

What are the different recruitment process steps?

When you're looking for a new job, it helps to understand each step of the recruitment process, so you know what to expect and how to stand out. By understanding what employers are looking for at each stage, you can tailor your approach to meet their expectations.

The recruitment procedure can be a lengthy process, involving several stages on the employer's side, including job posting, application screening and interviewing, before making a job offer. In this article, we outline the different stages of the recruitment process, providing practical tips for job seekers to each make it successfully through each stage.

What is a recruitment process?

The recruitment process refers to the steps involved in filling a vacant position. For job seekers, a recruitment or employment process is the journey towards securing that position.

For employers, the [recruitment process](#) encompasses attracting, evaluating and hiring new 'talent'. This process is designed to find candidates who have the necessary skills and experience, and ideally those who align with the [workplace culture](#) and values.

The recruitment process varies from company to company, and can change depending on the industry and the nature of the job. Some of these steps are:

- **Placing a job advertisement:** employers advertise the job opening through various channels like SEEK (or hire a recruiter to advertise for them).
- **Application screening:** a recruiter or HR department reviews resumés and applications to identify candidates who meet the job requirements.

- **Initial candidate contact:** shortlisted candidates are contacted for initial discussions or [screening calls](#).
- **Interviews:** these can entail multiple rounds involving different members of the organisation.
- **Assessment:** in some cases, employers may require candidates to complete tests or assignments.
- **Background and reference checks:** employers [verify the candidate's background](#) and work history, and may contact references.
- **Job offer:** the successful candidate receives a job offer, which may involve [negotiations on terms](#) and conditions.
- **Onboarding:** once the candidate accepts the job, the process of onboarding them into the organisation begins.

What are the six recruitment processes?

The recruitment process is typically divided into six stages. There's usually a lot going on 'behind the scenes' when an organisation decides to hire someone new, which is why the recruitment process can stretch out for several weeks or months. Here are the six main steps.

1. Planning for the recruitment

The first stage of the recruitment process is planning. This step happens internally and isn't seen by job seekers, but it shapes the subsequent stages of the process.

It begins by identifying the need for a new employee. This can be due to various reasons like expansion, organisational restructuring and replacing a departing employee. Understanding why the employer is hiring can give job seekers insights into the urgency and importance of the role.

Once the need is established, the next step is to define the role. The hiring manager will outline the position's:

- responsibilities,
- required skills,
- essential qualifications, and
- desired experience.

These details will likely be in the job ad, and will help you tailor your application to match the specific requirements of the job. At this stage, the employer already has a budget set for the new role, which includes a [salary](#) range, benefits and other

compensations, even if they're not listed in the job ad.

2. How organisations search for candidates

Employers use a variety of methods and platforms to find the right candidates:

- **Job boards like SEEK:** these platforms are often the first stop for many employers, where they can post job listings for active job seekers. Having an [up-to-date profile](#) on these platforms that showcases your skills, experience and achievements can help improve your visibility to potential employers.
- **Word of mouth:** some positions are filled through personal and [professional networks](#). Building a strong network within your industry can open doors to opportunities that might not be advertised publicly.
- **Engaging recruiters:** organisations often hire recruitment agencies to find suitable candidates. These recruiters specialise in matching candidates with suitable roles.
- **Partnerships with universities:** for entry-level positions, some organisations collaborate with universities to tap into a pool of fresh graduates.
- **Career fairs:** some organisations may participate in career fairs to meet potential candidates face to face. Attending these events can be a great way to make a personal impression on employers.

3. How employers screen for the right candidates

The screening phase is an important part of the recruitment process, where employers sift through applications to identify the most promising candidates. Understanding how this screening works can help you get to the interview stage.

- **Application review:** employers will [review resumés](#) to check if the basic job requirements are met. Ensuring that your resumé and cover letter include key words that match the job description is a good way to stand out.
- **Resumé analysis:** employers will look for [relevant experience](#), skills and qualifications. Tailoring your resumé to highlight how your background matches the specific requirements of the job can make a big difference.
- **Initial screening calls:** these calls are used to assess your [communication skills](#), clarify details in your resumé, and gauge your interest in the position. Be prepared to discuss your experience and show genuine enthusiasm for the role. You may be asked to provide your salary expectations at this stage. Provide a realistic range that is slightly above your expected salary.
- **Culture fit:** many employers will also consider how well a candidate will fit into their workplace culture. Researching the organisation and reflecting its values in your responses can help demonstrate your compatibility.

- **Salary expectations:** this may be discussed during the initial stages to ensure both parties have [similar salary expectations](#).

4. How organisations usually conduct interviews

Interviews offer both the employer and the job seeker the opportunity to assess compatibility. How these are carried out can vary and may range from traditional one-on-one interviews to [panel interviews](#) involving several members of the organisation.

Employers often use different assessments, such as skill-based tests, personality questionnaires and case studies to get to know candidates a little better. As a candidate, it helps to come prepared with an understanding of why these matter.

The number of interview rounds typically depends on the position and the organisation:

- Permanent [full-time positions](#) might have multiple rounds (often two to four), including initial screenings, technical interviews and final HR interviews.
- [Contract roles](#) might have fewer rounds, focusing on specific skills and experience.
- [Internship positions](#) might have one or two rounds and often focus more on potential and cultural fit than experience.

As a candidate, you should be ready to show how your skills and experiences align with the job's requirements. Before going to your interview, [prepare thoughtful questions](#) about the role, team and organisation to show your interest. It can also be a great way to screen the organisation. Approaching the [interview stage](#) with a clear understanding of what to expect and how to prepare can give you the best chance of succeeding.

5. Reference checks for candidates

Employers [reach out to references](#) provided by the job seeker to gather insights about their past work performance, reliability and qualifications. These references are typically from former managers or supervisors, but can also include recommendations from colleagues or other professional contacts.

A background check is also usually a standard part of the hiring process. This can include checking the job seeker's employment history, educational qualifications, and in some cases, criminal records and credit histories.

Here's how candidates can prepare:

- **Choose appropriate references:** select references who can vouch for your

skills and experiences relevant to the role you're applying for.

- **Inform your references:** [always ask for permission](#) before listing someone as a reference. Give them a heads-up about the role you're applying for and the qualities the employer might ask about.
- **Check your social media and online presence:** as part of the background check, employers might also review your social media profiles. Ensure that your online presence is professional or set your accounts to private.

6. Job offer and onboarding

The final stages of the recruitment process are the job offer, negotiations and onboarding. The job offer usually comes in the form of a formal letter or email, detailing the role, salary, benefits, and other terms of employment. This stage involves any negotiation on salary, benefits, work hours, [remote work options](#) and other terms of employment.

Tips for the negotiation process:

- **Research market standards:** understand the typical salary range and benefits for the position in your industry and region. Websites like SEEK offer valuable resources and [articles on salary guides](#), as well as negotiation tips.
- **Know how much your skills are worth:** be clear about your skills, experiences and achievements and how they add value to the organisation.
- **Be professional and realistic:** approach negotiations professionally and be prepared to compromise. It's important to manage your expectations about what the organisation can realistically offer.
- **Consider the entire package:** look beyond salary. Benefits, [work-life balance](#), WFH flexibility, career growth opportunities, and culture are also important aspects that impact your level of job satisfaction.

Once the offer is accepted, the organisation will send a contract to sign, then immediately start the [onboarding process](#). This involves introducing you to their policies, background, culture and your new role. A good onboarding process can set the tone for your success in the new position.

How long is the recruitment timeline?

One of the most challenging things about looking for a new job is how long the recruitment process takes. The timeline can vary significantly based on several factors, the Australian average for small businesses being 30 to 50 days. Here are some of the main factors:

- **Urgency of the role:** if an employer urgently needs to fill a vacancy, the recruitment process might be much faster.
- **Recruitment policies:** each organisation has its unique recruitment policies and procedures. Some may have a streamlined process, while others might be more thorough and lengthy.
- **Demand for the role:** competitive roles, or those requiring [rare skills](#), might take longer to fill.
- **Number of stages in the interview process:** more rounds of interviews usually means a longer process.

Average estimate on response times for different levels of positions:

- **Entry-level positions:** organisations generally respond quicker for entry-level positions as these attract a larger volume of candidates. The process can range from a few days to a couple of weeks after the application deadline.
- **Mid-level positions:** for mid-level roles, the process may take longer due to a more extensive interview and assessment phase. Candidates can expect a response within a few weeks to a month.
- **Senior-level positions:** [senior roles](#) often have the longest recruitment timeline. These positions usually involve a detailed interview process, including meetings with high-level executives. The process can extend from a month to several months.

Understanding the multiple stages of recruitment is important for any job seeker.

Remember that each step of the recruitment process is an opportunity to showcase your skills, your fit for the role, and the value you could bring to the organisation. Being well-prepared is the key to feeling confident throughout your job search and ready to handle the challenges it brings.

FAQs

How many job interviews are in the hiring process?

The number of job interviews in the hiring process typically ranges from one to four based on the:

- level of the position,
- the recruitment policy, and
- specific demands of the role.

Entry-level positions might require fewer interviews, while senior roles often involve more rounds to assess a person's fit.

What are the 5 stages of the selection process?

The five stages of the selection process are:

1. Application and resumé screening
2. Preliminary interviews
3. Assessments or tests
4. In-depth interviews
5. Reference and background checks

Each of these stages helps evaluate candidates, from initial screening of qualifications to deeper assessments of skills, experience and cultural fit.

What are the challenges of recruitment in the current job market?

Challenges of recruitment in the current job market include:

- finding candidates with the right skillset,
- adapting to remote or hybrid work models, and
- ensuring the right cultural fit.

How many rounds of interviews is normal for a recruitment process?

Normally, a recruitment process involves two to four rounds of interviews. The number of rounds typically depends on the job's level of seniority. More senior positions often require more interviews to thoroughly assess the person's fit for the role and the company.

Is 4 rounds of interviews too much?

While four rounds of interviews is a lot, it's not necessarily too much for senior, technical or highly specialised roles. Multiple interview rounds can be needed to assess a person's skills, cultural fit, and alignment with the role's specific requirements.

How do you tell when you are doing well in a recruitment process?

Signs that you are doing well in a recruitment process include:

- positive feedback during interviews,
- prompt and clear communication from the employer,
- invitations for follow-up interviews,
- discussions about salary and benefits, and
- questions about your availability to start.

What are the 7 stages of recruitment?

The seven stages of recruitment are:

1. Identifying the vacancy
2. Preparing the job description
3. Advertising the vacancy
4. Shortlisting candidates
5. Conducting interviews and assessments
6. Making the job offer
7. Onboarding