

Seasonal staffing strategy: Get started early

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'Tis the season of extended retail hours, an influx of customers and a shortage of permanent staff as the festive season approaches. To be prepared, companies should have a seasonal staffing strategy ready to implement to ensure that they have the right staff in place to keep up with customer demand.



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To get ahead of the game and ensure success in increasing staffing numbers at this time of year, there are a few tips to help companies through the process:

Start the process early

To find the most suitable staff to meet your particular company's needs, it is key that you start the search early. This will give you sufficient time to go through the influx of CVs, interview all suitable candidates and conduct the necessary checks before employing temporary or seasonal staff.

Sifting through CVs to placing candidates is a time-consuming process and requires sufficient planning to ensure that your HR, recruitment and finance teams are not overburdened and you get the right candidates and employees on board in time for the festive season.

Write good job descriptions

Finding the right candidate for seasonal and temporary jobs starts with the job description. Be sure that your job description is accurate and up-to-date so that job seekers know exactly what is required for the position and you know exactly what to expect from each candidate and employee.

As the Covid-19 pandemic has changed the retail landscape, many job requirements have adapted and applicants should have an understanding of what the new roles are, requirements for the position, skills needed and if training will be

provided. This should all be included in the job description to help streamline the search.

Conduct the necessary employee checks

Do not cut corners by bypassing the necessary checks to save time regardless of how well the candidate may seem to fit the role or the company. These checks are conducted to protect the organisation in the long run so set aside enough time to run credit, criminal and licence checks before handing over the letter of appointment.

Some organisations may require medical checks to be done, regardless of whether your company requires these checks or not, you may want to consider that candidates be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 to prevent employees and customers from infection and reduce possible absences of both seasonal and permanent employees when customer demand may be at its highest.

Provide adequate training

Your customers have become accustomed to receiving a certain level of service delivery from your company and will view your seasonal staff as a company representative, expecting the same service delivery they have received from your permanent staff.

To ensure that your seasonal staff are prepared to meet customer needs you should invest in adequate training or onboarding processes to improve employee performance and prepare them to deliver according to your company standards.

Understand the laws around seasonal employment

The Labour Law stipulates a few requirements in terms of employees regardless of whether they are temporary or seasonal employees. These include the fair treatment of employees, minimum wages and working hours that they are allowed to work per month.

In employing seasonal staff, it is important to be up to date with any changes that may have been made in terms of labour laws and regulations since you last employed seasonal staff. To overcome this, companies could opt to partner with a compliant, reliable supplier that is familiar with the latest labour laws and regulations as the onus of compliance would fall on both parties.

Use a recruitment partner

Sourcing and placing seasonal staff is a time-consuming exercise and companies often have limited time to source, vet and place employees ahead of the festive season. To avoid cutting corners and get the most out of your seasonal employees, your organisation would stand to benefit from using a single recruitment partner that understands your business and the industry you work in.

With this understanding, your recruitment partner should be able to source and screen suitable candidates to determine interest and suitability, interview and technically screen them, conduct the necessary verification and reference checks, and manage the human resources and payroll functions on your behalf. In doing this it will alleviate some of the pressure that HR, recruitment and finance teams face at times of intensive hiring and placement of seasonal employees.

In following these tips, you will be setting your seasonal employees up for success and your organisation will reap the benefits of having the right employees in place at the right time to meet your customer needs.

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