

# BUSINESS SENSE

Next Level Tools for Entrepreneurs & Small Business Owners

## HUMAN RESOURCES SERIES

### The Importance of Recruitment: Attracting the Right Candidates

#### Why is this important?

Attracting, hiring, and retaining the right people is key to any organization's success. Having employees with the right skills, abilities, interests, values, and temperament helps ensure that quality services and products are created and delivered, and makes a positive contribution to the company culture. Done well, a hiring process allows business owners and their leaders (supervisors, shift leads, managers) to focus their time on activities that help strengthen and grow the business, and support and develop their employees, instead of addressing problems related to behavior, performance, safety, or quality.

Quality hiring practices take time and money to develop and put in place, and skilled, caring supervisors to consistently follow and help improve. Key activities include preparing job descriptions, creating and managing a process for sourcing, vetting, and selecting candidates through interviews, reference checks, and hiring decisions, and designing and implementing a new employee onboarding process, all in compliance with relevant laws and aligned with your culture. This document outlines strategies, tools, and resources aimed at getting the right people into your organization, and in the right roles.



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#### Attracting the Right Candidates

Before posting the position, you will want to develop a detailed job description as well as abbreviated job posting content to advertise your opening. Key components of the job description include:

Job Title | Hourly or Salaried Designation | Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) Employee Classification (e.g., ..., ...) | Summary of Responsibilities | List of Essential Duties and Responsibilities | Qualifications\* | Physical Requirements | Location and Work Hours/Days/Shift | Special requirements like carrying a beeper, mandatory overtime, and/or travel.

**\*Qualifications:** A helpful way to identify and organize qualifications is by using the acronym KESA, which stands for **Knowledge, Experience, Skills, and Attributes**.



When defining position qualifications, it's important to carefully consider what an employee must be able to do on day one, and what they can learn through either OTJ (On the Job Training) or formal instruction. In a tight job market, and when competing for specialized talent, it's helpful to think about a range of candidates you might consider, and how you would describe their qualifications. For example: If you're seeking a web application developer, do they need to know a specific coding language, or do they need to have demonstrated the interest and ability to learn coding languages in general?

**Knowledge** - What do employees in this role need to know in order to carry out their responsibilities? This could include knowledge developed on the job, as part of a hobby, self-guided learning, and/or formal education. If secondary education or an advanced degree is not essential for success, you may increase your candidate pool by omitting any educational requirement.

**Experience** - What do employees need to have done in the past in order to safely and effectively carry out their responsibilities? Could they have gained that experience outside the workplace through volunteering and/or household or parenting/elder care responsibilities?

**Skills** - What soft skills (e.g., ..., ...), technical skills (tools, technology, design, engineering), organizational, planning, and communication skills are needed to carry out key responsibilities?

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**Attributes** - What qualities should someone exhibit for success in this role? Are there qualities you look for in all employees that you want to include in every job description? Once you've created a job description, you can develop a job posting that includes the title, summary of key responsibilities, and any must-have qualifications. It is also helpful to include either a starting hourly wage/salary, a hiring range, or at least the bottom of the hiring range; doing so can help ensure that only candidates who can consider your level of pay will apply, reducing the chances of investing time interviewing someone who will not be able to accept an offer. This level of pay transparency is increasingly being mandated by state law to promote fairness and reduce pay disparities based on protected factors like gender, race, age, or ethnicity. Determining what to pay for a job can be done through market-based evaluation of what

other employers are paying for similar roles and qualifications, or by using a more involved "point factor analysis" combined with a market review. The Vermont Department of Labor tracks wage data and makes it available to employers at <http://www.vtmi.info/wageincome.cfm>.

In addition to job-specific information, prospective candidates will want to know about your organization. This part of your ad content can draw from a mission statement and values that guide

how your organization operates, the workplace culture you strive to provide, and highlight any recognition you've received as a good employer. Reinforcing the "why" of your business differentiates you from your competition and enables you to attract top talent who seek meaningful work in a rewarding environment. Ultimately, compelling ad content is a tool for attracting people who can do the job in a way that aligns with and supports your company's values.



Business Sense is a no-fluff source of information that gets right to the heart of what small business owners need: essential tools and informational resources to help their businesses grow. Written by our team of business coaches, this series shares their decades of experience in areas such as financials, operations, sales and marketing, human resources, leadership, and governance. Business Sense is designed to provide entrepreneurs and small business owners in various sectors, including agriculture, forestry, waste management, renewable energy, and environmental technology, with recommendations and practical advice to help their businesses not only survive but thrive.

Our business management coaching and Business Sense Resource Guide are designed to accelerate the growth of the enterprises we work with and expand the leadership capacity of the entrepreneurs who own and manage these businesses.

### Let Us Help You and Your Business

The Vermont Sustainable Jobs Fund provides tailored business management coaching, entrepreneurial support, and training to position Vermont-based entrepreneurs and small business owners in our designated market sectors for growth and long-term success. We partner with state government, private sector businesses and nonprofit organizations to build a thriving economic, social and ecological future for Vermont. Learn more at [VSJF.org](https://vsjf.org)



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Accelerating Sustainable Economic Development

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