

As previously mentioned, agencies must emphasize the core competencies, agency mission and core values in the job announcement and throughout the recruiting and interviewing process. This includes describing the treatment-oriented approach to working with youth at all stages in the recruiting/hiring process. Providing this information during the recruitment stage allows potential candidates to decide for themselves if they feel the agency and position are a good fit. Having potential candidates “select out” prior to engaging in the interview and hiring processes will save the agency time and resources.

To ensure success, agencies must use a range of effective recruitment strategies and platforms to attract qualified employees. Common external recruitment strategies include newspapers, online classified advertisements and career fairs. Although these traditional methods may lead to an influx of applications, applicants

are often not qualified for the advertised position. Therefore, agencies must expand their recruitment strategies beyond traditional methods. Additional recruitment strategies offered by Clark (2014) are included in the list below:

- Advertise through professional or national associations such as CJCA and ACA.
- Provide incentives for employees who refer friends and family (resulting in employment). Ideas for referral incentives include gift cards, movie tickets, a special parking spot, an extra vacation day, etc. Some agencies compensate staff financially for successful referrals.
- Create job postings using social and electronic media advertising. Sites such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Indeed, and Career-Builder can be good sources for attracting millennials (those born between 1981 and 1996).

- Work with local media to spotlight the positive work of staff. Newspaper and television news coverage can assist in “putting a face on the facility.”
- Speak at local colleges and universities about careers in juvenile justice (and how they differ from the adult correctional environment).
- Host an open house where members of the community and potential job seekers can tour the facility, learn about the history and better understand the role of the facility in the local community.
- Run continuous job announcements in multiple formats.

Staying organized, ensuring that the agency is actively pursuing recruitment opportunities is a critical piece of recruitment success. Jurisdictions may find it helpful to create a recruitment calendar displaying various activities throughout the year. This approach ensures the person/division primarily responsible for recruitment remains active throughout the year and on target for meeting recruitment goals.

Branding is an important recruitment and marketing tool that allows an agency to demonstrate its unique and attractive attributes. The goal of branding is to declare to the local community, stakeholders, staff and potential employees who the agency is as an entity and the values driving their work. An agency’s brand should be displayed on all agency materials including those used for recruitment. More specifically, the logo, mission, values and goals of the department should be on all documents,

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publications, legislative reports, outgoing e-mails and various areas of the agency's website.

Data shows that using the Employee Value Proposition (EVP) framework may be helpful as part of a branding strategy to recruit top candidates in the field (Murdock, 2018). EVP provides a framework that explains to potential staff members why s/he would want to work for the organization. EVP highlights the competitive strengths of a position and separates it from other similar roles offered elsewhere. The key elements of the EVP framework (Murdock, 2018) include:

- 1) **Tangible rewards** — Applicants want information about the compensation package, paid time off, paid medical leave and other allowances such as prepaid highway toll tags, which add to the overall value of the compensation package.
- 2) **The opportunity** — Candidates need to understand the benefits of the career path and the organizational structure (e.g., career ladder, promotion opportunities, etc.).
- 3) **The organization** — People want to work for organizations of which they can be proud. Agencies should highlight how the juvenile justice system impacts the lives of youth.
- 4) **The people** — Potential employees want to know with whom they will work and what makes the employees a team.
- 5) **The work** — Candidates need to understand the activities in a typical workday.

Ensuring that marketing and recruitment materials provide sufficient information in each of the EVP categories is an important piece to an effective recruitment strategy.

Jurisdictions may find it helpful to create a recruitment calendar displaying various activities throughout the year.

Generational factors to consider when recruiting

Millennials constitute the largest generation in the U.S. labor force (Fry, 2018). As such, it is important to understand what motivates these individuals. According to research, millennials seek out work that has meaning and tend to value connections with coworkers (Taylor, 2013). Stinchcomb et al. (2009) offer information about potential generational differences in the workplace. Some of these are listed below:

Generation Xers (born between 1965 and 1980)

- Desire work-life balance — family and friends are higher priority than their job
- Avoid working overtime on a regular basis
- Value independence
- Value competence over rank

- Desire to make operational improvements (which may cause conflict with others who value organizational tradition)
- Seek regular feedback and coaching
- Hold many various jobs throughout their careers

Millennials (born between 1981 and 1996)

- Are optimistic and ambitious
- Consider family and friends their top priority
- Are team oriented and prefer working in groups
- Have high self-esteem and are good at multi-tasking
- Expect structure in the workplace and to have access to sophisticated technology when doing their work
- Actively seek feedback from coaches/mentors to help fulfill their aspirations and often move quickly up the organizational ranks
- Acknowledge and respect positions and titles and want a relationship with their boss; this does not always mesh with Generation X's love of independence and a hands-off style

Stinchcomb et al. (2009) highlight considerations that agencies should use when recruiting Generation X and Millennial direct care staff. These are provided in Exhibit 1 for reference. Additional resources, including a checklist of steps to improve staff recruitment, can be found in the Stinchcomb et al. (2009) article in the CJCA Staff Recruitment and Retention Shared Resource Folder. →

jurisdictions to quickly identify whether individuals possess the core competencies and qualifications necessary to perform the job. Ultimately, using an initial screening process reduces the number of candidates that will be interviewed, thereby decreasing the amount of time staff must dedicate to serving on interview panels (lending itself to a resource cost savings). Additional information related to specific initial screening instruments (i.e., Diana Screen, Ergometrics IMPACT Juvenile Correction Officer Test, etc.) can be found in the CJCA Toolkit.

Following the initial screen, most juvenile justice agencies use a minimum of two rounds of interviews to evaluate candidates (first and second round interviews). Some agencies choose to use group interviews for the first round and once the top candidates are selected, use a small interview panel to interview the top candidates individually. During the first round interviews, as well as in the final/second round interviews, interview panelists should clearly explain the agency’s mission, vision, core values, the approach to working with juvenile offenders, day-to-day activities and specific job duties. Clark (2014) suggests developing interview questions to effectively evaluate whether a candidate:

- Works well under pressure.
- Understands the importance of being fair and consistent with incentives and consequences.
- Brings a strength-based approach to working with juvenile offenders.
- Understands basic adolescent brain development and the impact of trauma.

- Effectively interacts with youth who have behavioral and/or mental health challenges.
- Is available to work seven days a week; to work overtime with short notice; to work nights, weekends and/or holidays.
- Understands they may be exposed to youth who are hostile and sometimes dangerous.
- Is comfortable with conducting strip searches, supervising showers, cleaning up bodily fluids and physically restraining youth (as a last resort) when provided proper training.

Having direct care staff lead these tours allows candidates to ask detailed questions related to the job and establish a connection with current staff members.

Competency-based interviewing is an effective way to assess whether applicants have the aptitude to be successful in their position. Competency-based behavior interviews differ from traditional interviews in that they use scenarios to elicit information about how a potential candidate will respond to a specific

situation. Ultimately, competency-based behavior interviews allow agencies to determine whether the job applicant has the knowledge and competency to perform the job in a juvenile justice setting.

Research has shown that competency behavior-based interviewing correlates with successful job performance. In a detailed analysis conducted by Zwell and Michael (2000), behavior interviews showed a strong correlation with job performance ($r = .48 - .61$). On the contrary, traditional interviews were shown to have a significantly low correlation ($r = .05 - .19$) with staff performance.

The Massachusetts Department of Youth Services (MA DYS) uses competency-based behavior interviews as part of its staff selection process. MA DYS has developed a “Competency Library” containing 40 competencies associated with various types of work within the Massachusetts juvenile justice system. Competencies are selected based on which qualities are needed to successfully perform each position. Some competencies to consider for direct care include: Action-oriented; adaptability, communication, conflict management, cultural competence, safety awareness, stress tolerance and teamwork, to name a few. Other examples and corresponding interview questions are offered in the CJCA Toolkit.

As part of the recruitment and/or interviewing process, facilities may consider having a direct care staff member conduct a guided tour for potential employees. This will allow candidates to see the residential living space and observe youth and staff interacting in the daily routine. Having direct care staff lead these

