

OCCASIONAL PAPERS

Check List for Appointment of Nursing Staff

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Very few nurses having the responsibility for the appointment and employment of staff have any idea of the amount of work, time and money involved in finding replacements.

A recent study on labour turnover in the food industry showed that the overall annual turnover rates varied from 20% to 200%. If a realistic figure of 20% of the annual salary is taken as representing the cost of replacement, then depending upon the salary bill and turnover rate, an estimate of costs involved can be calculated. The Table below gives a guide to these costs in hospital groups of varying size.

Therefore, if turnover rate can be reduced, the money saved can be used to employ more staff to improve standards of care.

One of the many ways of reducing staff turnover is right at the beginning by choosing the right person for the right job. Perhaps not enough time is given to following through a comprehensive programme of selection. All staff need guidance on this preparation and a check list has been compiled to assist senior nursing staff to prepare themselves for the task of replacement of staff. The list reproduced here is in nine parts. Seeking a replacement should be treated very seriously, so time has to be given for consideration of this check list.

A check list should be used for every appointment and each item ticked when complete. When an appointment is made, the completed check list is enclosed in the nurse's personal file. If the nurse leaves, the check list may be used as part of the 'post-mortem' in an attempt to deduce any failure in the selection standards and procedures previously set.

GRADE OF POST..... AREA.....
SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE.....

CHECK LIST FOR APPOINTMENT OF NURSING STAFF STAGES

(1) Vacancy or New Post

1.1 Is the post approved?

If YES

If NO

Seek approval of chief or
principal nursing officer.

1.2 Do you need to fill the post at present?

If YES

If NO

No further action re-
quired. Stop here.

1.3 Is there a job description in existence?

If YES

If NO

Prepare job description,
then continue to 2.1.

1.4 Does the job description need amending?

If YES

If NO

Continue to 2.1.

1.5 Re-write job description.

(2) Qualifications and Age of Candidate

2.1 What human qualifications are essential/desirable to do the job?

Size of Group	Nurses' Salaries per annum	Annual Turnover Rate					
		5% £	10% £	15% £	20% £	25% £	30% £
Small	£500,000	5,000	10,000	15,000	20,000	25,000	30,000
Medium	£1,000,000	10,000	20,000	30,000	40,000	50,000	60,000
Large	£2,000,000	20,000	40,000	60,000	80,000	100,000	120,000

Place in order of importance the following, giving points against each heading from:

- 1—least in order of importance, to
10—highest in order of importance.

(This may be of assistance to the interviewing team)

Education	Physical effort
Experience	Physical skills
Training	Responsibilities
Judgement	Communication skills
Initiative	Emotional characteristics

- 2.2 Have you any person in your area who fulfils the job requirements?

If YES

If NO

Seek advice from principal nursing officer. Is any person in the division suitable?

- 2.3 Encourage person to apply for the post.

If NO

Is any person in the group suitable?

If NO

Check or create a career development programme for all staff.

- 2.4 Age of candidate.

Look at the age range of other staff holding the same type of post in the area/division. Is the age range wide?

If YES

If NO

Age is unimportant.

Ideally, choose someone outside a narrow range.

(3) Advertising

- 3.1 Does the post need advertising? (See National Nursing Staff Committee Report, p. 20).

If YES

If NO

Continued to 4.1.

- 3.2 If national or local advertising cover is required, contact the nurse careers adviser or other co-ordinator: if internal, contact the editor of the local news bulletin.

- 3.3 Receive a copy of the advertisement before publication. Does it contain grade of post, salary, completion date and essential job items?

If YES

If NO

Contact the co-ordinator or nurse careers adviser or editor of the local news bulletin, then continue to 4.1.

(4) Receipt of Inquiry

- 4.1 Upon receipt of inquiry, send letter, job description and application form. Is the closing date for receipt of applications on the form or letter?

If YES

If NO

Confirm and insert date. Continue to 5.1.

(5) Receipt of Application Form

- 5.1 Does the applicant fulfil the minimum requirements for the post applied for?

If YES

If NO

Reject. Stop here.

- 5.2 Check with personnel or staff department whether the applicant has previously been employed within the group.

If YES

If NO

Continue to 5.5

- 5.3 Is work record satisfactory?

If YES

If NO

Reject. Stop here.

- 5.4 Is sickness record satisfactory?

If YES

If NO

Reject. Stop here.

- 5.5 Are there any other details contained in the application form which make the application unsuitable?

If YES

If NO

Reject. Stop here.

Continue to 5.6.

- 5.6 Is there more than one applicant for the post available?

If YES

If NO

Continue to Section 6, 'shortlisting'.

Continue to 5.7.

- 5.7 Arrange interview date with the rest of the interviewing committee if applicable, then write to applicant giving two weeks' notice and include travel instructions, offer of accommodation if long distance, and timetable of interview day.

Receive confirmation. Is applicant attending for interview?

If YES

If NO

If this is the only applicant, inform the interviewing committee.

- 5.8 Does he/she require accommodation?

If YES

If NO

Continue to Section 7, 'References'.

- 5.9 Arrange with accommodation officer through principal nursing officer.

(6) Shortlisting

- 6.1 Where there are more suitable applicants than posts available, the appropriate shortlisting officer(s) should examine in detail the application forms.

Will a job specification help in defining the better candidates?

If YES

If NO

Continue to 6.3.

- 6.2 Prepare specification.

- 6.3 After shortlisting, are there still more applicants than posts available?

If YES

If NO

Return to 5.7-5.9 then continue to Section 7.

- 6.4 Arrange for competitive interviews. Return to 5.7-5.9, then continue to Section 7.

(7) References

- 7.1 Apart from nursing auxiliary posts, are the references quoted on the application form from a professional source?

If YES

If NO

Request applicant to submit further names of professional nature. Continue to 7.2.

7.2 Send for two references marked 'in confidence' enclosing a stamped, addressed envelope again marked 'in confidence'.

7.3 Receive references. Are they satisfactory?

If YES

If NO

- (i) Send for a third reference.
- (ii) Senior officer to request from referee further information by telephone or other means as appropriate.

7.4 File with application form ready for interview. Continue to 8.1.

(8) Interviews

8.1 Before candidates arrive:

- (a) prepare room: suitable number of chairs, temperature of room satisfactory, seating arrangements, disconnect telephones, toilet accommodation
- (b) have a suitable person available to receive candidates and show other facilities which are available.

8.2 When candidates are present, is there more than one candidate for the vacancy?

If YES

If NO

Continue to 8.4.

8.3 Decide method of arranging order of interviews. Make candidates aware of this.

8.4 Has the committee a job specification or other criteria by which to match candidates? (See also Section 2.)

If YES

If NO

The committee should decide who should take various questions at interview.

The committee should plan what questions to ask and who should ask them.

8.5 Has a satisfactory person emerged from the interview who could be offered the post?

If YES

If NO

Call this person back and offer her/him the job.

Inform the candidates that no appointment is to be made. Return to Section 3.

8.6 If the successful candidate accepts, inform the other candidates and offer careers advice. Continue to Section 9.

8.7 If the candidate rejects the post, is there another suitable candidate?

If YES

If NO

Follow procedure 8.5-8.6

Inform candidates that no appointment is to be made. Return to Section 3.

8.8 Depending on the result, follow either procedure 8.6 or 8.7, then continue to Section 9.

8.9 Give careers advice to unsuccessful candidates.

8.10 Make travel and other expense forms available.

(9) Appointment

9.1 An offer of employment by means of a personal letter should be made within 24 hours. Include:

- (a) Confirm interview decision.
- (b) Offer the position.
- (c) Request or confirm starting date.
- (d) State Whitley Council grade.
- (e) State whether resident or non-resident.
- (f) Request confirmation in writing.
- (g) Advise on uniform.
- (h) Mention period of notice.
- (i) Confirm hours of work.

9.2 Inform personnel or staff department of appointment by using the appropriate form.

9.3 Is the person resident?

If YES

If NO

Continue to 9.5.

9.4 Inform accommodation officer through principal nursing officer.

9.5 Receive confirmation of appointment.

9.6 Inform head of nursing department of starting date.

9.7 Arrange for induction programme. If a trained nurse, contact the principal nursing officer; if a nursing auxiliary, contact the senior nursing officer in charge of in-service training.

Check list completed by Date

Grade: