

Initiate

Guide to Hiring: Do's and Don'ts To Consider

Hiring employees can affect how your business grows. Getting the right person will bring new skills and energy to your business. This guide will show you how to create an opportunity that helps both your business succeed and your employee thrive.

Whether bringing on your first employee or adding additional employees, it is an important step for your business. Finding the right people takes time and careful planning but hiring a great employee can help your business expand in new ways. You'll want to create clear expectations while also making your business welcoming and positive. As you begin the hiring process, you'll also need to keep the legal requirements in mind. Here are some key considerations to help you find and hire the right person for your business.

DO...

Do start with identifying what skills or qualifications are most important.

- Will the person interact frequently with customers? Look for someone friendly and approachable.
- Can you train them on the job, or do they need specific technical expertise? This affects whether you need someone with prior experience.
- Does the position require specific work hours? Confirm candidates can meet your schedule needs.

DON'T...

Don't rush the hiring process.

While filling a position quickly can seem like a solution, it can have some negative effects like lower productivity and higher turnover.

Do create a job people will want.

Think about what makes a job appealing to potential employees:

- Offer competitive wages and relevant benefits
- Understand candidates' work goals and how this role supports them
- Create a safe, positive business environment
- Consider what matters to individuals and families in your community

Visit the **Good Job Inventory** to help you get started.

Don't assume the needs and preferences of your employees are the same as yours.

A good job must take into account workers' needs and perspectives. Employees have different life circumstances, priorities, and motivations.



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DO...

Do write a clear job description.

Your job description should include:

- Essential responsibilities and daily activities
- Required qualifications and skills
- Why someone would want to work at your business
- Clear, specific language about the role

Do prepare for interviews.

Create a standard set of interview questions to ask every candidate. This helps you compare candidates fairly and make an informed decision. Include questions that consider the specific role and work environment:

- "Tell me about yourself"
- "Why do you want this job?"
- "How would you describe your ideal work environment?"
- "What achievement are you most proud of?"
- "What do you see as the greatest strength you bring to the position?"
- "Tell me about a time you went above and beyond your regular duties"
- "In this role, you may experience a difficult customer. Explain how you would handle this situation."

Do check references.

Checking a candidate's references will help give you a good idea of whether they have the necessary experience or skills to fill your position, how they get along with others and if they will be a good fit. When contacting references, ask:

- Confirmation of basic employment details
- What it was like working with the candidate
- Why they left their previous position
- Their strengths and weaknesses
- Whether the reference would recommend hiring them

Do make a job offer.

Once you've reviewed all your options and chosen your candidate:

- Call them personally to share the good news
- Outline the terms (salary, start date, benefits)
- Follow up with them in writing

DON'T...

Don't forget to assess the compensation offered against the job expectations.

You can research market rates for similar positions and skills required, taking into consideration benefits, flexibility and growth opportunities.

Don't include questions that are illegal to ask.

It is illegal to ask questions in an interview that relate to a candidate's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, pregnancy, disability, or genetic information: This includes questions about family status, number of children, religious holidays, country of origin, and even height and weight, unless directly relevant to the job role.

Don't rely too much on a resume.

A strong resume doesn't always mean that person will be a strong employee. Try to understand the candidate's ability to problem solve, communicate effectively and adapt. Think about his/her potential for growth, not just a past job title.

Employees can have a direct effect on a work environment. Finding a candidate with a strong work ethic, good time management, and positive attitude can have a great effect on the business culture you are trying to build.

Don't forget to follow up with all other candidates to inform them of your decision.

Even if candidates aren't chosen, your communication can offer them valuable feedback as well as give them an opportunity to give you feedback to improve your hiring process. This not only helps build a positive reputation for your business but also keeps the door open for future openings they may qualify for.

DO...

DON'T...

Do make sure legal requirements are in order.

There are a number of steps you'll need to take in order to comply with federal and state laws. Here are key tasks to complete:

- Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN) with the IRS on their [official website](#) (for your first hire)
- Register with your [state's labor department](#) (for your first hire)
- Report the new employee to a [designated state new hire registry](#) within 20 days
- Obtain workers' compensation insurance ([if required in your state](#))
- If necessary, perform a background check (must ask permission to do so)
- Have the new hire fill out [Form I-9](#) (Employment Eligibility Verification) and [Form W-4](#) (Employee's Withholding Certificate)
- Make sure you withhold the [correct amount of income tax](#) from their paycheck, based on their W-4 form

Don't overlook the importance of recordkeeping.

Hiring a new employee has many steps. Tracking and maintaining detailed records on each employee not only keeps your business better organized, it also reduces the chances of becoming out of compliance with any state or federal regulations.

Do plan for employee orientation and onboarding.

Orientation:

- Give a thorough tour of your business
- Introduce them to any other team members
- Show them their work area and facilities
- Review expectations and responsibilities

Utilize this [New Hire Checklist](#) to help you get started

Onboarding:

- Communicate regularly about their progress
- Identify areas where they excel or need support
- Help them understand how they contribute to the business
- Build trust through consistent communication

Utilize this [Creating an Onboarding Plan](#) to help keep you on track

Don't underestimate the benefits of engaging employees from Day 1.

Your new employees are excited to start their new position and are also feeling uncertainty around the unknown. How you address these feelings early on can make or break their experience and commitment to the business. By integrating them into the team, communicating regularly and helping them understand how they can make an impact in your business you are building a foundation of trust. This will increase their chance of being a long-term productive member of the team!

Disclaimer: This guide provides general information only and should not be considered legal advice. Employment laws vary by location and industry. Always consult with qualified legal professionals about specific employment matters.