

## Tips for Screening CVs and Applicants

1. It's helpful to have 'Yes', 'No' and 'Maybe' piles. Time isn't wasted revisiting applicants who are clearly not suitable. And, if you're struggling to find the right match after phone interviews with the 'Yes' applicants, the candidates you were unsure about can be reconsidered.
2. People are often skilled at writing complimentary things about themselves or getting professional help so, while a cover letter or personal statement may have value, they aren't always a reliable indicator of suitability. To save time, you could read them once a basic fit is established.
3. What does the CV tell you at first glance? What are the grammar and spelling like? Can you understand it? Is the information clearly and succinctly presented? Once again, it may not be their work so it shouldn't be the only test of these skills.
  - Work history is a key part of the puzzle you are attempting to solve, so start identifying the questions you need to ask, possible issues, and what maybe missing. It can be helpful to note questions as they come to mind in the margin of the CV, for ease of reference and recall.
  - If you have strict criteria regarding qualifications, read that section first.
  - Establish if the dates run concurrently or are there unexplained gaps? What were they doing? What is missing and why?
  - How long have they been in each role? Note the length of time at each company in the margin so you can see if there is a pattern, i.e.: two year stints can indicate steady progression or, on the flip side, boredom, failure to deliver or ongoing conflict.
  - If there are short-term roles, try to find the reason, i.e., did they relocate, was it a contract or temporary job, was it redundancy, or were they studying?
  - Is there a basic match or transferable skills suited to your role and culture?

- Look at interests, hobbies and activities that build experience outside the workforce. People may have gained valuable skills e.g., community or charity involvement, committee work, raising a family, etc.
  - Is there another role you are looking to fill they are a better fit for?
  - Are there interests or hobbies which give you a clue to their suitability? E.g., cycling or rock climbing may indicate physical fitness for a role that demands it and be worth asking about if you interview them.
4. Biases can lead to great applicants who would be good employees being declined. Just because a person went to a particular school, or likes a certain hobby or team does not necessarily mean they are a bad fit. If they fit the key criteria, suspend judgment and phone interview them to see if they might be suitable.
  5. If an applicant is applying from overseas or has moved to your country, does their CV make reference to having a valid work permit? Lack of a work permit might mean you need to prove they are the best candidate for the role, which in some cases is possible but not always.
  6. Always phone your preferred applicants quickly and get the ball rolling so you don't miss out.