

It clarifies expectations for both the recruiter and the requesting department of what will be accomplished, what the costs will be, and who will be held accountable for the results. It also clarifies the steps that need to be taken in order to ensure that they are all followed in a consistent fashion and in accordance with organization policy as well as relevant laws and regulations. In short, a recruitment process safeguards the interests of the employer, the applicant, and the recruiter.

Process Flow and Record Keeping

Before deciding where and how to look for applicants, it is essential that the organization prepare for the high volume of data that accompanies the filling of vacancies. This high volume of data results from the use of multiple sources to identify candidates (e.g., advertisements, walk-ins, employment agencies), the need to evaluate the applicant's credentials to multiple parties (e.g., hiring managers, HR), and the need to communicate with candidates regarding the status of their applications. If process flow and record-keeping issues are not addressed before recruitment search, the organization may become overwhelmed with correspondence that is not dealt with in a timely and professional manner; in turn, the organization may lose well-qualified applicants.

To manage the process flow and record-keeping requirements, an information system must be created for recruitment efforts. An effective system allows the candidate, the hiring manager, and HR representatives to know the candidate's status at any time. The information system tracks the applicant's file as it flows through the organization's recruitment process. The information system can also periodically issue reports on how timely and accurately the applicant information is being processed.

The process of managing data and records has been transformed by online applications.¹¹ Indeed, one might characterize it as a double-edged sword. On the one hand, data entry and record maintenance are facilitated in that applications are immediately transferred into a searchable standardized database. Online applications often permit candidate screening by checking qualifications and administering online skills tests. This can greatly reduce the time spent weeding out résumés sent in by unqualified candidates. On the other hand, online applications generate much more data, including applications from individuals who are poorly motivated to join the organization or are obviously unqualified for the position. To facilitate combing through all this information, many web-based recruiting systems have integrated screening tools to eliminate unqualified applicants early in the process.

As the applicant progresses through the hiring process, additional record keeping is required, such as who has reviewed the file, how long each individual has had the file to be reviewed, what decision has been reached (e.g., reject, invite for a visit, conduct a second interview), and what step needs to be taken next (e.g., arrange for a flight and accommodations, schedule an interview). Throughout the process, communications with the applicant must also be tracked so the applicant

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