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people + change consulting

# The people management people

## Recruitment Toolkit

### Case Study: Countrywide Farmers plc

Countrywide has ambitious growth plans and a strong commitment to recruiting and developing great people. In the 48 stores within their Retail division, they have a long-standing tradition of recruiting people with a strong affinity for the rural community, who build great relationships with their customers and account holders. In order to reinforce this tradition, and to complement it with the commercial skills necessary for future growth, they asked plusHR to develop a Recruitment Tool-kit for managers.

#### The Process

The Countrywide approach to implementing change is a consultative one, so we facilitated a team of senior managers in a workshop to specify what the tool-kit needed to deliver. Then they invited high performing managers from their teams to work with our consultant to define what great performance looks like for each of the jobs in a Countrywide store. Throughout the design process Countrywide managers were involved in signing off the content and approach.

#### The Tool-kit

The recruitment tool-kit gives Store Managers and their Deputies a robust

set of tools and guidelines to ensure that they are recruiting the best people; to meet current needs, and for the future of the business. Each job in the store is defined in terms of responsibilities and how the job holder will be expected to demonstrate the Countrywide *Ways of Working*, or values.

A range of interview questions for each job, probing experience, skills, knowledge and personal values, makes it easy for the recruiting manager to focus on the right things at interview. Candidate scoring sheets allow managers to capture the information in a user friendly way. The scores provide them with the evidence that they have carried out a fair interview, and make it easy to compare candidates. The notes for managers include guidance about the do's and don'ts of effective interviewing, and the legal pitfalls of getting it wrong. For some jobs, candidates must complete a further assessment, to demonstrate their sector specific knowledge, and the templates and scoring sheets are all included in the kit.

All the Store Managers and their Deputies had a one day training session on effective interviewing skills and had the opportunity to practise using the new tools.



#### The Results

The feedback from senior retail managers on the tool-kit was excellent. It sets a high standard for recruitment, and is designed with the flexibility to meet future business needs. It can be used by managers with little recruitment experience, but offers enough depth for more experienced managers to also find it helpful. Managers anticipate that the recruitment process will be faster, ensuring that vacancies are filled promptly, and that there will be lower turnover in the future, because the quality of recruitment decisions will be better.

The involvement of the managers in designing the kit was invaluable because they now have ownership for the end result. The senior team felt the tool-kit will provide a strong return on investment. The quality of the training materials was of a very high standard, and the training was 'first-class'.

#### Comments:

*'The pack is great; it provides more substance and uniformity to interviews'*

*'The tool-kit is excellent, and fully met all the objectives.'*

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