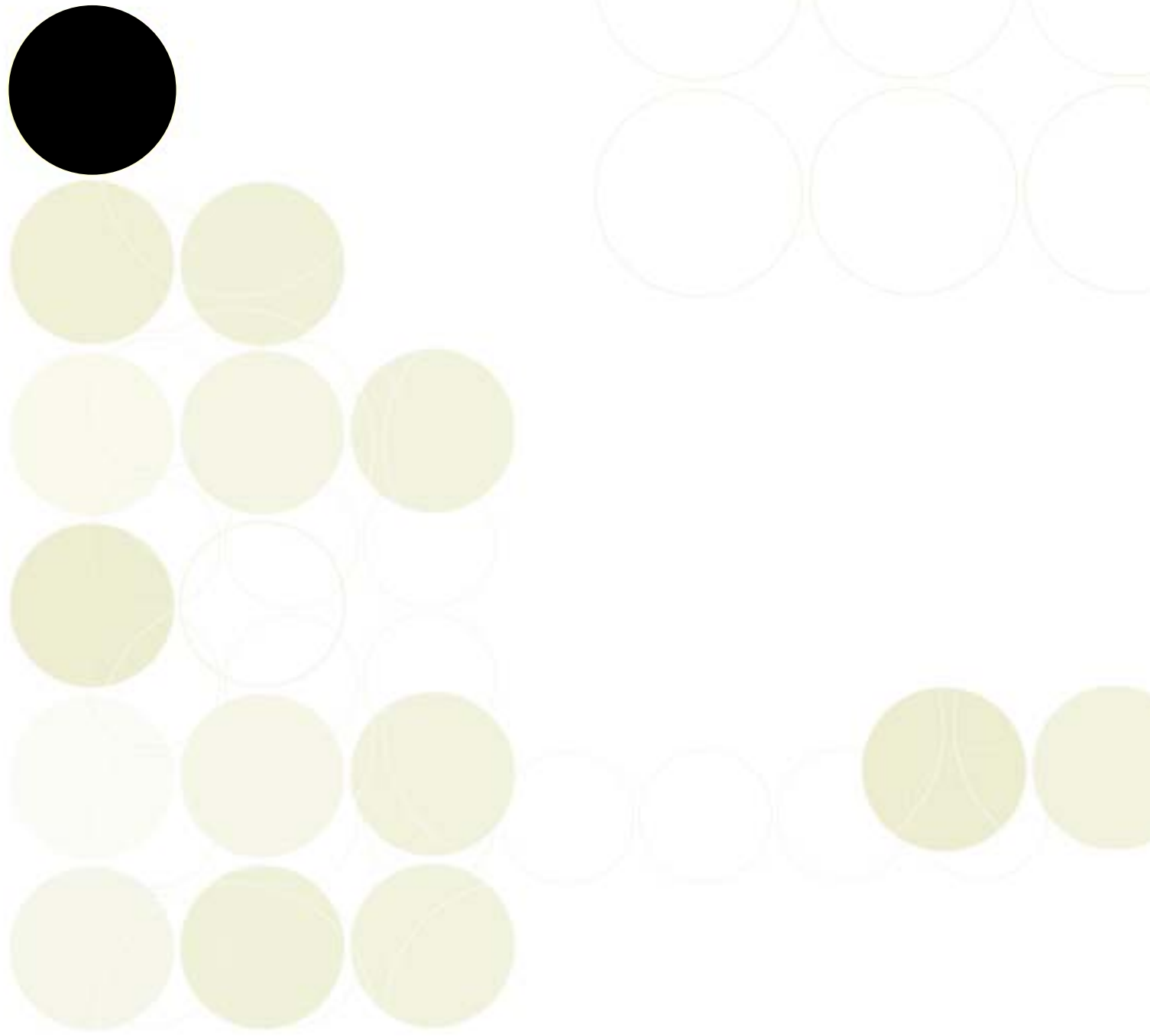


The Graduate Recruitment Handbook
for Australia & New Zealand

Chapter 1

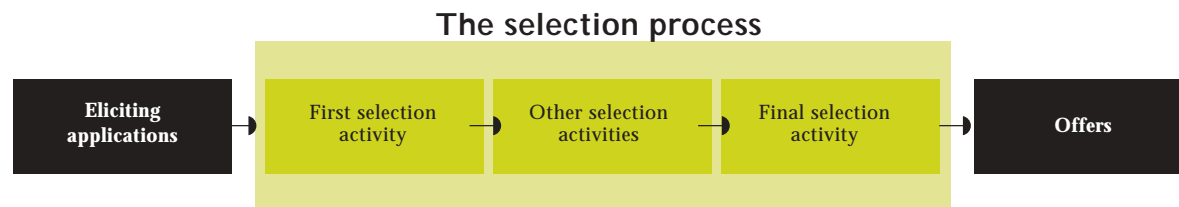
The Generic Process



1 Chapter One - The Generic Process

1.1 Process Overview

The following is a generic model of most recruitment activities:



The model assumes that any recruitment activity (internal or external, recent graduates or senior managers) consists broadly of the activities above.

1.1.1 Eliciting Applications

Any recruitment process requires the eliciting of applications whether they be via the Internet, through the mail, or through a third party recruiter. Requesting applications may be achieved in a number of different ways, and some will be more appropriate to your plans than others. Some organisations simply place an advertisement in a newspaper, while others may choose a number of different activities including sponsorship, work placements and careers fairs, as well as national advertisements. The next chapter discusses many of the options available.

1.1.2 Selection

After application forms have been received, the candidates are taken through a sequence of selection activities. Usually there is some screening of the application form, perhaps a preliminary interview and, possibly, an assessment centre. Some or all of these stages may be missed out if the recruiter chooses, and other activities substituted for them (these and other selection techniques are discussed in Chapter 3). At the end of these activities, the assessors choose their preferred candidate/s.

1.1.3 Offers

When the successful candidates have been identified, an offer is made and the candidates are obliged to accept or reject the offer.

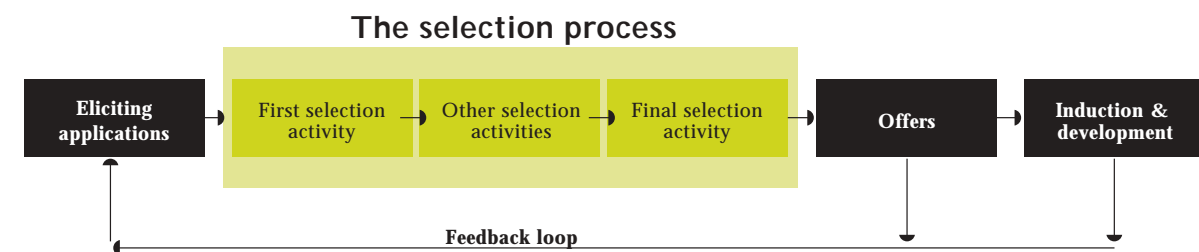
1.1.4 Feedback

Even in a relatively simple or 'one-off' recruitment activity, there are strong arguments for thorough and professional management of the process. Successful graduate recruitment programs are expensive – unsuccessful ones even more so. Furthermore, those applicants may one day be customers or suppliers. Lessons learned need to be acted upon to initiate change.

Clearly, in the case of organisations that recruit annually or in large numbers, analysis of the process is vital prior to commencement of each new recruitment cycle. Issues needing to be fed back to the beginning of the next process are discussed in Chapter 6.

The graduate recruitment process should not exist in isolation from other activities, internally or externally. The feedback loop provides information on how the process can be improved, from sources internal to the process. Questionnaires, for example, completed by applicants and university department staff, can also provide feedback from outside your organisation.

1.1.5 Induction and Development



There are also more pragmatic issues to pursue: agreeing on a start date, finalising a long-term development plan, and conveying information gleaned during the recruitment process to those who manage the recruits' development. These and other topics are presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

Added to the above diagram are the feedback loop, and the induction and development process. Note that the process doesn't end here: clearly graduate development is a long-term activity, and the recruits of this year may be involved in the process in future years.

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To complete the diagram of the recruitment process, there are four other important issues that will also be covered in detail in Chapter 6. They are: project planning, process management, staff development and quality assurance.

1.1.6 Controls

Project planning is paramount. Underlying any project activities are measures designed to ensure that the activities achieve their objectives, including complying with time and cost constraints.

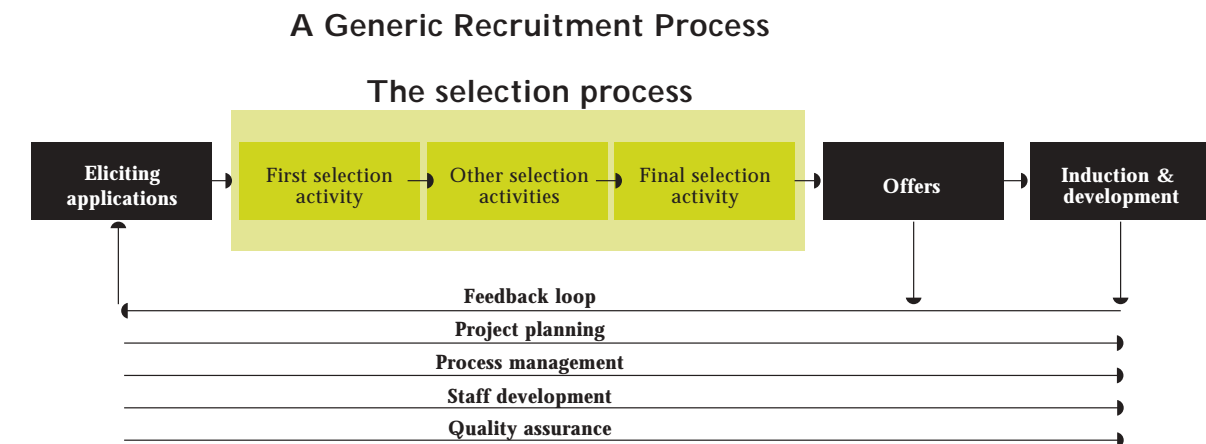
Process management is also very important. For most recruitment activities, some form of control and process management (paper-based and/or computer-based) is employed to manage communication and other parts of the project (expenditure and billable hours, for example). This control mechanism produces reports on activities carried out so far, provides easy ways of determining which stage of the process a particular candidate has reached, as well as many other areas of process management. This means that any recruitment-related activity can be tracked at any time.

It is worth remembering that anyone taking part in a graduate recruitment activity will gain valuable personal and professional growth. This may take the form of exposure to new computer systems, the experience of managing the assessment centres, or attending courses to qualify as a facilitator of personality questionnaires. Nearly everyone involved with the recruitment process comes into contact with senior managers within the organisation, hence there is the opportunity to raise your profile and gain insight into how senior management operates. The personal and professional growth prepares an individual for a higher role in the next recruitment process, or for a more general role where the skills and experiences gained will be extremely valuable.

Another control is quality assurance, which involves taking a series of measures which ensure that you achieve what you want, and includes making adjustments to the process while it is continuing. It does not rely on quality control measures, that is, achieving an end result and realising you have not got what you wanted, which are a waste of time and effort in this context.

1.1.7 The Complete Generic Model

The final generic recruitment process can now be presented as follows.



1.2 Competition and Collaboration

Every organisation operates in a competitive environment. Other organisations probably want to employ the graduates you're working so hard to recruit. And the graduate you've been trying hard to win might well be tempted by what another organisation can offer.

It is vital that you have a clear idea of what you can offer (in terms of development, use of technology, salary and so on), how this compares with what your competitors offer, and most importantly, exactly what your applicants are seeking.

What students are seeking in future employers is covered in the next chapter. How can you find out what other organisations offer? The two most popular methods are to talk to other recruitment managers and to look through their literature and advertisements.

Most recruitment managers are happy to talk about their recruitment methodology, what they offer to recruits and so on, in exchange for the same information from you. Despite the highly competitive nature of graduate recruitment, there is actually a great deal of openness, willingness to help others and sharing of information. Making initial contact by telephone or at conferences and seminars (with lots of business cards) can lead to more formal discussions about recruitment matters. You will easily find someone else who has the same problems as you! Exchanging brochures and application forms can lead to inspiring ideas.

Recruitment literature (including advertisements) from an organisation is usually specifically designed to convey what the organisation wants to say to its applicants and what it can offer them. Such literature is quite accessible, via career directories and peak bodies and

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can be a useful source of market research. As with any market research, segment the market in a way that makes sense to you. You might research organisations from your own industry, or perhaps investigate organisations that are looking for graduates from the same disciplines as your organisation is.

1.3 Best Practice in Graduate Recruitment

It is easy to design a recruitment project to fit the needs of the organisation and forget one of the vital ingredients in the process – the student applicant. Australia does not at this time have a generally accepted, national code of conduct, but other countries such as the UK and Canada do¹. Peruse the codes of conduct from these countries to gain an understanding of how you should treat graduates, and how graduates should treat you! Various Australian industries also have codes of conduct for graduate recruitment which are either national or state-based, such as the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia for the accountancy/finance industry and the Law Institute of Victoria's professional standards.²

1.4 Summary

- A generic recruitment process consists of:
 - eliciting applications*
 - a number of selection processes*
 - making offers*
 - graduate induction and development*
 - feedback*
 - controls (project planning, process management, staff development, and quality assurance).*
- Graduate recruitment takes place in a competitive environment, but one where competitors are generally willing to share information.
- Codes of conduct provide useful checklists to ensure that your organisation provides a user-friendly recruitment system.

¹ The Canadian code of conduct for graduate recruitment can be found on the web at: www.cacee.com/English/nonmembers/ethical.html and the British "Best Practice in Graduate Recruitment" document at: www.prospects.ac.uk/about/best.htm

² See the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Australia's website: www.icaa.com.au/ and the Law Institute of Victoria's website: www.liv.asn.au/ for further details.