



## EMPLOYING STAFF GUIDE

**Pre-Employment Tasks**

**Employment Tasks**

**Onboarding Tasks**

**Post-Employment Tasks**



## FACT SHEET

### Employing Staff Guide: Pre-Employment Phase Tasks

#### Ensure you have the necessary Workcover insurance

Before you employ staff, it's important to ensure your business is set up to comply with your state's health and safety laws. It's a requirement that all Queensland employers must hold a WorkCover Accident Insurance policy (unless they qualify as a self-insurer).

[Review the Work Health and Safety Laws here](#)

#### Understand and adhere to Awards

When it comes to paying your staff, it's important to understand and adhere to the relevant award. As outlined by the Fair Work Ombudsman, "Awards (modern awards) are legal documents that outline the minimum pay rates and conditions of employment".

With over 100 industry and occupation awards covering most people who work in Australia, you will want to determine which award applies to you before you enter into any discussions regarding remuneration.

[You can find out which award applies to you here.](#)

#### Understand and adhere to Fair Work Australia entitlements

Under Australian Employment Law, there are a set of minimum rights that all employees are entitled to in Australia. In addition, it's likely employees may also be covered by a Modern Award, providing additional entitlements.

Before you bring on a new hire, it's important to understand your responsibilities imposed by Fair Work Australia. For instance, all employees must be given a copy of the Fair Work Information Statement when they commence work with you, so they have a clear understanding of their rights as an employee. Some states may require that this is printed and placed on display in your office too.

Employers also have to give every new casual employee a copy of the Casual Employment Information Statement (the CEIS) at the same time.

Your obligations to your employees may be different for each, as it is dependent on the type of employment you have engaged them for (full time, part time, fixed term, casual, apprentice or trainee).

You might like to explore the different types of employment and the associated employee entitlements ahead of any new hires, as it may influence your decision on the type of employee you engage.



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### Employing Staff Guide: Pre-Employment Phase Tasks

#### Understand your tax and superannuation obligations

There are tax and superannuation obligations for all employers, which you should take some time to understand before you bring on your first hire, as your legal responsibilities commence the minute an employee starts working for you. These responsibilities are binding until your employee finishes working for you.

In some circumstances, these obligations can extend to directors of a business, and their family members too.

Obligations may include:

- pay as you go (PAYG) withholding tax.
- superannuation guarantee
- fringe benefits tax (FBT)

It's always best to seek some advice from your accountant before you bring on new employees, to ensure you have a thorough understanding of your tax and superannuation responsibilities.

#### Extension of obligations to Contractors

Businesses often consider engaging contractors rather than employees, it's important to note here that the correct classification of anyone providing services on an ongoing basis to your business is vital. We suggest first reviewing [ATO guidance](#), seeking specialist HR advice regarding classifying workers, and ensuring that you have the appropriate legal documents and agreements in place.

You may still be required to pay superannuation for individual contractors where the contract is principally for their labour.

#### Ensure you have the necessary equipment and systems in place for your employees

Before you bring onboard a new team member, it's important to ensure you have the right systems and equipment in place to facilitate this. Unless you're hiring a remote worker, your new employee will likely need to have access to a workstation with any equipment, tools and uniforms required to perform their role.

It's a good idea to check your memberships and software subscriptions, as there may be some extra costs required here for each new team member added.

Consider setting up your new employee with their email account and any system access required ahead of their first day to allow them to hit the ground running.



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### Employing Staff Guide: Pre-Employment Phase Tasks

#### **Ensure you have the necessary systems in place to effectively manage your business.**

Expanding your team brings with it a new set of challenges, especially if it's your first hire. If you don't already have accounting software in place to pay invoices and quote new work, it's a good time to explore your options. You'll need to think about how you will record timesheets, pay your staff including superannuation and manage leave requests. Reputable and common systems include Xero, MYOB and Quickbooks - all of which are Single Touch Payroll (STP) enabled and allow you to manage your employees' timesheets, pay, superannuation, leave, invoices and quotes with ease.

If you're unsure of which accounting system is best for your business, this is something your accountant can advise you on.

#### **Ensure you have the necessary policies and procedures in place**

While some policies and procedures that you should have in place such as Workplace Health and Safety may be obvious, there may be some that hadn't even crossed your mind. For example, have you thought about how you would handle conflict in the workplace? Do you have a policy or procedure in place for this?

Some common workplace policies that could assist your business include:

- code of conduct
- bullying, harassment and sexual harassment policy
- risk management policy
- confidentiality agreements
- recruitment policy
- staff performance policy
- internet and email policy
- mobile phone policy
- non-smoking policy
- drug and alcohol policy
- workplace health and safety policy
- discrimination and equal employment opportunity policy
- employee complaints / grievance handling policy
- discipline and termination policy
- employee travel policy
- employee reimbursement policy
- social media policy



## FACT SHEET

### Employing Staff Guide: Employment Phase Tasks

#### Identify skills shortages within your business

When the time comes to employ new staff, the first step should always include a thorough evaluation of where the skills shortages exist within your business. In some instances, this will be easy to identify, as it may simply be a case of filling an existing role where an employee has moved on. If your company is going through a stage of growth, you may need to consider introducing some new roles. On the other hand, you may realise that where you once thought you had a gap, you don't have any at all.

This is why the second step should always include an evaluation of the skills you already have access to (either internally or through existing outsourcing arrangements).

#### Evaluate the skills you already have access to

Hiring and onboarding new staff is not only a timely and costly process, but also comes with an element of risk – i.e., the risk that your new hire may not work out after you have invested your time and money into welcoming them onto your team. The risk that you may have to start all over again...

It is not uncommon for business owners to find the skills they desperately need sitting in another department, or another office within their business already. It therefore makes good business sense to evaluate which skills you already have hiding within your business. In an ideal scenario you'll find an exact skills match, but this may not always be the case. In some cases, it may be worth thinking outside the box to identify employees with transferrable skills, that you could nurture and build upon for the right employee.

Making use of the staff you already have within your business to fill skills gaps not only provides an opportunity to reward your existing employees for their loyalty by offering them more substance, but also reduces recruitment/onboarding costs and the time associated with it.

#### Determine which roles need to be filled

Once you have determined that a skills gap still exists, i.e., it cannot be addressed by your existing employees, this is where you would then determine which roles you need to fill to operate effectively.

Define the role clearly.

Consider what the role will entail – the duties and responsibilities of the role, what qualifications and prior experience will be required, where the role will be based and how many hours you require (full time vs part time).

Do your research – look at similar roles within your industry, what they entail and how they are compensated.



## FACT SHEET

### Employing Staff Guide: Employment Phase Tasks

#### Write a job description

To attract the most suitable candidates, it's important to write a detailed job description that clearly states what the non-negotiable expectations of the role are, along with any desirable experience. This is also a good opportunity for some employer branding, so provide candidates with some background information on your business, including what it is like to work with you (think about your company culture, your core values, your employee value proposition). In a competitive market you'll want to communicate any employee benefits on offer – whether that includes a 9-day fortnight, discounts on healthcare or gym memberships, the option to work from home, access to education and training, or the use of a company vehicle for example.

#### Advertise your job opening

Once you've pulled together your detailed job description, it's time to advertise the vacancy.

The best place to start is to think about where your ideal candidates will be looking – are they looking at all? Keep in mind that often the best talent is already employed, so they're not necessarily actively looking. Considering whether you're attracting active or passive job seekers should influence your decision on where to advertise your role.

When it comes to attracting active job seekers, the most obvious place to start is with traditional job boards such as Seek and CareerOne. It's important to note here that there are also a number of industry-specific job boards that you might like to consider, along with university job boards, which can be used to target candidates for graduate roles.

Other methods to target graduates may include attending careers fairs and building relationships with universities of interest.

If you have a strong brand, it's likely job seekers will seek you out themselves, so ensure your list of vacancies is always up to date on your company website. Share vacancies on your businesses social channels and encourage your staff to do the same. You might like to offer an incentive to staff who assist in the successful recruitment of new employees – this is referred to as an Employee Referral Program and is a common strategy used by HR Departments, particularly within organisations that have a large employee base.

When attracting passive job seekers, there are several avenues you may like to explore here. As an example, this might include paid social media advertising, print ads in industry publications, online advertising (behavioural targeting) and attendance at industry events. These methods, however, are a bit more time consuming than posting an ad on the likes of Seek. Fortunately, this is where a recruitment agency can come in particularly handy, as they will do a lot of the grunt work for you. As recruiters have access to a large pool of talent, it's also possible they will have someone in mind for your role straight away, making it a much quicker and easier process. However, if you'd like to have a go at attracting passive talent on your own, a good place to start for professional roles is on LinkedIn.



## FACT SHEET

### Employing Staff Guide: Employment Phase Tasks

#### **Advertise your job opening cont.**

While you can post a job on LinkedIn at no cost through your free account, as the saying goes, “you get what you pay for” – i.e., there are limitations with the free accounts. By upgrading to a paid membership, you gain access to wider search functions including access to advanced search and the ability to directly inmail/target candidates who you’re not connected to. There are a number of different paid membership options, with the Recruiter Lite and Recruiter memberships being quite costly for small businesses, which is perhaps another good reason to take advantage of a recruitment agency who will already have these memberships in place.

[Compare the different LinkedIn memberships here](#)

#### **Shortlist and interview candidates**

If you’ve advertised the role well, it’s likely you’ll receive a healthy number of applications, which can be quite time consuming to sort through and identify the best matches for your role.

If you asked candidates to address your hiring criteria in their applications though, this should help with the process of shortlisting.

Once you have established a shortlist, it’s time to arrange an interview with each candidate. If you’re still unsure after the first round of interviews, it’s acceptable to invite a select few back for a second round of interviews. You might like to invite additional members of your business along for this second round to get a better feel for how each candidate would fit within the team dynamic.



## FACT SHEET

### **Employing Staff Guide: Onboarding Phase Tasks**

#### **Verbal job offer and acceptance**

Once you've decided on an applicant, it's time to provide them with your official job offer and set a timeframe for acceptance. This is done verbally in the first instance, which is when you will lock down specifics such as salary, workdays (if part time) and the day you'd like them to start.

#### **Issue employment contracts**

Once a candidate has verbally accepted your role, the next step is to have the employment contract written up for both parties to sign.

If you don't have any experience writing up an employment contract, you might like to reach out to a HR company to assist here. You'll want to ensure you have your bases covered, as this is a legal document that could come back to bite you if it isn't executed properly.

Employment contracts should consist of:

- The name of both binding parties – employee and employer
- Title and description of the job to be performed.
- Employment start date
- Type of employment (e.g., casual, part time, full time, fixed term) and the hours of work
- Leave entitlements such as personal leave, carers leave, annual leave and parental leave.
- Remuneration details, including how it is made up (e.g., overtime, award payments, penalties, and non-wage monetary entitlements)
- Performance requirements, which may detail any commission or bonus schemes, as well as outline a schedule for performance reviews.
- Notice period, i.e., the amount of time required by both the employee and employer to end the contract.
- Termination process, including compensation entitlements should the employee be terminated.
- Confidentiality agreement
- Use of technology agreement
- Agreement to privacy policy

#### **Ensure your new employee has a Tax File Number (TFN)**

It is a requirement for all employees in Australia to have a Tax File Number (TFN), which is a secure and unique nine-digit number used by the Australia Taxation Office (ATO) to identify individuals.

Once an employee has applied for a TFN with the ATO, the number assigned to them will stay with them forever (regardless of how many jobs they have, whether they change their name, or if they leave the country and return later).





## FACT SHEET

### Employing Staff Guide: Onboarding Phase Tasks

#### **Ensure your new employee has a Tax File Number (TFN) cont.**

Employees are required to provide their TFN to their employer before commencing work, on the official TFN form from the ATO. When you issue the employment contract to your new employee, this is also a good time to provide the official TFN form too.

If you are employing someone who hasn't worked previously and therefore doesn't have a TFN yet, you can direct them to the [ATO's online TFN form](#) where they can apply. However, to finalise the process, they will still need to present in person at a post office or an ATO office to confirm their identification.

#### **Invest time into a thorough induction process.**

The success of any new hire hangs in large part on your induction process. If you invest the time into a thorough induction, it's more likely you'll get more out of your employee.

It's a good idea to create a schedule for your new employee for the first week. Starting a new job is a daunting process even for the most experienced of employees, so this can ensure they don't feel lost in that first week and it is a great way of ensuring you cover off all the things you had hoped for them. You might also like to share the induction responsibilities between your team members, which not only buys you back some time to get your own work done, but also serves as a good way of allowing your new hire to meet the team they will be working with.

Things to cover in your induction process typically include:

- A tour of your office space – this is a good time to issue any building passes required.
- An introduction to your team and how you like to work together.
- Work health and safety information
- Provide any forms that weren't already provided with the employment contract. This may include TFN and superannuation forms, as well as Fair Work information.
- An introduction to your business, including an organisational chart so they can see how they fit into your business and who their key contacts will be, including suppliers. You might also like to set up some meetings for your new employee with their key contacts.
- An explanation of your systems and how they all work together (integrations)
- A recap of the role and performance expectations
- Your vision for the business, and how they can help you get there.
- Any training that may be required (e.g., systems you use)



## FACT SHEET

### Employing Staff Guide: Post-Employment Phase Tasks

#### Maintain accurate tax records

Tax records must also be kept for five years, which is a legal requirement in Australia. As an employer it is your responsibility to ensure these records are kept safe and secure. If you use accounting software within your business, it should do this for you.

#### Consider which retention strategies to put in place.

A lot of hard work goes into attracting and securing employees, so it makes sense to put some effort into retaining them. There are several retention strategies you can consider, and it starts right back at the beginning with the onboarding and induction process.

- Onboarding and induction: First impressions last! It's crucial to set your employees up for success by investing in a well thought out induction experience. They should not only hear about the specific job they will be doing, but also about the company culture, how they fit into the business, and how they can thrive within it. If you're inducting remote employees, consider setting up a "work buddy" system, so they don't feel too isolated while they are still learning the ropes.
- Provide training and development opportunities for employees: Helping your employees to identify areas for professional growth and supporting them to achieve it is one of the hallmarks of a great manager. With technology changing so rapidly, upskilling staff is not only rewarding for your employees, but essential for your business' success. Succession planning should also be on your radar – think about who the future leaders within your business will be and invest in developing these people to get them there.
- Invest in leadership and management development: Investing in your team's development is one thing, but what about your own? The best leaders are acutely aware of their own strengths and weaknesses and seek out opportunities for self-improvement. Great leaders retain great employees!
- Measure staff satisfaction: For small teams, this can be achieved quite simply by ensuring you conduct regular performance reviews with 360-degree feedback. For larger organisations, an employee satisfaction survey may also be reasonable. Finally, when an employee decides to leave your business, be sure to conduct an exit interview, which can provide some valuable insights.
- Flexible working arrangements: We all have busy schedules, but some more so than others. Offering flexible working conditions not only opens up your hiring pool significantly, but it can also be used to retain exceptional staff who need a bit of support to manage their responsibilities (work/family).
- Employee benefits programs: Who doesn't love a perk? When it comes to offering employee benefits, the options are expansive. This allows you to build a program unique to your business, that suits your budget and your employees. You may like to seek some feedback from employees as you build this out to ensure it hits the mark.



## FACT SHEET

### Employing Staff Guide: Post-Employment Phase Tasks

#### Consider which retention strategies to put in place cont.

- Recognition and rewards systems: Employees love to feel valued! The good news is that you don't need to have a big team or budget to implement a recognition and rewards program. While some larger organisations opt to incentivise great work, ideas or innovation with bonuses, days off or early marks, recognising your team's accomplishments can be as easy as a thank you. You might simply decide to celebrate important work milestones with a team morning tea, where you can publicly acknowledge the efforts of your team members.
- Mentorship programs: Pairing up employees with a mentor can be rewarding for both parties involved. Mentees can gain new skills and knowledge from more experienced employees, while mentors get the opportunity to gain experience in training/mentoring others. A mentor-mentee relationship can also provide mentors with a fresh view on certain topics, which can lead to new ideas or new ways of doing things.
- Promote work-life balance: If you want the best out of your employees during their set work hours, it is essential that they clock off and unwind outside of this. One way to promote this is by not providing email access outside of work. It can be a hard pill to swallow for some work-a-holics, but it's for their own good!



# CHECKLIST

## For Employing Staff

1

### Pre-Employment Tasks:

- Ensure you have the necessary Workcover insurance.
- Understand and adhere to Awards.
- Understand and adhere to Fair Work Australia entitlements.
- Understand your tax and superannuation obligations.
- Ensure you have the necessary equipment and systems in place for your employee (includes uniforms if required)
- Ensure you have the necessary systems in place to effectively manage your business.
- Ensure you have the necessary policies and procedures in place.

2

### Employment Tasks:

- Identify skills shortages within your business.
- Evaluate the skills you already have access to
- Determine which roles need to be filled.
- Write a job description.
- Advertise your job opening.
- Shortlist and interview candidates

3

### Onboarding Tasks:

- Verbal job offer and acceptance.
- Issue employment contract (to be signed by employee and employer)
- Ensure your new employee has a Tax File Number (TFN)
- Invest time in a thorough induction process.

4

### Post-employment Tasks:

- Maintain accurate tax records.
- Consider which retention strategies to put in place.