

Identifying & Selecting New Employees

Selection criteria are the key capabilities - skills, knowledge, and abilities - required to effectively perform a job. These criteria should be developed from the job description and used to identify the best candidate for the position.

Key Points to Consider

1. What knowledge, skills, abilities, qualifications, and experience does an employee need to successfully perform the job?
 - i. For example, knowledge of crop rotation, animal husbandry, or specific farming technologies.
2. Are the criteria specific and measurable?
 - i. Consider clearly defining what skills (e.g., machinery operation, irrigation systems knowledge) are required and how they can be evaluated.
3. Are the criteria job-related?
 - i. Ensure that the selection criteria are relevant to the day-to-day tasks on the farm or agricultural business, such as physical stamina for manual labor, technical expertise for machinery, or environmental knowledge.
4. Do the criteria comply with human rights legislation?
 - i. Ensure that the selection process is free from discrimination and inclusive of all individuals, including those from diverse backgrounds or with different abilities.
5. If hiring foreign workers, are you following the appropriate regulations?
 - i. Be mindful of immigration laws and regulations regarding temporary foreign workers in agriculture.

When Looking for Employees

- **Willingness to Train:** Be open to hiring individuals with little or no prior agricultural experience, especially if they have the right attitude and are eager to learn. Agricultural work often involves practical, hands-on learning, and a strong work ethic can be just as valuable as prior experience.
- **Skills Transfer from Other Sectors:** Consider candidates from other industries where transferable skills can be beneficial. For example:
 - **Heavy machinery operation:** A candidate with experience in construction or manufacturing may quickly adapt to farm equipment operation.
- **Fast-paced environments:** Someone who has thrived in fast-moving or high-pressure jobs might adapt well to the demands of seasonal farming work, where quick decision-making and adaptability are crucial.
- **Non-traditional Workforce:** Broaden your search to include non-traditional groups such as newcomers, retirees, or persons with disabilities.
- Seek out employment agencies offering services to immigrants, newcomers, or persons with disabilities to share job advertisements or participate in career fairs. This can help diversify the talent pool and create inclusive opportunities in agriculture.
- **Reducing Barriers:** Consider ways to reduce barriers for underrepresented groups in agriculture:
 - Use simple language in job ads to ensure they are accessible.

- Assess language requirements for the job, ensuring that necessary skills are emphasized over language proficiency when possible.
- **Promote Agricultural Life:**
 - Emphasize the lifestyle benefits of working in agriculture, such as outdoor work, connection to nature, and the opportunity to contribute to the community's food security. Highlight the importance of sustainable practices, which is increasingly attractive to candidates interested in environmental stewardship.

References

Selecting the Best Candidate. (n.d.). Go2HR. Retrieved April 2026, from <https://www.go2hr.ca/explore-all-resources/human-resources/selecting-the-best-candidate>

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