

# WORKFORCE CHALLENGES: HOW TO BUILD THE RIGHT TEAM

## HIRING GREAT ATTITUDES TO CREATE A HIGH-PERFORMING CULTURE

**T**he Aged Care Royal Commission put some serious issues under scrutiny, including the adequacy and performance of management and staff. Even before the royal commission was announced, the age services industry faced a number of workforce challenges.

Viewing this positively, it is a motivator to reflect on your workplace culture. Organisations can benefit greatly from a process of self-auditing—identifying the systems and strategies that promote a positive workplace culture, while dealing with any areas of potential risk.

### Choosing wisely

Employing the right team is paramount to the success of your organisation. If you get it right, the result is a harmonious workplace, a high-performing team and satisfied clients.

If you get it wrong, the risks and potential consequences can be a nightmare. At best, you may have to deal with low productivity and a toxic workplace culture. At worst, you could face serious complaints and penalties, while jeopardising the safety of your clients and staff.



Employers have two important windows of opportunity to hire the right people: the recruitment phase and the probation period.

## The recruitment phase

Once you've narrowed down your candidates, how do you choose the right person for your team? What is the most important factor in recruitment? Is it their qualifications, their values or their attitude?

If you gain only one insight from this article, it should be this: the key to successful recruitment and retention of awesome team members is recruiting for the right ATTITUDE.

Conflict within the workplace can be caused by a bad attitude towards clients, the employer or other staff. When recruiting new staff and putting a team together, your ability to read or assess other people's attitude, personality, motivators and preferred communication styles will help you achieve the right balance and diversity for optimal teamwork and productivity.

There are behavioural science tools available, such as personality profiling, which can help screen and assess candidates.

## The probation period

The probation period of employment is vital to determine whether your new recruit is a good fit for your business, and for the new employee to decide if the job is right for them.

Managers must set clear expectations and key performance indicators from day one. These must align with both the position description and the organisational goals and values.

There should be open, honest communication between the manager and the new recruit at least monthly during the probation period to deliver feedback and communicate information. This also helps identify emerging issues or unusual behaviours before they escalate.

## What about staff working off-site?

There has been a growing trend in the disability and aged care system, with an increasing number of individuals wishing to receive care in their own homes. This has created a greater demand for support workers in home care, hospital in the home, allied health home visits and other similar care options in a community setting.

If members of your team work outside of your main facility most of the time, how do you track their progress? Some important questions you need to consider:

- How do your supervisors give and receive feedback with your staff?
- How do your supervisors give and receive feedback with your clients?

- How do you measure the client feedback? Are you accounting for mood and personality?
- What are the organisational processes and expectations for performance management, ongoing supervision, communications and handling complaints?

## What if it's not working out?

If you find that your new employee does not fit into the company culture and does not have the right attitude, it is advisable to attend to this during their probation period. You have the right to terminate the employment arrangement for any reason during the probationary period, as long as you are being fair and have applied your HR policies and relevant legislation (eg. discrimination, harassment).

However, termination during the probation period should not come as a surprise. It is very poor practice to say nothing for three months while problems or tensions escalate, and then terminate their employment. Best-practice is to establish regular check-ins from the get-go, for feedback and performance management. Make sure you take notes of each meeting. ■

Anna Pannuzzo is Director, WorkPlacePLUS.

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- Hear from our Aged Care Quality and Safety Commissioner
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### ➤ Make Contact phone 0419 533 434

Contact WorkPlacePLUS Director, Anna Pannuzzo, by phone or email. She will need to know your full name, LASA Membership number, which state you live in and whether you are an employer, employee or independent contractor.

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### ➤ Receive General Advice

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To proceed with engaging WorkPlacePLUS, you will need to sign off on the agreement and cost estimate.

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### ➤ Engage WorkPlacePLUS

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You can engage **WorkPlacePLUS** again in the future by returning to step 1 of this consultation process.

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