

Guidelines for Using Agencies in the Recruitment Process

CCA Standard© User Groups

Since the launch of the CCA Standard© in 2001, over 100 contact centres have successfully achieved CCA accreditation. At the end of 2004, it was agreed that the knowledge and experience garnered by these accredited organisations would benefit being shared by the group and within the broader circles of CCA members. CCA has established several working groups to examine specific topics known to be of importance within contact centres, to learn how to overcome problems, and to establish how best practice can be implemented in line with the ethos of the CCA Standard© of continual improvement.

Based on discussions held by the [Recruitment, Induction & Retention User Group](#) (click on link for more info), this white paper outlines the group's conclusions relating to using agencies in the recruitment process.

CCA would like to thank the following individuals and their organisations for their input to discussions on this topic. As organisations that have demonstrated best practice in their own contact centres, their contribution to the development of these specific guidelines is greatly valued.

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Introduction

Where the services of recruitment agencies are enlisted by contact centre employers, it is essential that both organisations work closely together to develop a common understanding of the key requirements, in order to ensure the best outcomes. The following guidelines are designed to guide organisations that have chosen to use agencies as part of their recruitment process.

Best Practice Guidelines

- Take the trouble to invest time up-front to ensure that the agency has a **clear understanding** of the organisation, roles being recruited for, and the type of people required to fit into the culture and be successful. A presentation around these topics is useful. In addition, the agency personnel, especially those involved in the actual recruitment process, should spend time in the contact centre to understand how things work.
 - Align the organisational and agency recruitment process to ensure no elements are missing. Agree the roles that each will play.
 - Work to build a relationship and a partnership with the agency. Be open and honest and discuss successful and less successful activity. Give honest feedback.
 - Share any internal research/development on recruitment with the agency as this may help them to be more successful on your behalf.
 - It can be worth checking whether the agency staff who will interview potential contact centre employees actually have contact centre experience themselves.
 - Ensure that all job information is completely up to date. Out of date job descriptions make a difference.
 - Have specific templates for the agency to work to ensure they fit into your criteria.
 - Communicate regularly.
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- Take notice of the agency with regard to recruitment opportunities. They know the local area and can give a true opinion on the reality of recruiting a large number of staff.
- Allow the agency sufficient time to complete the process. If you allow insufficient time then you will simply fill seats. Agree with agency their timescales for the complete end-to-end process.
- Psychometric testing can be used effectively for all staff to determine suitability.
- Consider using alternatives to standard recruitment agencies. Organisations such as Remploy and Able to Work have proved to be successful for some organisations.
- Use a standard process where multiple agencies are used.

Further Information

For further information on this topic, or for more details regarding the CCA Standard[®] User Groups, please contact Judy Smyth, CCA Best Practice Specialist, at judy.smyth@cca.org.uk