**Before you post on Seek…**

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**Make sure you do these 5 things**

If you’ve decided it’s time to grow your team, it can be pretty tempting to visit SEEK on your browser, whip up a job description and just hit ‘post’.

While the idea that help is just a few clicks away can be tempting, there are a number of things you need to tackle if you’re serious about hiring successfully. You’ll need to ensure you’re hiring the right employee, at the right time for your business, for maximum profit.

Sound too hard to handle? It doesn’t have to be.

Close down those job posting sites (I promise you can revisit them after this post) and grab a notebook and pen. You’re about to learn how.

**Are you ready? Let’s jump in.**

**1.** **Forecast your revenue targets for the next twelve months**

How do you know whether now’s truly the right time to grow your team? Sure, you might be overwhelmed by the work coming in – it’s clear that you need an extra hand. But a knee-jerk recruit won’t bring you the best result.

It’s important to look at your business and its successes now, and in the future. Can you afford an employee right now? And what are the alternatives if you can’t?

To figure this out, first you need to consider how your business will grow, and how these new people you’re thinking about hiring can support that growth.

Start by forecasting your revenue targets for the next twelve months. If you already have a business plan, this will be as simple as looking at your existing targets. If you *don’t* have a business plan, download a template to get started [here.](http://www.business.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx)

**2.** **Figure out who you *really* need**

So you’ve been thinking about getting an ‘office assistant’ for a while now and the list of things this mystical (and ever-evolving) creature will help you do is always growing. In fact, just this week you added ‘bookkeeping’ to the list… Hmmm. Can you hear alarm bells? I certainly can.

Just to play devil’s advocate here, how do you know you don’t need a bookkeeper with organisational skills, not an office assistant with some financial skills?

There’s a simple way to figure this out – and it starts with some serious self-reflection. Now I know what you’re thinking… “Why do I need to reflect on myself - to hire other people?”. Stick with me here!

Grab a new piece of paper and write down everything that you (yes, you) currently do over a week and allocate a time to it - the length of time each task takes you.

Now, group similar tasks into categories such as social media, finance, technology and business development. These are the key areas where skills are needed in your business.

Take a look at these and priorities which ones you need the most help with. These are the new roles you *really* need to add to your business.

**3.** **Figure out potential future revenue**

It’s important to forecast the amount of revenue you can generate if you make these new hires.

Considering the reclaimed time you’ll now have back in your schedule – will you be able to drum up extra revenue perhaps? Or will the hires themselves be a source of income? – Think sales agents or telemarketers – who will work to gain you more clients?

If you can cover the salary of an employee with this expected revenue, then it is definitely time to hire.

**4.** **Decide on the nature of your new hire’s employment**

If you’ve decided it really is the right time to grow your team, congratulations. You’re on your way to a more productive (and lucrative) business. If you manage your hiring process with rigour, that is.

The next thing you’ll need to cover before popping the champagne and returning to SEEK is to figure out *how much* help you actually need. In other words, are you hiring a permanent full-time, permanent part-time, casual, fixed-term/fixed-task, contract, labour-hire or volunteer employee. Who knew there was so many to choose from?

What will formulate this decision is the amount of work you have that needs completing – and whether you’ll be able to sustain this long-term.

If you sign on a full-time employee, you’ll need to be confident that you have enough work to keep this person occupied five days a week. And more importantly, whether you’ll have enough revenue to cover their salary too. A bright idea many small businesses use to navigate this commitment carefully is to hire someone on a casual basis until workflow is steadier.

However, do keep in mind that beyond the amount of work you have to delegate, the type of employees that you hire will have legal ramifications that you must be prepared to manage. Again, this needs to be done before you start advertising. Which leads us to our final point!

**5.** **Pay to get employment contracts drawn up**

To have a contract or not to have a contract – that is the question! With small businesses that are growing quickly, it is very common for an employment contract to be hastily pulled together in order to bring on new employees. To get a contract quickly, many business owners borrow (or crib from) a friend’s employment contract. So what’s the harm in that? A lot actually.

What often happens is that various managers amend these contracts (often unbeknown to the owner) and they end up with numerous versions, ranging from ones that aren’t legally binding to, in some instances, having no worthwhile contract whatsoever. This is very dangerous.

On a basic level, the contract you create should be compliant with the most recent [Fair Work Act](https://www.fairwork.gov.au/about-us/legislation) changes, and outline what happens when your employee leaves (or, you have the need to fire them).

For more on hiring your next team member, take a look at [‘Hiring tips for soloists and micro business owners’](http://www.flyingsolo.com.au/working-smarter/growth/hiring-tips-for-soloists-and-micro-business-owners).

Preparing yourself for the transition from *entrepreneur* to *employer* is a step worth taking before you post a job listing.