

# YOUR 'RIGOROUS RECRUITMENT' 3-STAGE PROCESS

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Practice

What can we learn from Google, Apple, Dropbox and other uber-successful businesses about recruitment processes that result in high-quality and highly motivated new recruits?

Kim Scott led the AdSense team at Google, was a faculty member at Apple University and was a founder and CEO of a tech start-up. She's coached the CEOs of Dropbox and Twitter, and she even managed a paediatric clinic in war-torn Kosovo. Here are a few insights from Kim about a rigorous recruitment process to help you get the right people for your accounting firm...

**“All hiring is flawed and subjective, and these drawbacks cannot be fixed; they can only be managed.” – Kim Scott, Radical Candor**

What should your recruitment process look like? Here you'll find some ways to help you assess every candidate and remove the confirmation bias that often shows up in interviews, ensuring you hire the best people. The pointers below are inspired by Kim Scott's insights and supplemented by observations from working with many accounting firms over 2 decades.



## THE JOB DESCRIPTION

### Describe the role:

- tasks
- outcomes
- responsibilities

### Describe the skills required:

- people skills
- technical skills
- process skills
- organisational skills
- other skills

### Describe the team fit:

- core values
- behavioural expectations and standards
- team ethos

# YOUR 'RIGOROUS RECRUITMENT' 3-STAGE PROCESS CONTINUED...

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## THE INTERVIEW

### Pre-screen (before the interview)

- Skills assessment – candidates do a project or solve a problem related directly to the job
- Weeds out those who look good on paper but can't do the work and helps candidates who look weak on paper but could do the job
- Make this as 'blind' as possible so you can't see age, sex, race, etc. Example: Orchestras that have implemented blind auditions increased the percentage of women hired 5-fold

### Use and interview committee

- Unilateral hiring decisions can lead to bad decisions – you improve your odds of success by involving multiple people (3 or 4 people – mixed race, sex and age profile)
- Use the same group for every interview to enable fair and consistent comparisons – one of the group should be from another team (they'll see things the recruiting team will not)

### Include an informal discussion

- Take candidates to lunch
- Walk them to their car or train station
- Unguarded moments can reveal a lot about people – how they treat a waiter or talk about their home life or sports team can show the 'real' person

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## INTERVIEW DEBRIEF

- If everyone in the interview group is not 'dying' to recruit a person, DON'T make an offer – a bias towards 'NO' is better than a bias towards 'YES'
- Once 3 or 4 candidates have been interviewed, the hiring committee should meet to review each other's notes before discussing each candidate
- Schedule a 60-minute meeting, with the first 15 minutes set aside for reading each other's notes/feedback
- If you make a positive decision, then make an offer immediately or as quickly as you and your firm are able

## A FEW OTHER HELPFUL POINTERS

- Take a photo of every candidate and attach to your notes – it's so easy with a mobile phone – or ask them to take a selfie and then email or text it to you if you prefer (this implies permission)
- Make the offer in person (or by Zoom) rather than by email so that you can see their reaction, answer any questions and get some idea of their level of interest
- If/when the candidate agrees to join you, ask them about who they will hand their notice to and how they think that person will react. Also, discuss how the candidate will react if they are offered more money or a promotion as a result of handing in their notice.



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