

IMPORTANCE OF SELECTION AND RECRUITMENT IN BUSINESS – AN INTEGRAL HR FUNCTION OR SHOULD BE OUTSOURCED A SPECIALIST?

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ABSTRACT

This thesis project aims to examine the importance of selection and recruitment analysing through the lens of the aspect whether this should be the function of an internal Human Resource Department or should be outsourced to a specialist.

The researcher has used a mixed approach where data is collected through secondary resources like recruitment policies of companies, data collected from internet of various HR specialised companies and their policies and functioning of selection and recruitment process.

The researcher analysed the data collected from various sources about strategies of both internal HR and special HR agencies and observed and compared the most common recruitment strategies used by the organisation, the changes on these strategies they plan to make in the near future and also observed into other methods, which the organisation could consider using.

The researcher found some minor issues with the current traditional methods recruitment methods used by the organisation; however if the future plans for changes in recruitment processes continue to take place within the organisation, there are chances that they will continue to remain competitive within the market and rates of staff turnover will remain low.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The idea of this thesis project is to assess whether or not recruitment for this organisation to be considered as an internal function, which should be carried out by a HR team or whether it should be outsourced to a recruitment specialist completely. This study in its completion aims to benefit not only the individuals who

are undertaking the study as part of her masters programme but also to help the organisation and their Human Resource recruitment team. This study gives the researcher a great opportunity to explore the different recruitment processes used by the organisation at present as well as in the past in addition to their plans for the future as regards their recruitment processes. It will also include some recommendations for the organisation in order to help them improve their recruitment strategies and as a means of helping them retain their low rate of staff turnover.

Recruitment and selection is a very important element of a business which is evident throughout this study. A successful selection and recruitment in a business allows them to attract the best talent, allows for low staff turnover and high levels of staff retention which in turn leads to high staff morale and high levels of motivation among employees. It can also lead to strong competitive advantage through people which other competitors would find extremely difficult to copy. (Grant, 1991) Neglecting recruitment and selection or having the wrong processes in place can have a negative impact on a business, such as high rates of staff turnover, very minor staff retention, low productivity and low staff morale.

1.2 Brief Overview

The literature review section of this research project aims to identify the importance of selection recruitment on a business irrespective of size of organisation whether big or small the organisation. It attempts to explain why an organisation needs to be specific in advertising positions vacant and be particular about the kind of person they hire for a job. It also looks into how selection and recruitment can lead to competitive advantage for a business and has a positive impact on businesses staff retention.

The other side of this project looks into the type of recruitment strategy which the organisation are using and the effect it is having on the business overall. It attempts to look at different methods, the business can use and whether or not these methods would have a different impact on the rates of staff turnover and on the overall work force within the business.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Human Resource Management functions with the management of an organisations workforce which included activities such as recruitment and selection, HR planning and the deployment and determination of employment, all of which were very important when it comes to employee resourcing. (Gunnigle et al, 2021) Recruitment and Selection processes are continually changing and developing from the traditional methods of internal recruitment to the most recent methods of outsourcing recruitment to a specialist. As time goes on outsourcing recruitment is becoming more and more common and the number of businesses continuing to recruit internally is falling rapidly. Since the 1980s and 1990s, there have been fundamental changes in the structures and management processes which heavily involve recruitment and selection (Farnham, 2020). According to a journal article on “Recruitment outsourcing on the rise” in 2020, 15.4 % of companies outsourced for recruitment. Furthermore, in 2017 a survey from The Institute for Corporate Productivity illustrated that this figure jumped from 15.4% to 34.4% (Werling, 2019)

“Recruitment is the process of finding candidates, reviewing applicant credentials, screening potential employees and selecting employees for an organisation. Effective recruitment results in an organisation hiring employees who are skilled, experienced and good fits with your corporate culture”. (Heathfield, 2019) There are many different forms of recruitment and selection with the most popular, most common form constantly changing. The internet first emerged as a recruitment tool in the middle of the 1990’s. However it did not become as dominant as it was expected, although it was used by many, organisations were using job fairs and recruitment agencies to recruit, just like they still are today. (Parry and Tyson, 2018) From this revolution came online recruitment; through specific websites designed to advertise jobs and through companies advertising specific jobs on their own company websites. It took 10 years for organisations and recruiters to get used to this new method of recruitment and selection as many were reluctant to change and tried to stick to the traditional methods they were used to. However, in recent years online recruitment, through Social Media and external recruitment is on the rise and becoming more and more common. “Online recruitment includes the potential for shorter recruitment cycle times, lower recruitment costs and being able to reach a wider range of job applicants”. (Savvas, 2019) However, online recruitment can also have its own disadvantages. Such as an increase in the number of candidates who are not suitable as it is so easy to apply for a job whether you are suited to it or not, and although it is a cost effective way of recruitment it is a more time consuming method as there is a lot of time involved in the screening of all applicants, some employers will also claim that too many time wasters apply to adverts. (Savvas, 2019) However, the idea of social media as a form of recruitment has had an extreme effect on the take over of online recruitment. Websites such as facebook, Twitter and most commonly LinkedIn have changed the ways of online recruitment largely. LinkedIn is one of the largest professional networks in the world with over 300 million members in over 200 countries worldwide. The idea of this website is to connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful by accessing people, jobs, news, updates, and insights that help you be great at what you do through the website and its members. It was first launched in May 2019 and has been continually growing ever since. (LinkedIn, 2019) Although at present, employers still participate in the traditional forms of recruitment, they must also take part in social media as a form of recruitment and selection. Social media is an additional tool in the recruitment process that will allow for a cost-effective way of connecting to a large population. Social Media as a form of recruitment will not only allow an organisation to remain competitive in the market but will also allow them to find the best fit employees for the job in the quickest, most cost effective way. (Andrews, 2022)

2.2 Competitive Advantage

“A firm is said to have a Competitive Advantage when it is implementing a value creating strategy not simultaneously being implemented by any current or potential competitors and when these other firms are unable to duplicate the benefits of this strategy” (Barney, 1991) People or Human are one of the most important aspects of a business; they are what it takes to bring it all together. Without them working in an organisation it would not work. The stronger an organisation’s competitive advantage is over their competitors the more attractive the workplace will be and hence, better the workers will be. Therefore, the more successful an organisation can be regarding their recruitment and selection, the stronger their competitive advantage will be. A good example of these organisations would be Disney, Microsoft, and Wal-Mart. It is clear that they have all been successful in implementing theories about how to compete in market which in turn has led to important competitive advantages for these firms. Disney made a theory that in order

to hold a strong competitive advantage over others they would exploit their strengths in characters and animation by providing a diversified entertainment business. In order for a company to have competitive advantage over another they must have something new, something individual and untested that is not common in their specific industry at the time for them to be different and to be able to compete successfully. (Barney, 2001) “According to Michael Porters now famous framework, the five fundamental competitive forces that determine the ability of firms in an industry to earn above – normal returns are “the entry of new competitors, the threat of substitutes, the bargaining power of buyers, the bargaining power of suppliers, and the rivalry among existing competitors”. (Pfeffer, 2019) It is so important to have a unique, hard to copy, successful product to achieve competitive advantage. A firm’s products or resources can only be considered a source of competitive advantage if they are considered valuable. Resources are considered valuable when they enable a firm to conceive or to implement strategies that will improve the organisations efficiency or effectiveness. (Barney, 2021, p. 106) This can only be done if you have the suitable human resource who are able to do it. The more intelligent your workforces are, there is more competitive advantage you will be able to achieve. No two people are the same and the greater the mix of different opinions and ideas, experiences and interests, it will be more difficult for your competitors to compete with you, which again all brings us down to having the most skilled, intelligent, experienced staff who are able to do this. It is here again, even when it comes to competitive advantage that selection and recruitment are so crucial. A firm needs to research the position in which they are trying to fill, find out exactly what they are looking for in a person and then work together in order to find the most talented, most successful individual to fill the position. No matter how well qualified a person is, or how much qualified they are, it is in the opinion of the researcher that the more skilled, the more competitive, the more driven a person is, the better they will be at their job and in return the more competitive advantage a business will receive from them. An organisation’s competitive advantage also goes hand in hand with retention of staff in a business. Staff retention is a very important factor for any business. Low staff turnover enables consistency in the levels of service provided, allows for high staff morale and employee motivation. One of the main ways to achieve this can be down to competitive advantage. If a business has a strong company culture they will have an automatically higher rate of attraction and retention. (Thompson, 2019) Competitive advantage in an organisation can help any business achieve this strong company culture.

2.3 Selection & Recruitment

Selection & Recruitment is the process of attracting suitable & Sufficient potential employees & identifying the most suitable candidate against the known criteria for the job. (Bagul, 2019. P. 1212) To know the ways as to how this process should be done are constantly changing and as time goes on, employers are coming to terms with the fact that finding a candidate to fill a position as soon as possible is not always the answer. An unsuitable employee joining a workforce can have a significant negative impact on the business right through. A more realistic approach to selection & recruitment, all depending on the kind of industry “can have a positive impact on turnover and job satisfaction”. (Raub and Streit, 2006) .The researcher will discuss the transition from the more traditional methods such as press advertising, internal recruitment to the most recent forms of recruitment known as e-recruitment, online, through Social Media and through agencies.

2.4 Traditional methods of recruitment

Internal recruitment would have been one of the most popular, oldest methods used in order to recruit staff for a position. It is considered an unsatisfactory way of filling posts as it only focuses on moving people up in the organisation rather than introducing new people and new ideas to the team. (Muir, 1988) Thankfully, it is becoming less common as time moves on, but as far back as 1996, figures show that among the 84 chief executives of the fortune 100 firms who were promoted to the position since 1984, only 11 of them were recruited from outside of the organisation. Internal promotion was once considered a very successful form of recruitment because it kept workers motivated if they knew there was a chance of promotion, it gave them a good incentive to work. However, on the other hand, it is also known for creating office politics, if one person is chosen for the job over a colleague. (Chan, 1996) Regardless of these problems associated with internal promotions it still has its benefits such as cost effectiveness and efficiency in filling the position quicker than it would take using most other forms of external recruitment.

2.5 Press advertisement

Advertising for new staff through the press has been very successful for many companies. This could be through local newspapers, national newspapers and trade magazines. (Maitland, 1994) For a basic, unskilled job it is considered acceptable to advertise in local newspapers as there is no major skills or requirements. It has many benefits in certain situations such as prompt publications as well as some problems such as the cost of press advertising. It is much more expensive than advertising in a job or careers centre which would be

free. (Maitland, 1994) Press advertising is not very popular where a bigger company is concerned. Those who require staff for a more skilled, highly qualified position would advertise these vacancies in the more specific, specialised journals or magazines so they can attract the correct type of people they are looking for, for that exact type of work. Press advertising is still used as a form of recruitment to a certain extent today.

2.6 E – Recruitment

E-Recruitment is online recruitment. It is the term used to describe recruitment processes used by progressive organisations that use electronic resources such as the internet to achieve and improve the normal outcomes of recruitment inside their companies. It allows a HR department to run a more efficient and productive hiring process. (Turbo Recruit, 2013) It provides a recruitment team with the opportunity to have the best of both worlds. When using the internet as a recruitment tool they are provided with the information that they may also be able to get in other forms of advertising but also with photos and images to supplement this information in order to be able to achieve the impact of live advertising. (Roberts, 2005) However, like everything else it also has its disadvantages. Although it allows for a faster, more efficient, cost effective process, giving a company access to a wider pool of candidates, the large number of applicants can make the process difficult in some situations. Because jobs are being advertised to such a huge volume of people, there will be more people in general applying for the jobs but also an increase in the number of unsuitable candidates for the job.

2.7 Social Media

Social Media can provide employers with better opportunities as well as a wider range of suitable candidates when it comes to selection & Recruitment. The most common types of social media as a form of recruitment are Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. According to an article by Christne Andrews on social media recruitment; it is cost – effective, speedy and efficient, it is a convenient form of communication, it is easy to target a specific audience, it is within instant global reach and it has excellent interactive capabilities. However, on the other hand it too comes with some problems such as; lack of confidentiality and unclear FDA guidance, information overload, and although very few in this day and age there is still a certain proportion of people without access to a computer. However, all in all it is a very effective way of accessing a certain section of the population and the number of organisations using it as a form of recruitment and selection is continually on the rise. Social Media allows for a cost-effective way of connecting to a large population.

2.8 Staff Retention & staff turnover

According to an article he wrote on staff turnover for the American Banker “We need to accept that turnover is integral to our business, and natural given the types of people who seek teller and other entry-level positions”. (Bird, 2021) In any given year, every organisation will lose some staff, sometimes for some reasons that could have been avoided, other times not. For example; retirement, better opportunities, unfair dismissal or maybe from the lack of satisfaction they are receiving from their job. Although staff leaving a company cannot always be avoided, it is important that a company knows the reason for this decision and in a case where it could have been prevented that they make the necessary changes so that this can be avoided in the future. Low staff turnover has many benefits for a business, one regarding recruitment. A business can avoid huge levels of expenditure on recruitment if they can maintain their staff. Thankfully though not all turnover is bad for a business, it can sometimes have a positive effect on organisations. For example; when low performers leave. However, when staff turnover is high in a business retention is low, it not only results in an inexperienced, unproductive workforce but it also costs a company huge funds in the form of administration costs, paper work, time wasted on training in new staff, orientation and hiring/termination processing. (Bredenberg and Larsen, 2021) A company can investigate this problem through conducting exit interviews on employees before they leave. They will help a company decide what is working well and what they might need to change.

2.9 Job analysis & Design

When a HR manager identifies the need for a position to be filled within the workforce, it is important to draw up a job analysis for the job. A job analysis can be described as the process where one gathers and appraises all of the information related to the given job. (Maitland, 2019) A job analysis will provide a description of the job; the necessary skills required to carry out the job correctly and also prepare candidates

for the job so that they are aware of exactly what type of job they are applying for and what will be expected of them. Instead of someone walking into a job and for their role to be completely different to what they were expecting from what they read in the job description. Kenneth York describes data analysis in his book as job analysis being a systematic process for collecting data about a job so that a job description (job requirements) and job specification (worker requirements) can be written for that job. (York, 2008) This however is not always as straight forward as drafting up a job analysis and finding the perfect candidate for the job. According to Lee Frochheiser in his book on business recruitment and fundamentals, over 30% of CEOs claim that up to half of their employees are a poor fit for the job they are doing. (Frochheiser, 2008) Unsuitable staff can have a huge impact on a business. It will cause poor staff morale, low productivity and could result in some opportunities being lost for the business. Drawing up a job analysis and an accurate description of the job, along with using the most suitable hiring techniques for the business can be a huge help to avoid these problems. A job analysis is usually conducted by the HR manager or with the help of the general manager within a business, all depending on the importance of the job. The relevant information is usually collected by speaking to or observing someone who is doing the job, getting feedback from other area managers and supervisors regarding what is required to be capable of doing the job properly and also by conducting exit interviews with the person whose position you are trying to fill. Drawing up a job analysis is becoming more and more important, especially with the increase in the use of technology in all jobs. There are more precise skills needed. Following a job analysis is the job description, which is basically a statement detailing the main purpose of the job and the tasks and responsibilities that come with the job title. All of this information is taken from what has been gathered during the job analysis process. (Maitland, 1997) Before the recruitment and selection process, it is important that the HR manager has conducted a job analysis and drafted an accurate job description before they hire someone. There are many reasons for this. It ensures the recruiter is completely aware of what they are looking for in a candidate. It also helps avoid hiring unsuitable staff along with all the problems down the line that goes with the mistake of hiring unsuitable staff.

2.10 Conclusion

Selection & Recruitment is a very important process which all businesses have to engage in, this is the main point being made right throughout the literature review. A well organised recruitment and selection team within a business has many positives right throughout the business, as mentioned above. Starting from a positive, productive, hard working team of workers to low levels of staff turnover, high levels of staff retention, strong competitive advantage and many more advantages throughout the business. Although it may take a lot of money to discover the most suitable recruitment strategy for the business and invest in these to start off, it is an investment and will save the business huge amounts of capital in the long run. When they hire the right staff and they are content and doing their job well there will be less people leaving their jobs and in turn less money will have to be spent on recruitment. It can also give the business a strong competitive advantage through people. If a business invest time and money into their recruitment team and processes they will be rewarded with the best possible staff for the position. The researcher also talks about how to reduce staff turnover in different ways, one being by conducting exit interviews and also by providing potential candidates for the job with an accurate job description before offering them the job so that they are aware of exactly what the job entails and exactly what is expected of them prior to accepting the job offer.

Although not all staff turnover is negative or can be avoided, exit interviews point out some of the things that could be changed to try to avoid the loss of certain staff members. This in turn will prevent the business losing valuable employees to another industry or more importantly to their competitors who they could then share their ideas with which would result in a loss in competitive advantage for the business. All in all recruitment and selection and the processes a business uses to deal with it are extremely important in an organisation. It may be a costly process to invest in at the beginning but in the long run it will have many positive knock on effects for the business from the top right through to the bottom line.

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter I will attempt to outline the methodology and research design used in this thesis. When undertaking a research project it is important to use the most relevant and appropriate methodology. In this chapter I will give a detailed description of the methods of data collection this study proposes to use and why.

3.1 Introduction

The aim of this project is to examine the recruitment and selection processes used by a manufacturing company; Monaghan Mushrooms and to assess how successful this process is and whether or not there is a more successful approach available. Using the correct research approach can be very important in determining this. This section will include a detailed insight into the approach used by the researcher and how well it worked including the strengths and weaknesses the researcher experienced while carrying out this research project.

3.2 Research philosophy

There are a number of factors which will determine the research philosophy a study will use. This is a very important factor of a research project as the right research philosophy will impact the overall findings of the project as well as separating those that are valid from the invalid. One way of determining the research philosophy suitable to you is by using the research “onion” developed by Saunders et al. The idea of this is that a researcher needs to start on the very outside and peel their way through each layer in order to ensure they decide on the most appropriate research strategy, design and methodology.

The type of research chosen all depends on whether the researcher adopts to positivism, realism or interpretivist. Basically, whether they rely on facts, impressions or a more realistic approach.

“Research Philosophy relates to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge” (Saunders, Lewis, Thornhill., 2012, pp. 127) There are two different viewpoints a researcher can take as regards their

research philosophy. Either Epistemology which is “a branch of philosophy that studies the nature of knowledge and what constitutes acceptable knowledge in a field of study” or Ontology which is “a theory concerning the nature of social phenomena as entities that are to be admitted to a knowledge system”.

Positivism

If your research philosophy reflects the principles of positivism then you will prefer “working with an observable social reality and that the end product of such research can be law-like generalisations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists”. (Remenyi et al., 2998:32) A positivist approach is likely to use existing theory to help develop a hypotheses. In this case the researcher would prefer to work with facts rather than opinions and impressions.

Realism

In comparison, realism tells us that “what the senses show us as reality is the truth: that objects have an existence independent of the human mind”. (Saunders et al., 2020, pp. 104) There are two different types of realism; Direct realism which means ‘what you see is what you get’ and Critical Realism which argues that what we experience are sensations, they are images of the things in the real world but not the actual things directly. (Saunders et al., 2020)

Interpretivism

“Interpretivism is an emistemology that advocates it is necessary for the researcher to understand differences between humans in our role as social actors”. (Saunders et al., 2019, pp. 106) This approach focuses on conducting research on people rather than on objects, so using humans as ones sample rather than using computers.

Overall, there is no right or wrong approach in research. Each approach has different benefits and some more suited to one research project than another. It is unrealistic to think that research will fit exactly into one philosophy, it is usually a mix of two or more approaches to fit each research project. The most important thing to consider when deciding on the best suited research philosophy is the research question (pragmatism). This will determine the most suitable research philosophy for the research project.

This researcher is using a pragmatist approach to the research project as she is aware that the most important aspect of this project is answering the research question which has been set out for her.

3.3 Research Approach

A clear research approach allows for a clear research design for the project. There are two types of research approach, both inductive and deductive. The deductive approach is where you develop a theory and hypotheses and design a research strategy to test the hypotheses. Whereas an inductive approach is where you collect the data and develop your own theory as a result of your data analysis.

Deductive Reasoning

Deductive reasoning involves seven steps. These include identifying a broad problem area, defining the problem statement, hypothesising, determining measures, collecting data, analysing the data and interpreting the results. The idea of deductive reasoning is starting with a general theory and then applying that theory to a particular case. (Sekeran and Bougie, 2020)

Inductive Reasoning

Inductive reasoning on the other hand works in the opposite way to deductive reasoning. It is based on the idea that we observe specific phenomena and based on this we make a general conclusion. (Sekeran and Bougie, 2020)

In the case of this specific research project, the researcher took the inductive reasoning approach, as the researcher had the opportunity to interview certain people and ask relevant questions to get a good insight into the recruitment and selection processes of the company and get a better understanding of how they work, gaining valuable, relevant information.

3.4 Why Qualitative Research

At first, before deciding on qualitative research the researcher had decided to use a mixed approach. However, as the study progressed the more the researcher was edging towards qualitative. In the end, after careful consideration the researcher decided to go with Qualitative Research. Quantitative research is “any data collection technique (such as questionnaire)

or data analysis procedure (such as graphs or statistics) that generates or uses numerical data”. (Saunders et al., 2021, pp. 145) Whereas qualitative data is any data collection technique such as an interview or data analysis procedure such as categorising data that generates or uses non-numerical data. (Saunders et al., 2020, pp. 145) Therefore, quantitative research is more structured, involving numbers and exact figures, whereas qualitative is less structured and more to do with understanding different peoples opinions and does not involve numbers.

The researcher gathered her information through the form of semi structured, face to face interviews. This type of interview was most suitable in this particular situation because the research subject was broad with no exact definition. It allowed the respondents to express their views without any constraint or a set list of questions by which they had to adhere to. This unstructured approach to the interviews allows for a wide-ranging explanation and an insight into many new and different ideas. (Horn, 2019)

Interviews are one of the most common forms of qualitative data research. They allow the Interviewer to engage in active, supportive listening that involves paraphrasing and probing to develop rapport and encourage in-depth discussion (Baxter & Babbie, 2019). In an interview the questions asked often allow respondents to say what they think and to do so with greater richness and spontaneity which one cannot do if for example answering a survey. They often provide a much higher response rate than that of a postal questionnaire. Another benefit of conducting interviews rather than handing out questionnaires is that the

interviewer has a better opportunity to give a prepared explanation of the purpose of the study in their own words rather than trying to explain this in writing in a cover letter which one might attach to a survey or questionnaire. There is also more of a chance of being able to reach less well educated respondents, it will be easier for those with reading difficulties, more misunderstandings can be prevented and the interviewer has more control over the direction in which the interview goes and the sequence in which the questions are asked. Another advantage of interviews is that many people believe that the answers are more reasonable, that people will give a more valid reason face to face than what they would put down on paper in writing. (Oppenheim, 2019)

Using both an interpretivist philosophy and an inductive research approach as mentioned above, it is expected that one would use qualitative research as they all work well together. These methods together will allow access to the most relevant, most important data available for the research project and it may also open up some other ideas and procedures the researcher was not aware of when first setting out to complete this research project.

and it can also allow for a reduction in the number of non responses. (Oppenheim,

3.6 Data Collection & Analysis

In order to answer the research question set out for this study the 4 interviews were carried out, starting off with 6 questions as a means of getting as much information on the topic overall from each participant. All 4 of those being interviewed were advised in a consent form that the interviews would be kept confidential and that they could remain anonymous if they wished. The interview panel consisted of both managers and staff in order to get a balance and a range of different views and opinions on recruitment in the industry. From the semi structured interviews conducted the researcher received all very good, well detailed answers which helped give a good insight in to recruitment within the organisation. All of the interviews carried out were face to face and semi structured in form. They helped clarify the most effective, most popular form of recruitment used and which method of all the methods used is the most successful in providing the organisation with the best talent in certain sectors.

3.7 Sample Strategy

According to Saunders et al, who you choose as your sample size depends on the “feasibility and sensibility of collecting data to answer your research questions and to address your objectives from the entire population”. (Saunders et al, 2019, p. 243) Because the researcher focused the entire research project on one organisation, the research project was based her on different types employees who all have something to do with the recruitment process. The interviews were conducted on both HR personnel, Recruitment personnel and general operatives. The researcher carried out 6 interviews in total, all of which were face to face. The interviews were conducted over a 2 month period, from the start of January until the end of march depending

on times to suit the interviewees. Each of the interviews took place in the organisations head office for their convenience. The length of the interviews varied from between 15 minutes and one hour and in each interview the interview questions were altered to suit the respondent. In order to contact the organisation for this study the recruitment manager was approached directly and she was more than happy to help and organised each of the interviews based on those who would be most relevant for the study.

3.8 Ethical Consideration

You should always think carefully about the ethical issues implied by the choice of your research strategy” (Saunders et al., 2000). Before conducting any research the recruitment manager in the organisation was advised on exactly what ideas the author had in mind for the study and gave the recruitment manager a copy of the interview questions which would be asked during the interviews as an idea of the data being collected. The recruitment manager gave full consent for the interviews to go ahead. After this the methods of data collection being used for the research project could be deemed fully ethical.

3.9 Limitations

It goes without saying that within any research project there will be several limitations which are mainly unavoidable. These are a few of the more common limitations which were experienced during this study.

- Because of the short time frame in which to gather the research, the research was limited to 6 interviews which resulted in a lack of information and a somewhat inaccurate account of recruitment within the entire organisation.
- Another limitation was that although all participants were advised that any information given would remain fully confidential, it is still their jobs and some might be reluctant to be 100% honest or give their honest opinion as it may come back to affect them in the future.
- This study was only able to be focused on the present state of recruitment within the organisation as there was no previous studies or information available on past recruitment strategies within the organisation.
- The word count set out for the research project kept the study very limited. Some areas of the project had to be kept very simple as the number of words kept the study very limited into how much detail they could go into.

CASE STUDY

This chapter begins with an overview of the industry on which this study has been followed by an insight into the background and history of the company on which the research project has been conducted.

4.1 Overview

The company on which this study was based are a modern thinking company who grow mushrooms as well as producing the compost in which they grow them, harvest them and then pack the mushrooms themselves before delivering them directly to their customers. This system in their opinion gives them 'complete visibility over the quality of our mushrooms from spore to store'. (Monaghan Mushrooms, 2015)

They also emphasise the importance of good quality customer service, not only good quality mushrooms. They have a sales and marketing team in place to help customers manage their category and also to help analyse sales and usage data in order to be able to understand the local market, what a customers needs are and also to be able to help develop new products.

Another important team Monaghan Mushrooms have in place is the Research and Development team. As well as researching the nutritional benefits of mushrooms they believe it is also important for them to keep improving every other aspect of the business. They are doing this by collaborating with different universities and research institutes in the hope of being able to grow the global market in order to help both them and their customers.

Not only do Monaghan Mushrooms want to develop their business but also their people. In their opinion, their people are the foundations of the business. They are committed to helping them reach their full potential and achieving their ambitions. They do this through internal recruitment and providing them with opportunities to develop professionally as well as providing them with training and career progression, which was taken from the interviews completed with the Recruitment and HR Departments.

4.2 Company Profile

With over 3,500 employees and operations across Canada, Ireland, The United States and Europe, Monaghan Mushrooms is one of the largest substrate and mushroom companies in the world. Starting off in 1981 in a small family home, Ronnie Wilson gave up a career in teaching geography in order to develop plans for a mushroom processing business. They first started off small in Monaghan where their head quarters still remains, focusing on producing mushroom compost and processing mushrooms for the jarred and canned markets. It was in 1986 that they ventured as far as the UK market to start growing for the fresh mushroom market. Soon after this, in 1987 they branched out a little bit further as far as Scotland.

4.3 Further Growth & Expansion

In 1991 Monaghan Mushrooms continued growing. They bought more farms both in Ireland and in Northern Ireland and continued getting bigger and joining together with more and more mushroom farms. It was in 2004 that they became the largest mushroom company in Ireland and the UK. In 2009 they expanded further, as far out as North America. Here they bought a farm just outside Campbellsville in Ontario, Canada.

4.4 The Future

In 2010 Monaghan Mushrooms made a huge investment in the company. They were thinking ahead and invested 12million euro in order to develop a Research and Development Centre and to set up a new farm at their headquarters in Tolland, Co. Monaghan. Since this there have been huge rewards for the

company. In 2012 they were made the largest Mushroom compost producers in the world. This came about when they welcomed “Walk to International” to join their team. Walk to International are a mushroom company that operates in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. The company plans to grow in size in the coming years with further plans for growing and expansion in place.

FINDINGS

5.1 Interview Questions - Main Findings

In this section the main findings, which were obtained from the interviews that were conducted, will be discussed. This will be done under a number of different headings covering each of the questions asked at interview stage.

Some interesting findings from the questions asked in the interviews were gained. The interviews all started out with a set of questions which all respondents were presented with before taking part in the interviews. Because the interviews were semi structured in form, each interview went in a different direction depending on the participant’s response to each question. This gave an opportunity to dig deeper into certain topics depending on each of the participant’s answers.

Q1. In what sector are you currently working?

The first question asked was very basic. It was just asked in order to provide an insight into the kind of job title and daily routine of each of the participants. Because the study included interviewing a variety of different people all from different positions within the workplace it was important to know exactly what each of them worked at, what their day to day job consisted of and in which field they would have the most knowledge or experience as the interview was taking place.

Q2. What is recruitment like currently in the organisation?

Each of the answers to this question were similar. All respondents had similar opinions on each of the recruitment methods used by the organisation, some maybe with a little stronger opinion on certain methods than others. Everyone agreed that internal recruitment still played a big part in the recruitment methods within the organisation and they all agreed that there needs to be more emphasis put on the Social Media aspect of Recruitment. They all agreed that it is not used to its full potential. While all participants agreed that the amount of recruitment being done through social media was very low and that it should be used more often, some had more to say on this side of things than others. From a digital marketing point of view, the interviewee explained how valuable LinkedIn is and that it really needs to be used more often. Her opinion is that they need to invest more, financially in the social media side of things. She went on to explain just how valuable LinkedIn is and that the organisation need to start paying a subscription to the site in order to take full advantage of its benefits. She also went on to say that they are working together with the HR and Recruitment teams to help improve the company profile and to help decide which subscription is the most suitable and beneficial for them to invest in.

Similar to the opinions of the digital marketing team, the HR department agrees

that there should be more emphasis put on social media as a form of recruitment.

As one respondent voiced her opinion saying ‘I don’t feel we are using the Internet and Social Media enough when it comes to recruitment’.

Whereas those interviewed from the recruitment team, although they agree social media could be used more, the recruitment manager believes “it can only be used effectively as a recruitment method, if all members in the organisation have profiles and they interact with each other and the business through these profiles”.

A recruitment specialist mentioned how in Germany they use social media more than in Ireland when looking for candidates. They use a profile called ‘Xing’ which is similar to LinkedIn and is their main form of recruitment. She also went on to say that in Ireland schemes such as referral schemes, assessment centres and online advertisements through their company website and irishjobs.ie remain their most common forms of recruitment.

Both the management information analyst and quality controller agreed that this is how they too got their jobs, through the employee referral scheme. The Management Information Analyst went on to say that three others in his office alone were placed in their jobs in the exact same way.

Q3. What is the most effective method of recruitment?

It was at this point that opinions really started to differ between the recruitment team and the HR department. It was at this point that the semi-structured interviews really came in to play. For the HR department they believed that external recruitment was the way forward. They believed that by recruiting through agencies they are being provided with excellent employer branding, especially within the food industry. This is a huge benefit of external recruitment because it can be extremely difficult to achieve this from an internal point of view.

From a recruitment perspective, both the recruitment manager and recruitment specialist had a great deal of time for internal recruitment. Especially the recruitment specialist who apart from online advertisements was completely in favour of internal recruitment for all positions. These internal methods used include the employee referral scheme, assessment centres and STRIDE (the internal graduate programme). Seamus the recruitment manager too was very much in favour of internal recruitment, but only when it is not classed solely as a HR function. When it is based within HR it will not work well or be successful. Recruitment needs to be a standalone function. However, in some situations they have no choice but to recruit externally, through agencies. Although outsourcing has its benefits such as being faster and more cost effective, it also has some negative effects. Such as; If someone has the right skills and qualifications on paper sometimes their personality and how well suited they are to the job will

not be considered. Some people view recruitment agencies as a moneymaking business, and in some cases he went on to say they are not far wrong. This in return can affect the quality of the organisation and its employees if unsuitable candidates are being placed in jobs, and for this reason they think it can be hard to pass internal recruitment.

Q4. Is recruitment a main focus for the organisation?

All six respondents emphasized that recruitment is a main focus for the organisation. Some with more to say on the matter than others, depending on what field they worked in.

From a recruitment perspective, sometimes the importance of recruitment can be underestimated. It is in fact one of the most important functions of an organisation. It ensures standards and quality are kept as high as possible. Without a strong successful recruitment team the right candidates, or the most suitable candidates would not be hired for the jobs which in return would lead to a decrease in the quality of work which would lead to many problems for the organisation.

From a HR perspective, again it is one of the organisations main focuses but it comes along with many challenges, especially for the HR team. Because their head office is in such a small location it can be hard to find the right people with the right skills or people who are prepared to set up or work in such a small town. It can also be difficult to target any of the people who may be suitable because social media is not the most popular in these smaller areas, there is also no agencies based in these areas. It can also be hard finding people with this right mind set, people who want to be made permanent with jobs in this type of industry, in such a small town. For example: harvesters and those working in the pack house.

Q5. What is the rate of staff turnover like for the business?

Staff retention and the rates of staff turnover vary throughout the business. In some sections staff turnover can be higher than others. These rates are all illustrated on attrition dashboards. For example: for monthly paid workers staff turnover rates at present are quite high. At present it is averaging at 21%. This however is higher on some farms than others. Here in Ireland their staff turnover rate is much lower than that of some of their farms in other countries. On the Mayo farm where turnover is as low as 15% which is amazing in comparison to figures such as 25% and 38% on other farms around Ireland. Mayo in comparison to rates on plants such as Carberry close to Dublin is so low down to the fact that there is much less job opportunities

around there, it is a nice little county and gives workers who are mainly all from outside of Ireland a nice homely, family feel.

Q6. Is Social Media continuing to become more and more popular as regards recruitment?

Although at present it is not playing a huge part in the recruitment side of things in this company, they are continually putting more emphasis on using it as a method of recruitment. They aim to do this by improving their company LinkedIn page, by making their company less reserved and growing the category of mushrooms again through advertisements and raising awareness, improving their brand name and giving them recognition all through social media. Already in just one year they are starting to see the pay offs of social media. They no longer have to use an agency to recruit digital media, which was the case three years ago. One participant talked about how LinkedIn has a specific skill set, it is geographical and can be used across borders to help promote and advertise positions which we cannot do with our own website and local advertising alone.

5.2 Research Objectives

Illustrate the most common methods of recruitment used at present within the organisation

The first few questions asked during the interviews gave a good idea of the variety of different recruitment methods used within the organisation, which of these the respondents considered most successful and why. It was found that there are a number of different methods used and the most preferred method usually depends on the sector in which they are recruiting for. For example: for any of the science based jobs such as laboratory work the organisation use external recruitment, usually through a recruitment agency. This is usually down to the fact that these positions can be more difficult to find the right candidates for, that hold the correct skills and experiences especially in such a small town in which the organisations head office is based.

For a job in any of the offices outside of Ireland they use a recruitment agency. They use one certain recruitment agency, which operate offices in each of the countries in which Manufacturing Company X have sites. This is because none of the sites outside of Ireland are big enough or employ enough people, yet in order to set up a HR or Recruitment sector in any of them. Therefore, at present all recruitment within the organisation is done through head office that is based in Ireland.

For Harvester's and General Operatives, internal recruitment is the most common method. They use a scheme known as a 'referral scheme'. This is where an existing employee can refer a friend on to the recruitment team for interview if the existing employee feels that they may be a suitable candidate for the position advertised.

They also advertise all of their positions available online, both on the company website and on other external websites such as jobs.ie and if the right candidate comes available through any of these websites they will recruit through them also.

Illustrate the transitions between today's methods and the more traditional methods once used by the organisation.

In order to answer this research objective the researcher asked questions around the different recruitment methods the organisation were using now in comparison to those being used ten years ago, and why they had decided to change these methods of recruitment and what other methods they are considering for the future. The results as mentioned above found that the organisation were moving some what away from traditional methods such as internal recruitment, referral schemes and local advertising and were moving slightly in the direction of more advanced methods such as external recruitment through agencies and through social media sites such as LinkedIn. The reasoning behind this is due to how popular and common social media is becoming and how it is now the first point of contact for many when they are looking for a job. The war for talent is another reason behind this. There are no longer the right people available internally or even externally in such a small town for this organisation to just advertise their jobs locally.

Social Media platforms such as LinkedIn are becoming a more and more common method of recruitment, which is why this organisation in particular wants to embrace it so much. They know that investing in a paid subscription to the site will provide them with a large pool of not only job seekers but also very suitable candidates for any particular position they want to fill.

The war for talent is one of the main reasons why this organisation had to make some changes to their recruitment processes. For any of the science-based jobs, it was not possible to find those with the right skills and qualifications in the locality and because the organisation is growing at such a fast rate, they had no choice but to change their recruitment processes in order to attract the best talent available.

The researcher has come to the conclusion that in order to stay competitive the organisation must keep up to date with the constant changes taking place. Although slow to react and still some what stuck in their ways when it comes to moving away from traditional methods of recruitment they are constantly making small changes in order to keep things up to date and to stay ahead of competitors.

Is recruitment one of the organisations main focuses?

Recruitment is most definitely one of the main focuses for this organisation. With both a HR team and a recruitment team in place at head office they are constantly working together to improve and keep up to date with the recruitment process through ways such as updating their LinkedIn profile, creating an app to oversee recruitment in all of their different farms and getting more involved in external recruitment as well as continuing to recruit internally

where possible. "Sometimes the importance of recruitment is underestimated but it is in fact one of the most important functions of an organisation". This statement is most relevant in an organisation such as the one at hand, because the organisation are expanding so much and at an incredibly fast rate it is so important to make recruitment one of the main focuses of the organisation to ensure the right people are being hired for the jobs and when there's a productive team at hand it has many positives right throughout the business.

Therefore, investing in recruitment ensuring you are up to date with competitors and using the best possible method to find the best possible candidate for the job will ensure success for the business snatching up well qualified, talented labour.

Is Social Media becoming more and more common as regards recruitment?

From the data collected above, it is very clear that Social Media has and is continuing to become more and more common when it comes to using it as a method of recruitment. It is becoming a major part of the recruitment process and organisations such as this organisation are beginning to alter their methods or recruitment in order to integrate it into the process. Although sites such as Facebook and Twitter are powerful social media tools when it comes to advertising, LinkedIn is the main site when it comes to recruitment. LinkedIn is one of the most powerful recruitment tools on the market at present. It allows organisations to source the perfect candidates for the job.

Although the organisation are still using a mixed method of recruitment, they are trying their best to focus more on social media as a form. By doing so they will remain highly competitive in the market and source the best talent for the job by reaching their target audience.

MAIN THEMES

The researcher has found that three main themes mentioned frequently throughout the study both from books and online sources but also from the research obtained from conducting the interviews. In this chapter the researcher will go into further detail on each of these themes. Each of the three themes relate back to the results of this research project as well as the overall conclusion that has been made on this research topic.

6.1 The focus on recruitment processes

The research illustrates that this organisation have invested a lot of time and capital into recruitment, especially in most recent years. According to the respondents, this investment is paying off and they are reaping in the rewards. The reasoning behind this investment is down to the rapid growth of the business as well as the lack of talent in certain areas in a small town like Monaghan where they have to make recruitment a main focus and invest in it in order to find the best talent and the most suitable candidates for the job. According to the literature review, in order for an organisation to have competitive advantage over its competitors they must have a strong successful recruitment process in place. If an organisation have a successful recruitment process in place, and the right people behind the job they will have strong competitive advantage and a successful team of workers over their competitors. Without the right people working in an organisation, success would be minimal. People are what hold an organisation together. Investment and a strong focus on the process of recruitment will allow an organisation this. In order to find the best talent, they have to reach out to people, sometimes going further afield to different parts of Ireland and also abroad in some cases. They do this both through recruitment agencies such as 'The Panel' and 'Morgan McKinley'; through social media platforms such as LinkedIn which they are constantly trying to embrace and are looking into paying a subscription in order to have a sponsored account in the future. In some cases this can also still be done internally, where recruitment through referral schemes is sufficient.

From the research carried out it is evident that investments in the recruitment processes and constantly making changes in order to keep up with their competitors in the same market and to ensure they do not lose employees to their competitors with whom they might share ideas and inside secrets all goes towards helping

make this a worthwhile investment. Having an in house Human Resources team and a Recruitment team can make this a much easier process for the organisation. With a team in place to oversee this entire process and focus solely on the recruitment process within this one organisation, having them as their main concern and their only focus has had a huge knock on effect for the business. It has been made clear that they are succeeding in filling positions and finding the best talent for the jobs and a successful team of workers having an impressively low staff turnover rate, especially in this type of industry which is at present just 20% overall.

6.2 Internal Recruitment vs. External Recruitment

The research conducted through interviews reveals that although the organisation is becoming more and more involved in external recruitment they are still using a very mixed method approach of both internal and external recruitment. This relates back to the literature review where it was stated that in the past internal recruitment methods were the most popular and once considered the most effective method where as in recent times they have been replaced by more up to date external methods such as e-recruitment and internal traditional methods are now considered a more unsatisfactory way of filling positions. Although they are making a great effort to change their ways and branch away from internal recruitment they are still somewhat stuck in their traditional ways when it comes to some recruitment processes such as internal promotions however these methods are slowly being replaced by some of the

more modern day external methods such as recruiting through agencies and social media. In an article on internal vs. external recruitment strategies it was said that although internal recruitment is considered the more cost effective strategy and usually the most popular strategy for sourcing staff in more stable developed companies even though it is said to yield disappointed and unproductive employees and prevents an organisation gaining new blood, fresh ideas, skills and competencies. However on a more positive note internal recruitment can allow workers to build up strong relationships, loyalty and provides them with a chance of promotion. External recruitment on the other hand brings new people to the organisation allows the recruitment team to define the exact requirements and to hire the candidate most suitable for the job. It can also help the organisation improve their brand name and increase their popularity through advertising and campaigning for these jobs and positions available. Although external recruitment is the more expensive option when an organisation is as big and as successful as this one, the right recruitment process is a worthwhile investment and one that this company want to continue to focus and invest in in order to find the best possible talent available to them. (Anyim, Ikemefuna and Shadare, 2021)

. 6.3 Limitations of the current recruitment strategies in place.

Research has shown that although the current recruitment strategies are working well for the organisation, constant changes have to be made to these processes in order to keep up with competitors and to continue to find the best candidate for each of the positions available. From conducting these interviews it is evident that although many of the respondents at the time of joining the organisation some 5 years ago, some 15 years ago were recruited using internal functions and some of which still believe that internal recruitment is the most effective strategy this is constantly changing. The idea of the “job – assignment model” of recruitment is becoming less and less popular. A firm having a very bottom heavy hierarchical structure is no longer always the best option. Having a work force with a large number of young, lower level workers and very little senior managers and providing them with training so that in turn they will be able to promote workers from internal positions to managers is no longer the best approach. (De Varo and Morita, 2013) As mentioned

in an interview with one of the HR Business Partners, internal promotion is not always the answer and can lead to many problems internally for the business. A participant went on to explain about a recent case where although an employee was hardworking and had years of experience working in the industry at a lower level, when they got promoted they were not suited to their new job and did not work well in their new position. This is a prime example of how internal recruitment and promotions are not always the right route to take, which in turn backs up the reasoning behind organisations becoming more involved in external recruitment strategies through agencies and social media platforms. In order to become more involved with Social Media as a recruitment process and to start utilising it more as mentioned by the research cohort, further investments in applications such as LinkedIn where a paid subscription will eventually become a necessity and more capital being spent on the organisations marketing and digital media sectors will be important for the company to be able to keep up to date with the most effective recruitment processes.

CONCLUSION

This last chapter will discuss the overall key findings of this research project. It will also cover the aims and objectives of the research project and how the answers have been reached along with mentioning the validity and reliability of the research. This chapter will also include some recommendations and points the researcher would consider should she carry out further research on this particular topic.

7.1 Validity of the research:

The researcher believes that the aims and objectives of the research project have been reached which in turn justifies the validity of the research presented throughout the dissertation. The researcher also believes that the methodology used presents an accurate reflection of the importance of recruitment in an organisation and how the process should be done.

7.2 Reliability of the research:

The data obtained shows that the organisation have and are continuing to change their recruitment methods in order to stay competitive in the market. The effects that Social Media are having on the recruitment process was a major focus of the research project which was mentioned by all of the respondents making this a reliable piece of research. Although the sample size was relatively small and may not have given the most accurate answers, this will be discussed further in the limitations of the research.

7.3 Limitations of the research:

Although overall the study received a fairly accurate insight into recruitment as a whole in the organisation, the sample size was relatively small. Had more people been interviewed within the organisation and more research collected there may have been a slightly different overall result from the research project.

Another limitation involved was the fact that the entire research was based on one specific organisation. This makes it difficult to come to an overall conclusion on recruitment as a whole due to different organisations

having different opinions on recruitment and different recruitment processes in place. In order to get a completely accurate account of recruitment as a process in organisations more organisations in different types of industries would need to be researched. For example; organisations competing in the hospitality industry, farming and agriculture, education, banking and health services to name a few.

Because all of the respondents were working in the same industry they all had similar opinions on the entire process down to the fact that they were all working together on the same projects and used the same processes down to the recruitment processes the organisation used as a whole.

7.4 Implications of future research:

Having conducted this research it is evident that there is a need for some minor changes when it comes to recruitment within the organisation.

- Recruiters need more up to date training and a deeper insight into the value of social media as a form of recruitment so that they realise exactly how important it is that they begin to embrace it more.
- Although Social Media is becoming more popular within the organisation, it is going to continue to play a bigger part in years to come. Keeping up with and being able to adapt to these changes while continuing to attract the best talent for an organisation will be an important aspect of the recruitment process for them.

If in future year's similar research were to be carried out on the organisation it would be interesting to see the results - whether or not social media completely takes over the world of recruitment, if the organisation continues to grow at such a fast pace or if they become more well known as regards their brand name, becoming bigger and better and more well known in the food industry.

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