



Working with staff

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Great staff are a fantastic asset to any community group that is fortunate enough to have the resources to employ them. They will lighten the load on volunteers and enable the group to achieve things that wouldn't have been possible without them.

But the group needs to have a few basic Human Resources processes in place to ensure the best outcomes for all concerned.

Recruiting – you want the best person for the job, so go through a proper recruitment process. Develop a Position Description so everyone is clear about what is expected. Advertise – target your advertising to media your potential staff are likely to see; use your group's social media and networks as well – it costs nothing and is likely to reach the type of candidate you are seeking. Interview the most suitable applicants – make sure your interview questions relate to the Position Description and ask 'behavioural' questions – past behaviour is a good predictor of future behaviour. Do thorough pre-employment checking – follow up the referees to confirm what the person said an interview, and make Police Checking part of your recruitment process.

Supporting – now that you've recruited your ideal staff member, give them the support they need to learn and perform their role. Good orientation and induction help the person understand what they need to do. A Work Plan documents what they are expected to achieve and gives something to measure against at the annual review. Appoint one person who is their 'supervisor' so they know who to go to if they have problems. Schedule regular meetings with the supervisor to review progress, and to provide both parties with a forum to discuss any concerns. Provide regular feedback – acknowledge the good work and provide constructive corrective feedback if things need to be done differently.

Managing – if a problem arises, and constructive corrective feedback hasn't fixed the issue, meet with the person ASAP to outline: what the issue is; why it is an issue; what needs to be done differently; and how you will support them to make a change. If the issue continues, you may need to progress to formal warnings, or dismissal depending upon the seriousness of the matter.

Have documented policies and procedures in place in relation to all of the above, and if you are faced with having to issue warnings/dismissals get some legal advice before taking action!