

BUSINESS CREDIT MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

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Ten Tips on Hiring and Training New Collectors

1. Do not limit your search to applicants that have experience in your industry. Instead, look at transferable skills. Be sure you have a clear description of the job requirements to help you identify candidates with the right skills or readily transferable skills.
2. Be extremely selective in the hiring process, recognizing that a mistake in the hiring process is easy to make but often exceedingly hard to fix. Screen resumes carefully for achievements and results, along with technical skills and personal characteristics needed for the job.
3. Conduct an in depth interview. Make certain you have and ask questions that provide insights about the applicant's level of motivation, their long-term goals, and their work ethic. Use a job description both to explain the position to candidates and to help identify the best qualified applicants.
4. Speak personally to former managers of finalists to hear for yourself the Good, the Bad and the Ugly about the applicant. Note: This requires more than a superficial five minute discussion with a reference. Again, having a list of questions to ask will simplify the process and improve the quality of feedback you receive.
5. Create a formal training program for new collectors.
6. Assign a new collector a "buddy" if you cannot assign them a mentor. Current employees should be asked if they want to be a buddy or a mentor, not simply assigned this task.
7. As supervisor or manager, meet frequently with the new collector. Ask questions to be sure that the new employee understand what to do and why doing it is necessary.
8. Break bad habits quickly. Newly hired collectors often bring with them ideas about how the collection process should work. If their ideas are at odds with the collection department's established procedures, make it clear that their actions are not consistent with your company's goals and rules and get from them a commitment that they will cease and desist immediately.
9. Admit promptly if you decide you have made a poor hiring decision. Work with your HR department to address and resolve the problem. Do not act unilaterally.
10. Develop both individual targets for the collector as well as group/team performance targets that the new collector will share with his or her colleagues.

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