

EQUAL PAY FOR EQUAL WORK MONTANA TASK FORCE

The Equal Pay Task Force and the State of Montana are working together to provide resources and guidance to businesses in our Montana communities regarding best practices to encourage equal pay and diversity in the workplace. Recruit Your Way to Success is one of those resources – providing practical ways to hire a diverse and high-performing team.

Recruit Your Way to Success

Everyone has heard the phrase, “Your business is only as good as its people.” Research shows you’re more likely to have a successful business if you hire a diverse, high-performing team. The tips below can help you to find the best and brightest employees:

1. **Use a recognizable job title.** When advertising for a position, use the common job title and quickly and clearly describe the job responsibilities. When posting online, think about the search terms candidates enter and include them in your job title and description. Emphasize the 2-3 most important aspects of the job, including what you expect the person to accomplish. Use short sentences, color, and bullet points. Avoid acronyms and company-specific terminology that external candidates may not understand.
2. **Ask only for necessary qualifications and experience.** Lower-level and entry-level positions typically require 6 months to a year of related work experience. Most positions should not require more than 5 years of related work experience. Stress the behaviors required for the position instead of focusing on easy-to-train skills. Ask for hard-to-train abilities, such as outstanding customer service, problem solving, or leadership skills. Remember, it’s generally easier to teach a new employee how to do a new task than it is to modify an employee’s behavior.
3. **Advertise the benefits.** If your company offers benefits, include them in your job advertisements. Remember, benefits include more than health insurance and leave time. If you offer flexible work hours, exciting travel opportunities, the opportunity to earn a new certification or other perks, be sure to cover these in your advertisements and interviews.
4. **Broaden your candidate pool.** Research shows diverse businesses are more successful. Seek opportunities to attract a more diverse group of candidates. Instead of posting a sign or asking a current employee to refer someone, use an online posting, visit a career fair, ask local schools to refer candidates, or start an apprenticeship program. Use gender-neutral language in job postings, and avoid using company or industry jargon to appeal to a wider range of applicants.
5. **Interview your candidates.** Make sure your candidates can back up what they state in their applications. A candidate who looks perfect on paper may be too good to be true. Ask job-specific interview questions to help you determine if candidates have the experience, enthusiasm, and communication skills required to help your business succeed. Ask for specific examples and use “tell me about a time” questions. For example, ask candidates to tell you about a time that they dealt with a difficult customer and what exactly did they do to address that customer’s situation, or ask them to give you an example of when they made a mistake at work and what did they do about it. Don’t hesitate to ask job-related follow-up questions if you don’t get enough information. Remember, an interview should feel like a conversation. Make eye contact and smile. You’ll get more information if you make your candidates feel comfortable talking with you.
6. **Check references for your finalists even if they interview well.** Use references to verify your candidate’s interview responses were accurate. Speak to recent former supervisors, or, if a candidate lacks previous work experience, talk to another person of authority, such as a teacher, club leader, or event organizer. Contact people you trust who may know your finalist even if your finalist didn’t list them as references. Notify your finalist before contacting her current supervisor.

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7. **Pay competitively and fairly.** The Montana Department of Labor & Industry provides information regarding average wage by occupation in Montana. Use this information to help you determine a competitive salary. Don't forget Montana and federal laws prohibit discrimination based on age, marital status, sex, pregnancy, physical or mental disability, race, national origin, color, religion, and creed.
8. **Check out Job Service Montana and other resources for help.** Job Service Montana can help you advertise jobs and find employees. The resources section below contains links to additional information about recruiting, determining pay, and complying with legal requirements.

RESOURCES

Recruiting.com Article, "One Simple Way to Win Over More Job Seekers"
<http://www.recruiting.com/articles/one-simple-way-to-win-over-more-job-seekers/>

About.com Article, "Top 10 Ideas for Recruiting Great Candidates"
<http://humanresources.about.com/cs/recruiting/a/candidatepool.htm>

DiversityInc Article, "What's Missing from your Diversity-Recruitment Strategy"
<http://www.diversityinc.com/diversity-recruitment/whats-missing-from-your-diversity-recruitment-strategy/>

Houston Chronicle, Small Business Chron Article, "How to Build a Recruitment Plan"
<http://smallbusiness.chron.com/build-recruitment-plan-25811.html>

McKinsey & Company Article, "Why Diversity Matters"
<http://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/organization/our-insights/why-diversity-matters>

Forbes Article, "The Secret of Top Performing Companies: More Women on the Board"
<http://www.forbes.com/sites/davidprosser/2014/09/25/the-secret-of-top-performing-companies-more-women-on-the-board/#68d66f87d7cb>

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