



Education  
and Training

McArthur  
Early Childhood Education



# Ensuring the best possible recruitment strategy and candidate experience

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# How to maximise success

Have all the relevant information on hand that will be pertinent to the recruitment process.

Chances are the candidate you are communicating with is also talking to other potential employees. And if that candidate isn't getting prompt and accurate replies to their queries from you, they will move on.

So as a minimum have on hand in a format easy to email:

- Full position description
- Promotional marketing material (if applicable)
- Employment terms and conditions
- Employment contract
- Letter of offer





In a market where job seekers are in short supply, it's a possibility that candidates may withdraw their applications or drop out between the initial interview and the final offer.

"Our market is flooded with opportunity," and most candidates are actively interviewing for at least four or five opportunities at once." This means candidates can be very selective about which opportunities they'll pursue and which they'll opt out of.

Given this we simply can't afford to lose great candidates during the hiring process."

One of the impacts of candidates pulling out during the recruitment process is it means the time needed to fill the role is drawn out, which can put pressure on the team and ultimately result in increased organisational costs.

### **Why candidates drop out of the hiring process (and what you can do about it)**

#### **1. The process is too long**

If other services turn around their hiring process quickly, a longer hiring process can make it harder for you to hold onto candidates throughout.

Setting clear expectations can help. "Have a clear interview process set out prior to engaging candidates and manage candidate's expectations so they have a good understanding of the timeline, "Ensure there is flexibility to progress to second interviews quickly and avoid adding extra steps in at the last minute."

#### **2. The salary for other opportunities is more competitive**

With job ads up 25.6% in May 2022 compared to May 2021 and applications per job ad down 2.3% month-on-month, salary is an important factor in attracting and retaining talent.

"Do research to ascertain if your role is being pitched at the right level in the current market,"  
"Be transparent with candidates about what the role is paying and have salary conversations up front."

But remember, money isn't everything. Even if you don't have much room to move on salary, you may be able to offer other attractive benefits.





### 3. You don't offer additional benefits

More and more candidates are interested in knowing about the broader benefits you can offer. Flexibility around work hours and location are two highly valued perks. Whilst difficult in our sector it is something we need to be mindful of when planning our session times and whether it can be joint.

Supplementary compensation may also include memberships, health insurance including well-being plans, while initiatives such as parental leave and volunteer days can also help to attract and retain candidates.

### 4. Opportunities for progression & professional development

If candidates aren't clear about the opportunity for professional development or progression you risk losing them. Some organisations we work with now offer conference attendance (fully paid airfare/accommodation etc).





# What sets you apart from others?

ECE professionals have never been more in demand.

They are worth their weight in gold, and if you are not giving them what they want, it is a guarantee another employer will.

So what makes you an Employer of Choice? What attributes or benefits can you offer that sets you apart? Here's some food for thought:

- What training & development do you offer?
- What support can you give Teachers?
- What extra tangible benefits can you offer? e.g. Extra salary – sign on bonus extra annual leave (with or without pay), paid study and study leave
- Anything special about the centre location or facilities?
- Can you sponsor international candidates?

The most important goal is to have a clear understanding of what the candidate wants, and what you can offer in return.





# Be Creative!

Current candidate shortages in ECE are the most challenging in living memory, and the market is certainly dominated by 'passive' job-seekers. Unlike the days of newspaper advertising being the only option (and later Seek), today there are many more channels and mediums available. As many as possible should be utilised - leave no stone unturned! Here are just a sample of the channels you should be utilising.



## Advertising

Job boards e.g. Seek, Childcarejobs.com, Indeed, CareerOne, DET Jobs Board etc. are all still worth considering although response levels via job boards has dropped off in recent times, but they are still an essential part of any sourcing strategy



## Social Media

SM is becoming the 'go-to' candidate sourcing channel in ECE. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube all offer great ways to promote your brand, culture and roles. Think about specific interest group as well.



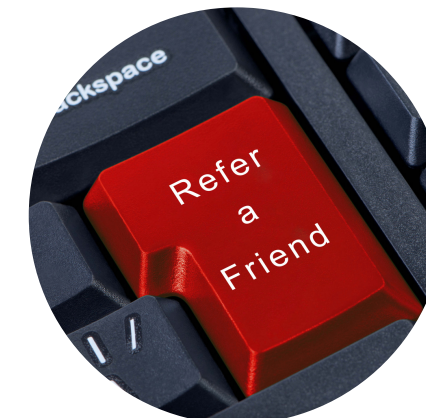
## Website Promotions

Your website should be the hub of all your employer brand messaging and of course your role advertising. Use feature ads to promote specific roles, design landing pages for major campaigns.



## Word Of Mouth

Your own employees can often be your best employer brand ambassadors. So if you have created a great working culture and environment, encourage your people to spread the word.



## Referral Programs

A great way of really encouraging your people to be ambassadors for your workplace. But make the rewards attractive, not just token gestures. And make it realistic and achievable, not too many T&C's or provisos.



## Info Sessions

Info Sessions allow candidates to really get a feel of your environment, facilities and culture. With actual staff on hand, it also means candidates can get quick answers to specific questions



# Market Stats & Trends

What we know is that the demand for early childhood staff is increasing and projections show that growth in the sector is expected to increase over the five years to November 2023 with employment expected to increase by around 11% for educators and 17% for teachers.

According to Seek Job ads have recorded the first decline in 2022 but remain above pre-pandemic levels.

Job ad volumes fell for the first time this year in June, following five consecutive months of growth.

"It was also the first time since April 2020, when the pandemic first impacted the Australian job market, that all states and territories recorded a drop in job ads within the same month."

"Job ads remain extremely high compared to pre-pandemic levels, so it is too early to speculate whether this month's drop represents the beginning of a slowdown in the Great Job Boom."





# Long Term Workforce Strategies

The current skills shortage in ECE doesn't look like abating anytime soon, so it is imperative that you do as much planning today to future-proof for tomorrow. Considerations should include as a minimum:

- Need to prepare for the coming years – how do you do this
- Think about ways to **retain** your current workforce - in our current shortage you don't want to lose your current top employees. Make sure you are doing everything to retain the ones who have
  - \*Be creative with work perks – it could be tenure awards (extra day off for every year worked),
  - \*Champion employee wellbeing – this is really important for this sector as many employees talk about burn-out (what are you going to do to support this).
- How do you build capacity in current staff?
- Build a relationship with universities and TAFE for now and into the future
- How to develop and manage casual 'talent pools'?

