

## **The Recruitment Process**

### **Advertising**

Unicorn's website provides one of the best tools for recruitment. We also advertise on [www.environmentjob.co.uk](http://www.environmentjob.co.uk), on the shop floor and among existing casual workers. Guardian print and on-line advertisements often receive a good response, although these are expensive.

An effective advert clearly contains all necessary information, including pertinent details from the job description and person specification, and pay and benefits. Publicising relatively low wages may eliminate a lot of people, but will save time in the long run.

### **Applications**

The most useful questions on our application – why a person wants to work at Unicorn, or why s/he is suitable – give a better insight into skills, experience and expectations than a CV. Contact information allows the option to clarify any confusion or gather further information in advance of interview. We use monitoring forms to further our principle of Equal Opportunity, although these forms are not passed along to the recruitment team. Obviously, we do not include any irrelevant or discriminatory questions on the application, e.g., age, child-rearing plans, etc!

### **Recruitment Team**

The three-person recruitment team includes of one member of Personnel, and at least one member from any specific teams for which we are recruiting.

### **Shortlisting**

Unicorn's recruitment team usually begins with a 'yes,' a 'no' and a 'maybe' pile. Incorrectly-filled in applications go straight to the 'no' pile. The 'maybe' pile is tallest and most difficult to resolve, as it requires the team to discern where each applicant fits within the business. Referring to the job description and person specification, the team asks the following questions.

- Why does this person want to work with us?
- Does s/he have potential as a director and manager?
- Can s/he make tough decisions?
- Can s/he project manage?

Members of the recruitment team may call applicants to ask a few questions, and try to discover if they have the appropriate drive.

### **Confidentiality**

As mentioned above, monitoring forms (if used) must be separated from applications. All forms must be locked away, in respect of data protection regulations. Unless the form explicitly states that all members may see it, do not share responses on forms even if they are funny or great or both.

### **Interviewing and assessing**

In order to gain a more holistic insight, short-listed applicants are invited to assessment days at Unicorn, which include an interview, a written test, and a chance to working alongside existing members. Not everyone interviews well, but someone

who makes many mistakes while helping on the shop floor and does not show potential for improvement may not be a suitable candidate.

For the interview, the recruitment panel sticks to the same set of questions to keep the process fair; look online for question ideas. Discuss beforehand what the panel would like learn from the candidates and how to discover the most information. During the interview, each recruitment team member should take notes and mark the candidate on individual questions.

If the candidates work alongside the members on the shop floor, that member receives a simple 'scorecard' to be completed immediately after the work trial. A written test offers another means for expression for those uncomfortable in interview and especially helps to evaluate prioritising or problem-solving skills. Generally, every business benefits from experimenting with different interview questions and types of assessment.

### **Selection**

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of recruitment, the panel may want to keep most of the short-list by the selection stage. At Unicorn, the recruitment panel first looks at who scored the most points in interview, then to other assessments. We aim to match assessment performance with the skills required and find the perfect grocer!

The panel aims to recruit the number of staff or hours agreed by the membership. However, in case of exceptional candidates, and providing it is affordable to the business, we make the most of the recruitment process by offering more people slightly fewer hours each.

### **Leave a good impression**

Unicorn writes a letter to everyone who has made the effort to fill in an application form, even for those applicants who did not meet our criteria or expectations. Aside from common decency, these candidates may be customers, or friends to customers or future employees. As discussed elsewhere in this toolkit, word of mouth is crucial to our reputation and negative experiences always travel faster and farther than positive ones.