

Running Your Business Tips - Hiring Employees



We all hope to reach that point when we realize that our small business is not so small anymore. But when the moment actually comes, it's often a lot more stressful than we predicted. The time has come - you need some help. You'll no longer be the boss of just yourself, but the boss of someone else too. So where do you start?

1. **Determine your needs.** How can another person help? Analyze the situation so that you know what duties they will fulfill, and how you will have to change your methods to make room for them. But take caution - don't rush to hire help just because your sales are on the rise. Another employee is expensive, so take your time and be sure you can afford them. Assume that your new employee will accumulate as many expenses as you already do - and that's in addition to their paycheck.
2. **Start your search.** Your best resource is networking. Ask for referrals from your friends and past co-workers. If you can get a referral, then part of the screening process is already done for you. Of course, there are many job searching sites such as Craigslist, Monster, and CareerBuilder that you can

post your ad on.

3. **Hire someone you can spend 40+ hours a week with.** You are going to spend a lot of time and share a lot of responsibility with your new hire, so you need to be able to work well alongside them. But hiring someone who is skilled is probably not the most important characteristic. Hiring the right attitude is crucial. Someone who is talented, knowledgeable but has an eagerness to learn and grow is key when searching for the right employee. Their working style should complement yours and their personality should mesh well with you and the group.
4. **Do a trial run.** Before you make an offer for a full-time position, you need to make sure you've found a good match. This experience will also allow you to learn more about what you need in an employee. There are a handful of ways you can create a trial period for your employee: you can hire your employee for part-time work, so they have a chance to gradually get a feel for your business. Or, you could hire an intern from a nearby college. If you like them, hire them when they graduate for part or full-time work. Another option is to hire a full-time employee for a probationary period. You need to check with your state employment office to see how long probationary periods are allowed to be, but they are typically 90 days. Lastly, a new, non-committal option is to hire a contractor or consultant to get specific work done for the business. oDesk is a popular option which allows you to verify their experience and even get reviews on contractors prior to hiring. The contractors can be hired hourly or project-based from anywhere from a few hours per week/month, to the entire length of a project, to on-going contract work.

Hopefully these tips will guide you through hiring for your growing business. If you have great hiring tips, please share them in the comments below.