



## The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

*A Guide for HR Professionals, Managers, Business Operators and Recruiters*

*Developed by Business Work and Ageing through the **Better Balance** Program*

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## The **Better Balance** Recruitment Guide

The **Better Balance** program was run throughout 2005 in Brisbane CBD targeting job opportunities for older workers in the financial services sector, primarily in branch and call centre roles. The program was funded by the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR) and incorporated project partners Business Work and Ageing (BWA), Westpac Banking Corporation, The Salvation Army Employment Plus (TSAEP) and Hudson.

The advice in this manual is taken from a range of projects BWA has been involved with, including the Better Balance project.

BWA wishes to thank our project partners for their support and insight during the Better Balance project, and in particular the following individuals:

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# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Index

Foreword.....	4
Candidate Search .....	5
The Myth of the Perfect Employee .....	5
The Recruitment Lifecycle .....	6
Promoting the Vacancy.....	8
Successfully Targeting Candidates .....	8
Your Web Presence – What does it say about you?.....	10
Interviewing and Assessing Applications .....	11
What to assess in candidates?.....	11
Communication in Recruitment .....	14
Assessment Rules.....	15
Evidence .....	18
Cultural Fit.....	20
Induction & Integration .....	22
Better Recruitment Checklist.....	23
Appendices .....	27
Appendix A - IT Skills Assessment .....	27
Appendix B - Web Page Review.....	28
Appendix C – Better Balance Recruitment Checklist .....	29
Appendix D – Cultural Fit Assessment .....	32

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Foreword

One of the clearest challenges faced by organisations today and into the next few decades will be a tightening labour market. Some key points to consider:

- We are having fewer children (birth rates are down from 3.4 in the 1960's to 1.7 today)
- Due to decreased birth rates, we have a diminishing growth in supply for our labour market; we are still experiencing growth, but at a quickly diminishing rate.
- Employees under 45 will represent a small percentage of labour force growth; this trend is set to continue for the next two decades.
- Many businesses still only think in terms of recruiting younger employees.

Labour market growth is in the process of falling from an average of 170,000 new entrants per annum for the decades of the 1980's and 1990's to a per annum growth rate of just 12,500 for the entire decade of the 2020's.<sup>1</sup> It is already a challenge to find good employees, which is increasing the need for better recruitment practices in any organisation, large or small. Recruitment, as anyone who works in the area will tell you, is a tricky proposition. However, there is a range of simple and practical steps an organisation can employ or require of their recruiter to increase the likelihood of doing the job better and attracting more appropriate candidates.

Three of the key challenges for large and small businesses alike will be:

- How do we ensure we are getting as many potential candidates to apply for jobs we offer?
- In particular, are we making the most of the increasing numbers of older people who are available to join our organisation?
- Are our interviewing and assessment systems rigorous enough to ensure we make the right employment decisions?

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<sup>1</sup> Access Economics, 2001

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Candidate Search

### *The Myth of the Perfect Employee*

In today's labour market, a good starting point for anyone wishing to fill a position is to be realistic. You may find a very close match between all an applicant's skills, attribute and experience and those you are looking for, but the likelihood is that you will need to make some compromises on the elements on your wish-list. It makes sense then to make an employee wish-list, but to rate your requirements in order of importance, from "absolute necessity" through to "would be nice, but not really important".

- Rank the skills and attributes that are crucial.
- Supplement these with desirable skills and attributes.
- Avoid working towards a stereotype of the perfect candidate for the role.

***The perfect employee is the one that is the closest match to what you need, who also finds your business the closest match to where they would like to work.***

#### **Employer (Demand)**

Knows what they need from the employee.

Has the sort of culture where employee would fit.

Can offer terms and conditions to suit the employee.

Can support the employment relationship.



#### **Job Seeker (Supply)**

Has the skills and knowledge.

Would fit the culture.

Is happy with your employment offer.

Can demonstrate the personal attributes you require.

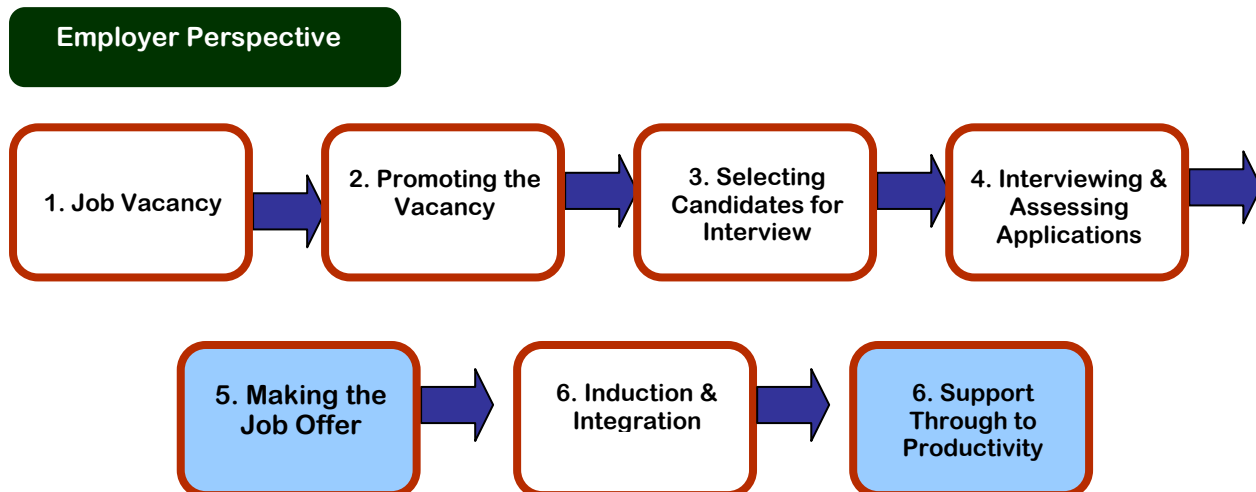
Can demonstrate specific skills if needed.

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## *The Recruitment Lifecycle*

For an employer, the recruitment lifecycle starts from the point of need and finishes when they have a productive and integrated employee.

From the employer's perspective the recruitment lifecycle could be represented in the following manner:



Employers need to remember that their needs as an employer are only half of the recruitment lifecycle, matching their needs with the job seeker's needs is vital. Recruitment is about the right "fit" and having both needs satisfied. Employers will be unsuccessful in their search if they forget that the needs of the job seeker are also crucial.

### **Key considerations:**

- Your needs as an employer must align with the needs of the job seeker. If you only consider your needs, you increase the likelihood that the fit is not right.
- Take time to understand the needs of the job seeker and to consider how well you can accommodate them.
- Consider your job done once your new recruit is integrated and productive, which might take you months after they have commenced work.
- Make sure part of your recruitment planning addresses what happens after the job seekers commences employment.

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

For the purposes of this guide, the focus will largely be on the stages leading up to the job offer being made and accepted, with some brief notes on the integration phase for you to consider.

An employee who can feel effectively utilised at work and recognised for this is most likely to be the best type of employee.

[Back to top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Promoting the Vacancy

### Successfully Targeting Candidates

The means of promoting a job vacancy to job seekers has radically evolved to the stage where today, job ads can be promoted utilising a wide variety of media. From the employer's perspective, the aim should be to cast the net wide, but be clear about what type of job is on offer.

Candidate matching means limiting your field to those who are genuinely interested in the position you have to offer. The wrong match may mean the employer will incur the recruitment and training cost involved only to have to incur these costs again in the near future.

We have a labour market that is growing at a much slower rate than it has for the last few decades and it is increasingly important to ensure you are getting your job ads to the right potential candidates. Also think about the wording of your jobs ads, do you use terms like "dynamic" or "energetic"? Remember, these terms imply "young" and will quite often diminish the interest of older candidates. The last thing you want to do in the current labour market is to frighten off potentially valuable job candidates.

### Diagram A – Careful Language selection

You will be rewarded with a competitive salary not to mention a great deal of personal enjoyment and responsibility as a trusted advisor. We also offer discounts on banking products and special offers on health, lifestyle and travel.

Our customer base is diverse and so are the people that work here. Your attitude and passion are as important to us as your experience.

Please apply using the Apply Now button or contact Careers @ Westpac on 1 300 1 30 548.  
[www.westpac.com.au/careers](http://www.westpac.com.au/careers)

**Westpac**

A simple line such as this at the bottom of your advertisement speaks volumes about your principles as an employer.

Today, 85% of labour force growth is focussed in the age group 45 years and over – if employers target only young recruits they are ignoring the fastest growing pool of available labour. It is the job of HR professionals to align their business practices with the prevailing business climate. Whereas a very short time ago, the labour force growth **was** in the under 45 age bracket, today most labour force growth is in the over 45 age bracket.

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Key considerations:

- Understand the labour market and where you are likely to find candidates. Avoid thinking into stereotypes.
- Make your job offer clear enough to discourage candidates who are really not interested in that type of work you have to offer.
- At the same time, make sure you cast the net wide and get the best response you can.
- Consider all your resources to promote positions, including your business locations if appropriate, local papers, job network providers, internet job sites, newspapers. Choose the most effective means of reaching your target audience.
- Avoid using exclusive terms such as “energetic” and “dynamic”.
- Communicate clearly about the job on offer. Are qualifications necessary or just desirable or are they irrelevant? What are the principle or most important day-to-day duties that a candidate will need to undertake while they do the job?
- Be clear about the mode of employment – full-time, part-time, casual, contract. Your offer of mode of employment needs to meet the needs of the job seeker.
- If you are going to use photographs on your job advertisements, your potential candidates need to associate themselves with the images they see – choose these carefully.

Remember, the job needs to be a good fit for the candidate as well; the risk of forgetting this is that you may attract candidates, but you will find it hard to **retain** them when they start doing a job which is nothing like the one they were expecting. This is a costly mistake made by many businesses. This is one very good reason why it is important to be clear about the role and the working conditions you have to offer.

[Back to the top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Your Web Presence – What does it say about you?

Think about the image your website portrays, candidates self-select out if they don't think they 'fit' the image. Does your organisation website portray opportunities for younger but not older candidates? Some companies spend a great deal of effort on promoting their employment opportunities via their website, but many also focus almost exclusively on graduate opportunities. Again, this just does not make good business sense. Employing graduates may well be one part of your business strategy, but if it is the only part of it. The likelihood is that your business will struggle to find and keep good candidates and you may well also find a real lack of management depth over time as experience is lost with high turnover and a youthful organisational profile.

A quick reference follows for you to review your web presence and the way in which you promote the jobs you have on offer via your website:

- The visual images on our website reflect all generations.
- We might refer to graduate opportunities, but we equally stress a range of other employment opportunities.
- We promote equity as a principle we apply in recruitment on our website.
- We value diversity in employment and make this clear on our website.
- Our website would encourage people of all generations to want to work with us.

If you can't answer yes to all of these questions, you may wish to consider ways of improving the way you promote your business to potential employees via your website.

### Key Points

- Make sure you don't exclude potential candidates by the way your website is designed.
- Make sure the images you use don't exclude potential candidates.
- Make sure candidates can find the information they need simply.

[Back to the top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Interviewing and Assessing Applications

### *What to assess in candidates?*

When assessing applications and interviewing potential candidates, the employer needs to be quite clear about what they are looking for.

A study released in 2002<sup>2</sup> examined recruitment practices in 10 countries, including Australia, examined the most common practices across all nations.

When interviewing, recruiters look for the following:

- ❑ Is the candidate able to or do they have the potential to meet the technical requirements of the job? This can be measured in two ways:
  - A person's **demonstrated ability** to perform the technical requirements of the job.
  - A person's **potential** to do a good job, even if the person is not entirely competent when they first start.

Recruiters assess the ability of candidates by employing:

- An **employment test** in which the candidate demonstrates the technical skills required (such as a specific skills test, an aptitude test, a role play, a numerical reasoning test, etc), or rely on
- Proven **work experience** in a similar job

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<sup>2</sup> DIVERGENCE OR CONVERGENCE: A CROSSNATIONAL COMPARISON OF PERSONNEL SELECTION PRACTICES *Human Resource Management*, Spring 2002, Vol. 41, No. 1, Pp. 31–44

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

❑ As well as technical ability, recruiters assess the ability of candidates to “fit in” to the organisation.

- Does the candidate demonstrate an **ability to get along** well with others already working here?
- How well the person will **fit the company's values** and ways of doing things

To actually assess the ability to **fit in**, one or both of these methods are commonly used:

- Future **co-workers' opinions** about the person
- A **personal interview**

❑ It is also common practice to consider the company's belief that the person will stay with the company (e.g., five years or longer). For example, what is the likelihood an employee will stay long-term in a part-time role if they really want or need to work full-time?

Employers should review their interviewing and selection practices to ensure they are measuring the elements that are most important to them in filling their vacancy.

In Australia, **proven work experience** is generally considered an important selection criterion. However, when asked what is most important in recruitment, **a good fit with the company's values and ways of doing things** is considered more important by recruiters. In other words, we currently place more weight on someone's work experience, but we feel that how well they would fit the company's way of doing things is a more important factor in who we choose for the job.

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

Previous work experience can be established with little effort, via the candidate's résumé, whereas cultural fit is a little more time consuming to establish and requires a skilled interviewer.

A more thorough recruitment process might be a little more costly and time consuming, but the cost of hiring the wrong person will no doubt be a more expensive mistake.

## Key Points

- Understand fully the requirements of the position you hope to fill.
- Be clear what skills are crucial and what ones are simply desirable.
- Be clear if a proven track record in a similar position is important.
- Be clear whether cultural fit is important and what traits you are looking for.
- Be clear whether the candidate's ability to learn new things is important.
- Rank these in order and ensure your process that fits your needs.

[Back to the top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Communication in Recruitment



Efficient communication through the recruitment process is vital, particularly with older candidates. Many older candidates will not have gone through a recruitment process for some time, so the process will be quite foreign to them. There is a great deal of uncertainty for us all when it comes to applying for a job, and when our hopes are bundled up into a job application and interview, we need to be supported through the process so we can feel we know what is going on at all times.

- ❑ **Be poised to act quickly with quality candidates** – a good candidate won't wait forever to hear from you, be ready to act when you find them.
- ❑ **Be clear about communication expectations up front** – about when and how you will communicate and stick to it.
- ❑ **Provide clear expectations about how you wish to contact candidates** – many are difficult to get in touch with. Some may not have voicemail, or even a mobile phone, or an answering machine at home. Be clear about how and when you will be in touch with candidates and then stick to your guidelines. Providing support and advice to older candidates may be appropriate at this stage. They may need to borrow a mobile phone for a few days so that you can have access to them when you need to. Make sure you have a way of getting in touch with them that suits both you and the candidate.
- ❑ If you haven't made a decision by a set date, then let candidates know your timelines have changed. There's no getting away from the fact that finding out if you were successful in your job application **is important news**. If a candidate has been led to believe they will hear about their application on a certain date, then don't let them down.

### Key Points

- Be clear about your timelines and communicate these to candidates.
- If you change your timelines, communicate this.
- Be clear how and when you wish to communicate with candidates and make sure this also suits them.
- Make sure you communicate the essentials about the job as effectively as you can.
- As older candidates may not have been through the recruitment process for some time, be sure you communicate clearly with them.

[Back to the top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## **Assessment Rules**

At its simplest, the recruitment process is an assessment. An employer makes an assessment, based upon all the evidence they can gather, whether or not a candidate is a good match for the position on offer and whether the candidate will fit the culture of the organisation.

Job seekers are also making an assessment on whether or not they feel they will fit the role and the culture. Recruitment at its best is about matching both needs, those of the employer and those of the job seeker.

There is certainly a science to getting assessment right, and with the process of recruitment, it is very important to be as rigorous as possible. Getting the recruitment process wrong is a costly experience.

### **Principle 1 - Validity**

To be valid, an assessment activity must assess what it claims to assess. It must sample a sufficient range of skills and performance and the tasks assessed should resemble those in the workplace. Multiple approaches to assessment are generally a good idea.

- Review assessment tests to ensure they are assessing what you want.
- Role plays can assess a range of things depending on the way they are administered. They can assess communication skills, but can also assess reading and comprehension skills if candidates are required to review printed materials before undertaking the role play.
- Specific skills demonstrations can be a valid form of assessment. For example, a demonstration of a particular software package if that is appropriate.

### **Principle 2 - Reliability**

Reliable assessment show consistent results from one assessment to the next. Reliability is ensured by collecting evidence from different times and locations, by using a number of different assessment methods, and by comparing the results of two or more assessors.

- Assessment tests need to be administered in the same way with different groups of candidates to ensure reliable outcomes. If Candidate A gets to practice before undertaking a test and Candidate B does not, then the results may not be a reliable indication of ability.
- If different assessors are using the same assessment tool, then they must apply it in the same way to ensure reliable results. For example, if

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

Assessor A reads a document to the candidate and then ask questions related to it whereas Assessor B gives the document to the candidate to read and then asks questions, then the results may not be reliable.

## Fairness / Equity

Nowadays the requirement is that the assessor and the assessee work together, in collaboration, to achieve success and equitable conditions for the assessee. This is to ensure that the person being assessed clearly understands what is expected of her/him and has been made aware of what the criteria for judging performance are. It also ensures that the learner is ready and prepared for the assessment and is able to access the appropriate environment and resources.

## Flexibility

Assessment procedures must be accessible to all assesses regardless of age, gender, disability or background. A flexible assessment provides for the recognition of competencies as well as skills and knowledge, no matter when, where or how they were acquired. Flexibility means that provision is made for you to be assessed when you feel that you are ready, and that the type of evidence you present can be negotiated with your assessor.

*It is important to note that sometimes it is impossible to be flexible: dates have to be set for some assessments. But usually there is the chance for another opportunity.*

## Transparency

Participants should be given an indication of what the assessors are looking for. Assessment is about allowing people the chance to demonstrate their ability to perform, not about eliminating people from the process.

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Key Points

- Review your current methods of assessment for validity and reliability. Are you actually assessing what you want to assess? Are your methods reliable enough to get consistent results over time and with different people?
- Discuss the way your recruiter assesses candidates for you.
- Do your assessment methods make it harder for particular age groups to succeed?

[Back to the top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Evidence

This section deals with step four from the employer's perspective and step three from the candidates. An assessment is a gathering of evidence, the weighing up of the evidence gathered and then the making of a decision based upon the evidence. The nature of the evidence in this process becomes quite crucial. Assessment centres are structured to gather as much evidence as possible to make the right judgement on behalf of the employer so as to recommend them candidates who are a good match for the positions they need to fill.

There are four principles of evidence that the recruiter, or the person making the recruitment decision needs to keep in mind throughout the process – currency, relevancy, authenticity and sufficiency.

## Currency

The evidence of performance and skills/knowledge are of current status, not of another time. This can make it difficult for some candidates if the recruiter limits the requirements to their most recent employment. We all know that skills and knowledge can be developed in a range of ways and that they may not simply be developed on-the-job.

- Do you require evidence of skills/knowledge that have been developed in a similar role or could the candidate have developed them elsewhere – such as at home, volunteering or via a hobby?
- How important are current skills, can you teach the candidate the skills you require?

## Relevance

The evidence of performance and skills/knowledge are relevant to the position. The question of relevance is a common one when considering the types of evidence gathered in an assessment procedure. The evidence of skills and knowledge should be linked directly to the position you are trying to fill. Is age relevant to an individual's capacity to do the job? In certain circumstances, physical capacity may be relevant, for example, if the job required continuous heavy lifting (such as a removalist might have to do) then physical capacity is important, but would physical capacity be important in deciding whether or not a person could fulfil the requirements of office clerk?

- Be careful to assess the most relevant skills, knowledge and attribute that directly relate to the position on offer and the employment culture within the business.
- Use an appropriate method of assessing cultural fit. (A sample form is detailed later in this guide.)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Authenticity

The assessor is sure that the evidence gathered is reflective of the candidate's ability and employment and study history.

- Reference checks will help establish this.

## Sufficiency

There is enough evidence gathered to ensure a suitable judgement can be made. One common term used in training and development in relation to sufficiency is "*consistency in performance*". Basically, can the candidate demonstrate they have consistently performed over a period of time the skills required for a position? Quite often recruiters use industry experience as a means of measuring consistency in performance, whereas this may not be the best measure. For example, a person may have consistently demonstrated the ability required in another industry environment, however, if the recruiter is looking for specific industry experience, they may well be overlooking capable candidates from other industry sectors.

## Weighting the Evidence

Make sure the most important evidence and the least important are weighted accordingly.

- Which pieces of evidence that you have gathered tell you most about the candidate's ability to do the job?
- Is their CV more important than the testimonials provided by referees?
- Is their previous employment more important than how well they will fit into the organisation?

## Key Points

- Do you have all the evidence you need to make the right decision?
- What pieces of evidence are the most valuable for you?
- Are you reviewing evidence that is relevant to the candidate's ability to do the job?
- Do you have enough evidence that the candidate is a good cultural fit for your organisation?

[Back to the top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## **Cultural Fit**

From the research discussed in the titled “What to Assess” research discussed demonstrated that many Australian businesses do not focus enough on cultural fit when they recruit. Some recruitment experts believe the interview can be quite misleading as *the selection process is an ‘actor versus actor’ game. Candidates try to appear like the person they think managers want, and managers try to appear like the firm they think candidates want.*<sup>3</sup>

One assessment method suggests that, to measure cultural fit, employers give the candidate a range of attributes to rate on a scale from highly desirable to least desirable. This will have the additional benefit of providing a basis for discussion during an interview.

On the following page is an example which may be appropriate for a role such as an administrative assistant. You would need to adapt this instrument to suit both the role you are trying to fill and the culture that is prevalent in your workplace. Statements should be design to measure the candidate’s response to the specifics for the job you need to fill and your business.

For the cultural fit assessment to provide useful information:

- The employer needs to know in advance which attributes they rate highly and look for a close match by the candidate.
- Rank the answers which are the most important from the employer’s perspective in terms of fit.
- For example, if the job required someone to work without constant supervision or direction, their response would need to match your requirements for statement 14.

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<sup>3</sup> “How Many Turkeys Do you Hire?” Human Resources Magazine 24<sup>th</sup> February 2004

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Cultural Fit Assessment

Which of these statements do you most agree with and which do you least agree with?

Remember there are no right or wrong answers here, just answers that sound more like you and less like you.

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. I like to follow procedures other people have come up with	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I like working different or variable hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I am happy to do my job and do it well and not worry about climbing the ladder at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I like to be responsible for making sure clients are happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I'd prefer to pick up a system working well and ensure it continues to work well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I am happier if there is someone I can refer client issues to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I don't like it when things take me by surprise at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I like finding ways of doing things more efficiently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I like an environment where each new week can bring a new challenge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I like an environment where I am pretty sure I know what each new week will bring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I think I can come up with smart systems for common tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I like to climb the ladder at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I am confident I can help clients when people are out of the office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I generally get along well with my work without much direction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I like to be given important tasks to complete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I'd prefer to be given new tasks all the time to keep me busy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I don't get flustered easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. If I make a mistake it upsets me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I like working the same hours as it helps me plan my week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I don't mind fixing other people's mistakes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I like to balance my work and my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I enjoyed being planned and making sure I prioritise my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. I hate having a messy desk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. I find it annoying when others distract me from my work to help them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

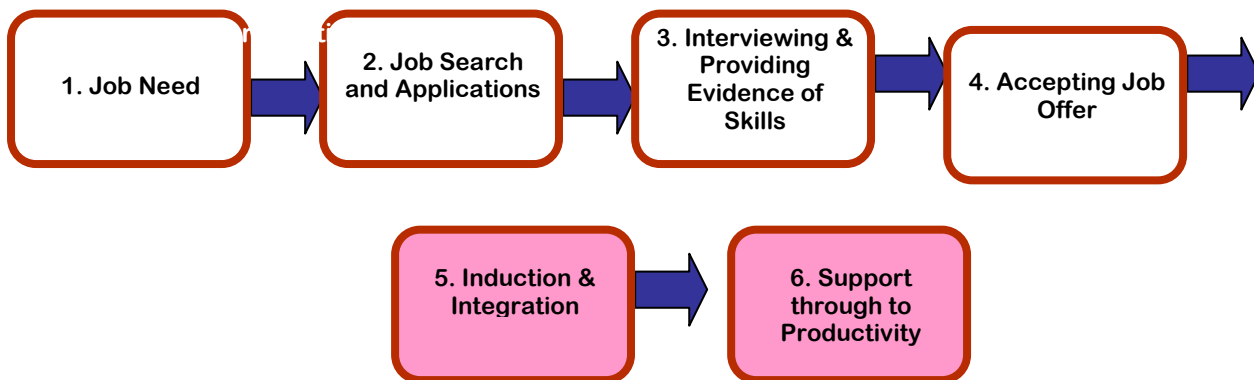
[Back to the top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Induction & Integration

To conclude the main part of this guide, a reminder for employers that the recruitment process becomes a success when your new employee is integrated into the workplace, is productive and is happy working for you. No matter how well you have done everything to the point of getting the candidate into the position, the last phase of the recruitment lifecycle is still to come.



All candidates need support when commencing a new job and your success in creating a smooth induction for them is vital.

Some things to remember:

- Everyone needs to feel part of the social fabric at work as we spend a great deal of our day there. Make sure new employees are welcomed, introduced to others and perhaps provided a buddy for the early stages.
- Consider providing a mentor for them, someone who is doing the same job so that they feel they have a person to ask questions of.
- Have realistic expectations about productivity, research suggests it can take 6 months or longer in many roles to be fully productive at work.
- Ensure they receive the training they require to take on new tasks.
- And remember, all of these points will be much easier if you've followed a sound recruitment methodology before this point.
- Older workers can find it difficult moving into an environment where they are surrounded by younger workers. Be aware of your work culture and your work environment and consider age awareness training for managers.

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## ***Better Recruitment Checklist***

This checklist which follows on the next three pages looks at the critical moments in the recruitment cycle and indicates the critical aspects for the employer to focus on.

If you outsource your recruiting to a recruiting firm, this checklist will help you discuss your needs with them to ensure you get the best service possible and attract the best candidates possible for the position you have to offer.

This checklist will also appear in the Appendices section so you can copy it and use it for all new positions or new recruitment needs you may have. It is also a useful tool to periodically review your recruitment practices.

### **Prior to interview – Marketing the Position**

*Before you advertise a position, you need to have a clear idea about what the role entails and what skills, attributes and knowledge are important to complete the day-to-day tasks required in the role. It is recommended that you meet with key stakeholders first to answer the following questions before advertising the position.*

1. Is it important that the candidates have had prior experience in this industry? If so, what are the reasons for this?

**Yes – reasons:**

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**No**

2. Is it important that this person has had prior experience in this sort of role? If so, what are the reasons for this?

**Yes – reasons:**

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**No**

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

3. What method of advertising the job will get us to the greatest pool of potential applicants in the most cost effective manner?

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4. Do we show any bias (age or other bias) in the way we are promoting this position or in the type of person we are hoping to recruit for this position? If there is a bias, does this fall within our business plan (eg – We are hoping to attract a mature aged candidate to help us achieve a better age balance across our organisation.)

**Yes – reasons:**

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**No**

## **At the Interview:**

1. Are we able to act quickly once we have decided on a candidate?

**Yes**

**No**

2. Are we prepared in advance for the questions we are going to ask? If there is more than one interviewer, do they all know who is asking which question?

**Yes**

**No**

3. Do we have a clear timeframe to fill this position? Have we communicated effectively with the candidates about our timeframe and when they can expect to hear from us?

**Yes**

**No**

4. Will we be able to contact the candidates easily? Have you asked the candidate about the best way to get in touch with them?

**Yes**

**No**

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Making the Decision

What technical skills and personal attributes does the person have that are required to do this job?

**Skills:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Attributes:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Candidate Skills Match to Those Required***

<b>Not a good match</b>									<b>Excellent Match</b>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Do we expect them to already possess these skills and can we train them?

***Must have skills***

***We can train***

If we decide we can train them, what are the indications that this person has the potential to learn these skills within a reasonable timeframe?

**Indicators of potential:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### ***Candidate Indicates Potential***

<b>No indication of potential</b>									<b>Excellent Potential</b>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

How well will this person get along with other people at work? Are there indications that this person won't fit our culture?									
<b>Indicators of social/cultural fit:</b> _____									
_____									
_____									
_____									
_____									
<b>Indications of Cultural Fit</b>									
<b>No real indications</b>					<b>Strong indications</b>				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

[Back to the top of this section](#)

[Home](#)

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Appendices

### Appendix A - IT Skills Assessment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please answer these questions as honestly as possible. This is important for the way we design the pre-employment training program IT component.

Please indicate your proficiency in the following areas to help us gauge which components of the IT training you will need to undertake if you are successful in gaining entry to the program.

I have a computer at home.	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		
I use a computer	<b>Never</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Daily</b>
I can confidently use a mouse	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		
I know how to click and drag	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		
I know how to use keyboard shortcuts	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		
I use the internet	<b>Never</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Daily</b>
I send and receive emails	<b>Never</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Daily</b>
I use Microsoft Word	<b>Never</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Daily</b>
I use Microsoft Excel	<b>Never</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Daily</b>
In previous employment I used a computer <i>Please indicate how long this employment lasted: . . . . .</i>	<b>Never</b>	<b>Monthly</b>	<b>Weekly</b>	<b>Daily</b>
I can use several programs simultaneously	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>		
I would say my computer skills make me a . . . . .	<b>Beginner User</b>	<b>Intermediate User</b>	<b>Advanced User</b>	

#### **General Comment on my IT Skills:**

***Please use this space to sum up your strengths and weaknesses when using Information Technology.***

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# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Appendix B - Web Page Review

You can review the effectiveness of the careers section of your website by addressing the following points:

- The visual images on our website reflect all generations.
- We might refer to graduate opportunities, but we equally stress a range of other employment opportunities.
- We promote equity as a principle we apply in recruitment on our website.
- We value diversity in employment and make this clear on our website.
- Our website would encourage people of all generations to want to work with us.

How do we promote our careers section of the website? How will people know we have a careers section?

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How often is the careers section of our website reviewed for the currency and accuracy of information presented?

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# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Appendix C – Better Balance Recruitment Checklist

### **Prior to interview – Marketing the Position**

*Before you advertise a position, you need to have a clear idea about what the role entails and what skills, attributes and knowledge are important to complete the day-to-day tasks required in the role. It is recommended that you meet with key stakeholders first to answer the following questions before advertising the position.*

1. Is it important that the candidates have had prior experience in this industry? If so, what are the reasons for this?

**Yes – reasons:**

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**No**

2. Is it important that this person has had prior experience in this sort of role? If so, what are the reasons for this?

**Yes – reasons:**

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**No**

3. What method of advertising the job will get us to the greatest pool of potential applicants in the most cost effective manner?

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4. Do we show any bias (age or other bias) in the way we are promoting this position or in the type of person we are hoping to recruit for this position? If there is a bias, does this fall within our business plan (eg – We are hoping to attract a mature aged candidate to help us achieve a better age balance across our organisation.)

**Yes – reasons:**

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**No**

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## At the Interview:

1. Are we able to act quickly once we have decided on a candidate?  
 **Yes**  
  
 **No**
2. Are we prepared in advance for the questions we are going to ask? If there is more than one interviewer, do they all know who is asking which question?  
 **Yes**  
  
 **No**
3. Do we have a clear timeframe to fill this position? Have we communicated effectively with the candidates about our timeframe and when they can expect to hear from us?  
  
 **Yes**  
  
 **No**
4. Will we be able to contact the candidates easily? Have you asked the candidate about the best way to get in touch with them?  
 **Yes**  
  
 **No**

## Making the Decision

What technical skills and personal attributes does the person have that are required to do this job?									
<b>Skills:</b> _____ _____ _____									
<b>Attributes:</b> _____ _____ _____									
<b>Candidate Skills Match to Those Required</b>									
<b>Not a good match</b>					<b>Excellent Match</b>				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

Do we expect them to already possess these skills and can we train them?

- Must have skills**
- We can train**

If we decide we can train them, what are the indications that this person has the potential to learn these skills within a reasonable timeframe?

**Indicators of potential:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidate Indicates Potential**

No indication of potential								Excellent Potential	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

How well will this person get along with other people at work? Are there indications that this person won't fit our culture?

**Indicators of social/cultural fit:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

**Indications of Cultural Fit**

No real indications								Strong indications	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

## Appendix D – Cultural Fit Assessment

The cultural fit assessment which appears on the next page needs to be tailored to the specific role you are trying to fill. The example provided is a replica of the one that appears earlier in this guide.

What you should do for each recruitment activity is to shape the statements in the assessment sheet to suit particular elements of the role you are wishing to fill.

The cultural fit assessment will look somewhat different for different roles, however, it is likely parts will remain constant as you will be assessing fit with the organisation as well as fit for the specific position.

You also need to have an idea of what your ideal responses from the candidate will look like. If you want someone to be able to work autonomously, then you would hope that autonomy appeals to the candidate, and so forth.

# The Better Balance Recruitment Guide

**This is for the candidate to complete.**

Which of these statements do you most agree with and which do you least agree with?  
Remember there are no right or wrong answers here, just answers that sound more like you and less like you.

1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = neither agree nor disagree 4 = Disagree 5 = Strongly Disagree

	1	2	3	4	5
1. I like to follow procedures other people have come up with	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I like working different or variable hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I am happy to do my job and do it well and not worry about climbing the ladder at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I like to be responsible for making sure clients are happy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I'd prefer to pick up a system working well and ensure it continues to work well	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I am happier if there is someone I can refer client issues to	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. I don't like it when things take me by surprise at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. I like finding ways of doing things more efficiently	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. I like an environment where each new week can bring a new challenge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. I like an environment where I am pretty sure I know what each new week will bring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. I think I can come up with smart systems for common tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. I like to climb the ladder at work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. I am confident I can help clients when people are out of the office	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. I generally get along well with my work without much direction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. I like to be given important tasks to complete	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
16. I'd prefer to be given new tasks all the time to keep me busy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
17. I don't get flustered easily	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
18. If I make a mistake it upsets me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
19. I like working the same hours as it helps me plan my week	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
20. I don't mind fixing other people's mistakes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
21. I like to balance my work and my life	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22. I enjoyed being planned and making sure I prioritise my work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
23. I hate having a messy desk	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24. I find it annoying when others distract me from my work to help them	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Remember, you can alter any of these questions to suit your own business culture and the role for which you are recruiting.

[Home](#)