

## Finding and Keeping the Right People

Facilitated by Michel Ballieu, Executive Director of Biomed Alliance - Alliance for Biomedical Research in Europe

Mr. Ballieu, Executive Director of the Biomed Alliance, began his presentation by describing two main areas that are key for associations and building their teams. First is the recruitment process, and second is the retention of your employees.

Mr. Ballieu described the main difficulty of the hiring process that all associations face: the time-consuming nature of the recruitment process itself, paired with the decision to hire.

Within the recruitment process, Mr. Ballieu highlighted five key steps, broken into two phases. The first, or the 'Administrative Phase', contains steps 1-3.

### The Administrative Phase (Steps 1-3)

1. Establish the job and job description
2. Advertise the job
3. Manage the applications

Mr. Ballieu provided additional information on the first three steps. With step 1, it is important to clarify the job title and the precise role within the job description, and provide clear objectives to be achieved. Step 2 should include advertising the vacancy on your own website, and to use additional online resources. With step 3, Mr. Ballieu advises beginning with two groups of applicants: those rejected, and those not rejected. From there, he advises defining a 'long list' of candidates for interviews.

In addressing the applicants who may be rejected, Mr. Ballieu stated that '*everyone deserves a reply*'. He believes that a reply not only builds credibility for your organization, but also demonstrates respect for the applicant and their time.

Steps 4-5 are in the 'Active Phase' of recruitment.

### The Active Phase (Steps 4-5)

4. Interviews
5. 'On Boarding'

For step 4, Mr. Ballieu stated that interview questions should include asking if the candidate visited the website, specific questions about experience or the CV, and explaining the hiring process and next steps. In order to avoid the cliché '*What are your strengths and weaknesses*' question, he strongly advises another perspective by posing this question: '*If I met your best friend, what would they say about you?*' This gives the candidate the opportunity to more objectively describe themselves and their strengths and weaknesses.

The second main area is retention of the right people. The primary focus in retention is keeping your employees satisfied with their work. Mr. Ballieu described six factors to measure job satisfaction: respect (praise and appreciation), trust (being delegated to and trusted to produce results), providing opportunities for individual growth and education, having a good boss (who communicates well and manages conflicts and issues), having compatible co-workers, and finally, having a well-established work-life balance.

The results of these factors in contributing to job satisfaction help associations retain employees who are satisfied, willing to contribute, and who will continue to perform. Additionally, employees with higher satisfaction will be more engaged in their work, utilize their talents and skills, and make a positive, lasting impact on their colleagues and the organization.

Mr. Bailleu addressed an important question that was asked: '*What is the best way to manage salary expectations in order to keep high-performance people with less resources?*' He admits that this can be difficult with limited budgets, and offers the following advice. First, it is important to be honest, and to communicate clearly what can or cannot be done, and why. Next, he advises that if a salary cannot be increased one year, to make an impact when you can, or when the resources are available. He mentioned it is also important to manage employee expectations and to maintain honesty and transparency. Mr. Bailleu advised those in the room to make a markedly big salary jump and to leave a lasting impact on the employee in a positive way.

With his concluding remarks, Mr. Bailleu gave the audience this primary take-home message: *Let's keep the human sense in our leadership behavior*. This includes living your values, and actively practicing, embodying, and promoting them in the workplace.