

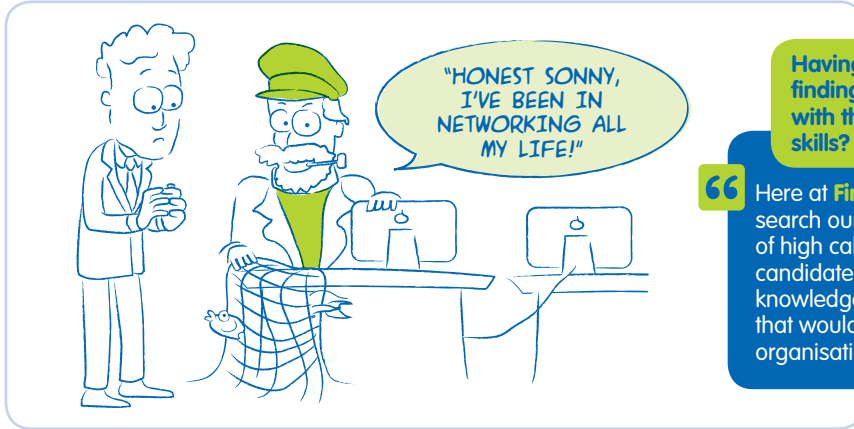
# An employers' guide to using a recruitment agency...

Four things to consider before you recruit.

What is the minimum wage?

Using recruitment agencies.

Finding your perfect candidate.



Having trouble finding people with the right skills?

“ Here at **FirstBase** we search our database of high calibre candidates using our knowledge of people that would fit your organisation. ”

## 4 things to consider before you recruit...

Once you've thought through your reasons for recruiting and decided that taking on a new member of staff is definitely the way forward (rather than outsourcing, training up an existing member of staff or using a freelancer) you should consider carefully the following points to clarify the role for which you are recruiting and help attract the ideal person for your vacancy.

- 1 *A comprehensive job specification will help you to decide what you want the individual to do, where you want them to work, the hours you want them to work and for what time period (full time, part time, short term, permanent) and the person to whom they will be responsible.*
- 2 *A person specification should include all the criteria that will make up your ideal candidate: the essential skills and experience, the desirable ones, the aptitude specific to the job function, work ethic, flexibility, reliability. Are you looking for formal qualifications or is practical experience more important? Ensure that your requirements could not be deemed discriminatory.*
- 3 *The salary you will be offering: to include NI, holiday entitlement, occupational pension, sick pay, bonus or commission payments, overtime rates, flexible working arrangements and any payments to be made in lieu of unsocial working hours. You may also want to consider occupational maternity or paternity pay (visit the ACAS website [www.acas.org.uk](http://www.acas.org.uk) for more information).*
- 4 *Start date: think through when you need someone to commence employment and make sure you have sufficient resources in place to deal with applicants. Think about the interview procedure – where will you meet with prospective candidates and how will you communicate with them. You may feel you want to do a group or skills based interview or brush up on your technique before you meet with people. You may need to allow time for a second stage interview if you have a number of candidates who, at first meeting, might fit the bill, which will need to be taken into account when you're planning in the start date.*

## What is the minimum wage?

The National Minimum Wage is the minimum pay per hour to which almost all workers are legally entitled. It doesn't matter how small an employer is, they still have to pay the minimum wage.

The minimum wage rate depends on a worker's age and whether they are an apprentice. They change annually and can be checked at <https://www.gov.uk/national-minimum-wage-rates>. If you have decided what you can afford to pay a new member of staff, either hourly, annually or based on output, use the <https://www.gov.uk/am-i-getting-minimum-wage> to check you will be meeting the minimum wage requirements. There is also guidance on working out the minimum wage for different types of work.

## Who gets the minimum wage?

To be entitled to earn the minimum wage workers must be school leaving age (usually 16) or over. Contracts for payments below the minimum wage are not legally binding. The worker is still entitled to the National Minimum Wage. Apprentices under 19 or in their first year get an apprentice rate.

Workers are entitled to the minimum wage if they are:

- part-time
- casual labourers, eg someone hired for 1 day
- agency workers
- workers and homeworkers paid by the number of items they make
- apprentices
- trainees, workers on probation
- disabled workers
- agricultural workers
- foreign workers
- seafarers
- offshore workers

To check who is classed as a worker, go to <https://www.gov.uk/employment-status/worker>



Having trouble locating local talent?

“ **FirstBase** check on all our candidates to make sure they are who they say they are and come from where they say they come from. ”

## Using recruitment agencies...

A recruitment agency should be able to provide guidance on the 'going rate' for the type of vacancy you're offering and let you know if you're offering enough to attract the right candidates. Based on that information, they should give you a clear idea of what they can do to help you find, interview and recruit the right candidate and their charges. They may have an idea already about how reliable a candidate is, their time keeping, etc. and they may already have references for them.

### Why can FirstBase help me?

“ We can act quickly to respond to your requirements, we can help you cut through the complexities of finding the right candidate. ”



The government has introduced the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations 2003 (the Conduct Regulations) to raise standards within the recruitment industry and to specify how recruitment businesses should operate. This provides added protection both for job seekers and the companies using the services of recruiters. In many respects the Conduct Regulations bring the law into line with the Code of Practice already adhered to by members of the Recruitment and Employment Confederation.

*Agencies usually focus on specific industries or types of positions, e.g. temporary staff for the catering industry, so make sure you don't waste your time contacting scores of agencies and just target the ones that deal with the kind of opportunities you are offering. To find agencies that specialise in your market sector or the skill sector for which you are recruiting, use the sector listings on the REC website:*

**[www.rec.uk.com/regions-sectors/sectors](http://www.rec.uk.com/regions-sectors/sectors)**

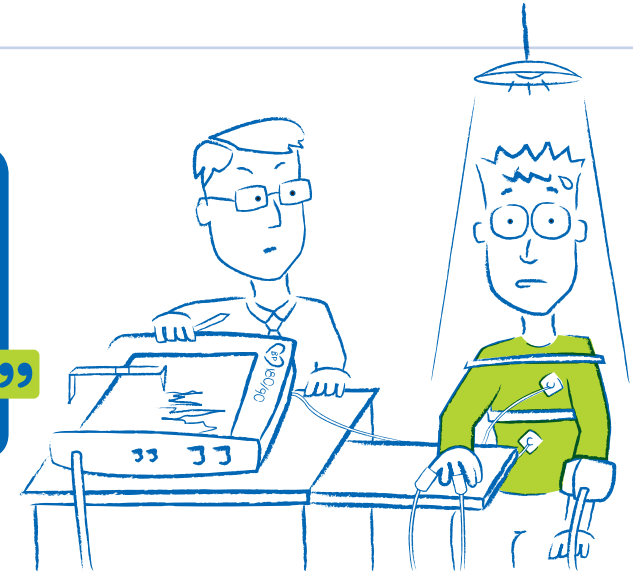
*If possible, check agencies' websites – many of them advertise their current vacancies online which should give you a good idea of whether they are likely to attract the kind of candidate you are seeking and if it would be worth contacting them.*

### Information to be supplied to you as an employer:

According to the Conduct Regulations, as a client you must be given a contract by the agency or business supplying recruitment services setting out their terms of business. Agencies and businesses are required to obtain information about the position from you, including information on any known risks to health and safety and steps taken to prevent and control such risks. The recruiter must also confirm the identity of each candidate they supply, check that they have the relevant experience, training and qualifications that you require for the position and that they are willing to work in the position.

### How do you recruit the right candidates?

“ FirstBase conduct thorough interviews with each of our candidates to ensure they have the right skill set. ”



The Regulations have introduced a new obligation on recruitment agencies and businesses to notify you if they obtain information that means the work-seeker is or may be unsuitable for the advertised vacancy. For businesses supplying temporary or contract staff this obligation to you is ongoing during the supply of a temporary worker. In the case of permanent recruiters, they are obliged to notify you if they obtain such information during the first three months after introducing a candidate.

### Restrictions on employment businesses charging 'temporary to permanent' fees:

Traditionally employment businesses charge a fee if you give one of their temporary workers a permanent contract directly, during or after a temporary assignment. This is known as a 'temp to perm' fee. The new Conduct Regulations state that if you take on a temporary worker directly you may still be liable to pay a transfer fee, provided the employment business gives you the option of an extended period of hire as an alternative to the fee.

In addition, the employment business may only charge you a fee if you take on the temporary worker within a period of 8 weeks after the end of an assignment, or 14 weeks from the start of the assignment (whichever is the later). The Regulations dealing with temp to perm fees are complex and should you wish to obtain further information you should discuss the provisions with an REC member firm. Agencies introducing permanent candidates are not restricted in charging fees under the Regulations.

### VAT:

In most cases the provision of recruitment services will attract VAT. Certain methods which recruiters use to mitigate VAT for certain types of clients, known as 'VAT friendly schemes' are affected by the Regulations. For agencies providing introductory services of finding employment for workers or workers for a client, whose workers enter into a direct contractual relationship with the client and are paid by the client, VAT is due only on their intermediary service, based on the commission received.

## Finding your perfect candidate...

You will probably know when you see the right person sitting in front of you. They will have the right skills and/or experience, a personality that will fit in with your existing team (and your customer base) and the right work ethic. There is a perfect candidate for every business, although, the time it takes to find them is often underestimated.

Some basic rules for recruiting your perfect candidate:

- 1 *Having a clear job and person specification in place from the outset will help you to filter out those who are not suitable more easily. If you're certain that you know what you want them to do and what hours will suit you and your business you have a far better chance of spotting the right person when they're in front of you. You'll also know how much flexibility your company can show to the right person for the job.*
- 2 *Prepare a pre-interview process to ensure that you make time to communicate with every candidate that applies to your vacancy, either by telephone, email or letter. You could lose the perfect candidate if you take too long to respond to their application.*
- 3 *Do you want to interview applicants over the telephone, by Skype or face to face? Do you have space in your premises to hold interviews or will you need to meet outside of your business? Who needs to meet the candidates and when? Will it go to second interview stage? Think about who needs to be present at the interview and whether there are trained for this task – could an agency take the interviews for you?*
- 4 *Make sure that, once you decide on the successful candidate, you make them an offer quickly- prepare an offer letter and contract of employment ready to send out that clearly sets out your key terms and conditions (how much they will be paid, whether the offer depends on satisfactory references and if the job includes an initial trial period). Let them know how long they have before they need to tell you whether they want the job or not.*
- 5 *Check references and qualifications – ask the candidate for proof of qualifications and permission to contact previous employers. Check references by phone: if the candidate has got any skeletons in the closet you're more likely to find out in conversation than to see anything in writing.*

Are you getting too many irrelevant CVs?

"SURE... WE'VE SELECTED ONLY THE BEST CVs FOR YOU"



At **FirstBase** we make sure we manage all applicants and make sure you get sent details of only those who are relevant.

“ I’m very proud of the way we operate and really passionate about making sure we uphold our standards in what is a highly competitive market. ”

We have to have standard terms and conditions of business as we are governed by the **Recruitment and Employment Confederation**, but we much prefer to work to our own high standards put together over years of trading in the recruitment sector.

What sets us apart:

- **We'll listen, learn, and make sure we fully understand your requirements**
- **Assess your situation, the problem it's causing you and understand what type of candidate you need to help you solve it**
- **Agree with you on how we can work together**
- **Keep our prices competitive, working within your budget**
- **Search our database of high calibre candidates using our knowledge of people that would fit your organisation, or advertise using relevant media if necessary**
- **Conduct interviews and appropriate skill tests**
- **Manage all applicants and make sure you get sent details of only those who are relevant**
- **Prepare candidates for their interviews**
- **Liaise with all shortlisted candidates to make sure they know the outcome of the interviews**
- **And... we will not ask you to pay a penny if you're not happy!**

*Tricia Hay*

Tricia Hay, Director

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