

# Recruitment **Back To Basics**



box, left, for the pros and cons of recruitment advertising methods.

## Use the job description to shape your interview questions

Don't simply follow the applicant's CV. Anyone can write a CV and quote it at you in an interview.

Control the interview by taking the key points from the job description and asking direct questions about the applicant's experience in relation to those points.

For example, you want to test the applicant's experience of working in a pub. Ask about the best work they have done, the worst mistakes they have made and the lessons they learned from their experience.

Ask simple questions which cut through any embellishment on the CV. For example, when interviewing for a chef's position take an item from your menu and ask: "How would you cost out this meal?"

If you're worried that asking a question might land you in legal hot water – such as "are you pregnant?" – it's better if you don't go ahead and ask it.

You should now have all the information you need to make your decision on whom to appoint.

## Keep that job description handy

Deliver on your promises and use it to make sure the successful applicant doesn't let you down.

[www.thepublican.com/businessbuilder](http://www.thepublican.com/businessbuilder)

Be prepared to probe answers given by candidates at interview instead of allowing them to just parrot what's listed on their CVs

Right: test any potential chef's experience by asking, say, how they would cost a particular item on the menu

## Ever thought about an apprentice?

If you have considered taking on and training an apprentice, look out for some basic advice on how to go about it in the August 27 issue of *The Publican*.

## Interview technique: ask open questions

Remember, a person's past behaviour in a role is an indication of how they are going to behave in the future.

With this in mind you need to ask questions that begin with what, how, why and when? You then have the option to further probe the answer the applicant gives.

Let's look at an example involving someone who wants a job as a chef.

### Question

Give me an example of how you would cost a menu.

### Probe

Can you tell me specifically 'how' you would cost... (choose one menu item)?

### Question

How would you manage an under-performing member of your team?

### Probe

Can you describe step by step the process you would us to monitor this person?

Try not to ask 'closed' questions which can only be answered 'yes' or 'no' – for example, "do you think it is important to fully cost all menu items?" Such questions do not promote conversation and stifle any rapport building between the employer and candidate.

When it comes to live interview situations, many highly trained interviewers fall into the trap of asking closed questions – if you don't believe me, just watch the news tonight! Asking open questions is a good skill if you can remember to put it into practice. It allows candidates to use their knowledge of a subject to give the answer.

Clearly, the more detailed the answer and the 'flow' of the information, the better the indication of the depth of knowledge the candidate has in a particular area.

"I remember using this technique to interview some trainees," says recruitment consultant Nigel Sapsed. "One person had little work experience – not even a paper round – and struggled to give any answers.

The second candidate sat there sweating profusely and gave weak, but credible, answers.

"The third candidate was the head glass collector at a local pub and worked in his uncle's restaurant on Saturday nights. He had an experience for every question and was the best trainee I ever employed."

*Advice compiled by Nigel Sapsed, recruitment consultant*

