



HR At a Glance - Hiring

A Practical Desk Reference for Small Business Leaders



RECRUITING

Most small businesses hire reactively. A little proactive recruiting saves time, money, and bad fits.

INTERVIEWING

Interviews feel subjective because they are - unless you build in structure.

ONBOARDING

Onboarding is not orientation. It's the foundation for long-term retention.

<i>Define who you're looking for before you start looking.</i>	<i>Consistency in interviews leads to better decisions.</i>	<i>What happens in the first 90 days shapes everything after.</i>
Key Actions ☐ Job description reflects actual role ☐ Ideal candidate profile defined ☐ Sourcing channels identified ☐ Screening criteria established ☐ Referral process in place	Key Actions ☐ Structured questions prepared in advance ☐ Same questions asked of all candidates ☐ Behavioral questions used ☐ Multiple interviewers when possible ☐ Scoring rubric or notes documented	Key Actions ☐ First day planned before they arrive ☐ Role expectations communicated in writing ☐ 30/60/90 day check-ins scheduled ☐ Manager introduces team and culture ☐ Training plan documented

Red Flags

- Hiring out of desperation, not strategy
- Job descriptions copied from the internet
- No defined criteria before interviews begin

Red Flags

- Different questions asked of different candidates
- Hiring decisions based on "gut feel" alone
- No documentation of interview responses

Red Flags

- New hire's first day is unplanned
- No formal introduction to role expectations
- Manager unavailable during first week

Lean in HR Tip

A bad hire costs 1.5x to 3x their annual salary. Slow down to hire right.

Lean in HR Tip

If you can't explain why you hired someone, you can't defend it.

Lean in HR Tip

Retention starts on Day One - not at the 90-day review.



KELLY'S RULES OF HIRING

Keep these in mind before, during, and after every hire.

1. Slow down enough to hire right.
2. Hire for values and capability.
3. Consistency reduces hiring mistakes.
4. Onboarding starts before Day One.
5. Every hire changes your culture.



HOW URGENT IS THIS?



ADDRESS TODAY

- Open role with no job description
- Interview process with no structure
- Offer extended without documentation
- New hire starting with no onboarding plan



ADDRESS THIS WEEK

- Job description not updated to reflect actual role
- No defined screening criteria
- Interview questions not standardized
- 30/60/90 day plan not created



ADDRESS THIS MONTH

- Ideal candidate profiles built for key roles
- Structured interview process documented
- Onboarding checklist created
- Referral program established



BEFORE YOU MAKE A HIRE

Before extending an offer, ask yourself:

- Have I defined what success looks like in this role?
- Did I use consistent, structured interview questions?
- Am I hiring for capability and values - not just availability?
- Do I have documentation from the interview process?
- Is my onboarding plan ready before Day One?
- Would my hiring decision hold up to scrutiny?

Most hiring mistakes don't start with bad candidates - they start with unclear role definitions, inconsistent interviews, and onboarding that never happened. A little structure today prevents a costly mis-hire tomorrow.

Need a Second Opinion?

Take the free HR Snapshot to find out where your hiring practices stand - and what to fix first.

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