A practical guide:

Hiring in 2026. Getting it right matters more than ever

If you have any questions or would like to book a FREE initial consultation,

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Hiring the right person has always mattered – but in 2026, the stakes are higher than ever. Alongside the familiar financial, brand, cultural and operational impact of a poor hire, organisations now face new responsibilities around employment legislation, ethical hiring standards and the safe use of AI in recruitment. The upside? Hiring the right person in transformational. It strengthens culture, accelerates performance and builds long-term organisational resilience.

Our top 5 must do's to deliver great hiring in 2026:

1. **Know what you need.** The fundamentals still matter. Get crystal clear on the role, responsibilities, essential skills, experience and behavioural expectations. Ensure policies, processes, job descriptions and person specifications align with the latest legislation.
2. **Strengthen your brand.** Candidates are evaluating you as much as you're evaluating them. Use your digital platforms to communicate culture, values, opportunities and benefits. Today's candidates expect fair, transparent and responsible hiring practices.
3. **Best possible candidate experience.** Inconsistent communication remains one of the most common frustrations candidates share on LinkedIn. Acknowledge applications, communicate timelines and treat every candidate respectfully.
4. **Recruit for both skills and attitude … with evidence.** Robust hiring decisions balance technical competence with behaviours and mindset. Use structured interviews, behavioural questions, validated assessments. Human oversight helps reduce bias and supports fair decision-making. Skills matter; attitude builds strong teams.
5. **Move quickly once you find the right person**. Top talent move quickly – and expects the same. Confirm details, maintain engagement, and ensure robust pre-boarding and onboarding. A smooth early recruitment journey reduces risk and boosts retention. Inform unsuccessful candidates promptly and respectfully.

Practical tools make a difference – and recruitment checklists are a great place to start.

1. Pre-Recruitment Checklist
- Review exit interview from previous job holder
- Write or update job description and person specification
- Add salary range & anticipated recruitment costs
- Check for internal candidates or succession plans
- Secure correct authorisation

2. Job Description Checklist
- State job title, department, reporting line & purpose
- Define how role supports business strategy
- Include direct reports, budget and decision-making authority
- List key responsibilities with expected end results
- Specify working pattern – on site/ hybrid/ remote

3. Person Specification Checklist
- List essential & desirable qualifications
- Detail relevant experience requirements
- Detail required knowledge & skills
- Define behavioural competencies aligned to values
- Ensure all criteria are measurable, job-relevant and non-discriminatory

4. Recruitment Campaign Checklist
- Schedule a recruitment planning meeting
- Agree internal & external advertising strategy
- Post internal advert (all checked for inclusive language)
- Post on all channels. Social media. LinkedIn. Job Boards
- Brief external agencies

5. CV Management & Shortlisting Checklist
- Acknowledge CVs promptly (use technology to help)
- Schedule shortlisting meeting
- Ensure two-person shortlisting panel

- Document decisions transparently
- Inform all unsuccessful candidates promptly

6. Interview Checklist
- Agree structure & competencies to assess. Prepare interview questions
- Brief interviewers & prepare interview packs
- Check candidate accessibility needs and attendance
- Verify eligibility to work
- Ensure scoring matrix is prepared. Complete interview assessment

7. Offer & Pre-Start Checklist
- Conduct required employment checks
- Send conditional offer
- Confirm salary, benefits and start date
- Schedule onboarding programme
- Maintain engagement during notice period

8. Onboarding & Probation Checklist
- Provide role specific onboarding programme – all equipment and systems ready
- Set performance expectations in week 1
- Conduct regular checkins in weeks 1, 2, onwards. Identify training needs
- Conduct 3-month probation review
- Confirm, extend or end probation period

Finally, if you use AI, be clear about purpose, expected outcomes, and how it fits into the recruitment process. Clarity protects both candidates and organisations.

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