

Neami Recruitment, Orientation & Probation Guidelines

Introduction

These guidelines are to assist you in the following processes:

1. Attracting and recruiting new staff
2. Effectively inducting staff
3. Conducting a thorough Probation Assessment during the staff member's first three months at Neami.

Refer to the Managers Handbook for information on the principles underpinning the recruitment process, and the compelling reasons to develop a skilled and diverse workforce at Neami.

For further information about the process or to discuss recruitment, orientation and probation, please contact HR at Head Office.

Recruitment & Selection

Recruitment Strategy

There are 7 key elements to Neami's recruitment strategy:

1. Regular information sessions and targeted advertising to promote what working at Neami means.
2. Review written applications (CV and Cover Letter explaining interest in Neami and the work we do.)
3. Conduct phone conversations (using the guide questions) with between 10 and 15 of the best applications.
4. Conduct face to face individual interviews (using the guide questions) with the top 3 - 4 applicants. Interview panels are gender balanced and include a consumer representative and 2 Managers/SPL's.
5. Introduce the applicant to the service site and team members (at least 2), giving the opportunity for unscripted interaction with a small group.
6. Reference checking and follow up conversations with the applicant where needed.
7. A well planned and welcoming induction and orientation when the staff member starts work, followed by the probation assessment to clarify the responsibilities and expectations of the position.

Information Sessions

Purpose:

Information sessions provide an opportunity for interested people to learn about Neami's values and culture, the CRM, and strengths based approach to working with consumers. Whilst information sessions are particularly targeted at people interested in working for Neami, they are also an opportunity to share information with other stakeholders such as community partners and students. For job seekers, the information sessions will serve to broaden their understanding of the nature of the work conducted with consumers through conversations with Neami managers and staff,

providing them with a realistic sense of the work. You will have the opportunity to share your experiences, both challenges and benefits, of the work.

How often?

As a guide, Information sessions should be run quarterly to coincide with current vacancies, or more regularly in connection with specific recruitment if required.

What should the session cover?

The Information session can be tailored to meet local needs. Small sessions can be held at a Neami service site, larger sessions can be held at community venues. As a guide, there are three main parts:

1. Welcome, meet and greet
2. Short presentation about Neami (template PowerPoint slideshow is available on the intranet)
3. Short presentation from a consumer representative
4. Questions from guests
5. Informal conversations over tea & coffee

For small sessions the slides can be used as a guide for the speaker rather than projected on screen. The slideshow covers the following topics and can be updated to match your local setting:

- Overview
- About Neami
- Neami values
- Neami Service Locations (in your state)
- What do we do?
- How do we do it?
- CRM
- Life-jet tools
- State Staff (e.g. NSW Staff)
- Diversity in the workforce
- Currently vacancies
- What we are looking for
- More info & how to apply
- Selection process
- Questions

Checklist for planning the info session:

- Discuss the info session at your State/Regional Leadership Team meeting, and appoint an organiser(s). Contact HR to discuss advertising the Info Session (together with current vacancies if applicable).
- Plan a date, time and venue (ensure availability if booking a community venue)
- Arrange for a small group of staff to attend the session, e.g. CRSW, PSW, SPL and a Service Manager, dependant on the expected turn out.

- Arrange with a consumer to present at the session. You will need to brief the consumer on what is expected (short 5-8 minute presentation about their experience of Neami) and provide any support or resources as required.
- Ensure the slideshow has been updated to reflect your state/region, and a computer and projector are available (if required).
- Arrange a good supply of Neami brochures including CRM Information.
- Arrange tea and coffee to offer at the end of the session.
- Prepare a sheet of paper for interested people to join the mailing list for future updates about info sessions and jobs at Neami. Provide room for name and email address. Forward this to HR following the info session.

Recruitment Planning & Advertising

1. When a vacancy occurs, review the need to fill it with your line manager and State/Regional Leadership Team, and discuss if there are vacancies at other sites that can be recruited for at the same time. Contact HR to discuss a plan for recruitment. If a number of positions are available across sites in the same area (e.g. Metro Adelaide) an information session specifically for these positions may be useful if one has not recently occurred.

Timelines including dates for info sessions, interviews and introduction to the service are agreed at this point, and the interview panel is decided. Interview dates will be included in Position Descriptions (PD) and advertised to give applicants ample notice, and will ideally occur within 1 week (but no later than 2 weeks) of the closing date. The panel will be gender balanced, and include a consumer rep and 2 Manager/SPL's. Where a member of the interview panel knows the applicant and there may be a conflict of interest, that member will declare it and the panel will review if it is appropriate for them to remain on the panel. If multiple positions are being filled at different sites, one manager is assigned to oversee the process in collaboration with HR to ensure it is coordinated.

2. Send a completed and signed Approval to Recruit form to jobs@neami.org.au. Five working days notice is needed before the position is advertised. Positions are generally open for applications for 2 weeks.

Refer to your Vacancy Report to determine which Fund/Program has vacancies and include this on the Approval to Recruit form. This information is critical for costing purposes.

3. HR sends a draft PD to you for review – this is so you can check details such as closing dates, contact person, interview date and location, and any site specific information. The main elements of the PD, such as Key Responsibilities and Selection Criteria remain the same for most positions. If changes are necessary, for example “experience with women’s programs” you should discuss this with the HR team.
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4. Once you have returned the PD, HR will arrange advertising, and contact recruitment agencies where relevant.

Advertising: To fully utilise the advertising investment (particularly in print media), adverts will be designed to promote the benefits of the position, as well as Neami’s values and the culture of the

organisation more broadly. Details of the information session (if applicable) will be included to encourage interested people to come along.

A targeted plan for where to advertise will be developed to attract applicants. This will range from targeting those with qualifications and experience including social workers, occupational therapists, community development workers, and welfare workers through local community networks and partnerships with universities, as well as applicants from a range of other professions and cultural backgrounds to attract a diverse group of skilled applicants. All Neami Staff are notified of the vacancy via email from HR, and are encouraged to forward this on to anyone who may be interested.

Where an information session is planned, HR will create an invite and you should be forward this on to your contacts Word of mouth through your network is the most effective form of advertising!

Recruitment Agencies: If a recruitment agency is being used, HR will contact them to advise of the position details including closing dates, and forward through the current PD.

5. All applications (including applicants from recruitment agencies) are received at Head office via the “Apply online” portal on the Neami website. An acknowledgment email is sent. After the position is closed, HR will send you the applications via email, together with phone screen and Interview Guides, and an excel report containing details of all applicants. This should be used to keep a record of who has been shortlisted or is unsuccessful.

Where a number of positions are being filled, you should work with the other managers to coordinate the short-listing.

Selecting an Applicant

1. **Shortlist applicants from written application** – review the CV and cover letter to identify the best 10 – 15 applicants against the selection criteria. You should look for themes that emerge in the cover letter indicating a good values fit with Neami, and a match with the selection criteria. Look in the CV for past experience or qualifications to identify transferrable skills. This may include human services type qualifications or experience such as social work, but may also include other types of experience where there are likely to be transferrable skills – for example teaching, parenting, etc.
2. **Shortlist applicants using a phone conversation (10 – 15 mins each)** – Using the “Phone Screening Guide Questions” available from Head Office, contact the shortlisted applicants (10 – 15) by phone to rank them in order of quality. Use the Applicant Assessment Form to make notes on how strongly each applicant matches the selection criteria. The phone conversation will allow you to identify the top 3 – 4 applicants to be comprehensively interviewed. A follow up phone call can be made if necessary to narrow the shortlist down to 3 – 4. This can occur as applications are being received by making an assessment of the written application when you get it and sorting into “Yes”, “No” and “Maybe”, helping avoid a large number of calls when the applications close. Short-listing should be completed with in 2 - 3 work days of the closing date.

Phone screening is an extremely useful and efficient pre-selection tool. It will significantly reduce the amount of time you commit to interviews by ensuring only genuinely strong applicants are

interviewed. Phone screening involves a brief (max 10 - 15 minute) conversation with the applicant. Using simple guide questions this process will allow you to more reliably assess how well applicants meet the criteria for the position. Skills like communicating clearly and respectfully, listening, and demonstrating insight and self-awareness can be assessed. These skills are difficult to determine from a written application.

3. **Notify HR** - Once you have shortlisted the applicants you want to interview, return the excel report to HR containing details of who you have shortlisted, who was unsuccessful, and a brief description of why.

Confirm of the interview date, location and panel previously agreed, and interview times. HR will notify the unsuccessful applicants by email. Operational Support Staff can provide assistance with arranging interviews as needed. Applicants will be asked to bring 100 points ID, (and copies of work visa where applicable) to the interview, and informed that this is to conduct police checks if they are successful.

4. **Prepare for the interview –**

Prior to the interview, work with your staff team to select the consumer representative for the interview panel. Ideally, it will be a consumer who has completed the interview skills training. Organise to spend some time with the consumer and other panel member (Manager/SPL) preparing them for the interview process – this will include providing copies of the CVs and cover letters, providing feedback from the phone screening, discussing the needs of the team, providing the observable behaviours document, Interview Guide and Applicant Assessment Form and outlining the interview process.

If the consumer has not recently completed the interview skills training, you will need to allow time to work through the Interview Skills Workbook with them, to ensure they understand the interview process and can participate on the panel. The Workbook is available on the intranet.

The panel should refer to the observable behaviours document to refresh themselves of the types of behaviours to look for in interactions before, during and after the interview.

You will need the following for the interview:

- A. Applicant Assessment Form with your comments for each applicant (make copies for the panel)
 - B. Interview Guide
 - C. Fit2Work Consent Form (for criminal history check)
 - D. 100 Points ID Check Form
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5. **Conduct Interviews (45 mins – 1 hr with 5 min break half way through)**

Ensure interviews are conducted in an informal, comfortable, and private environment to help put the applicants nerves at ease. E.g sitting at a round table, rather than opposite a desk. Explain to the applicant at the beginning how the interview will work: You will engage in conversation around a number of questions, and you will have a short 5 minute break allowing the panel and applicant to reflect and collect their thoughts. You may invite the applicant to have a drink, or finish completing the forms. There will be time towards the end for them to ask questions they have.

Use the guide questions to lead a conversation, engaging the applicant in the topic. Make notes on the Applicant Assessment Form either during the interview, or during the 5 minute break and at the end. The guide questions are based on the premise that past performance is the best predictor of future performance. Investigating how the applicant managed past situations, and any reflection about what they may do differently now, allows you to make a good assessment of their actual skills, rather than espoused skills.

Where applicants are asked to give examples of past experiences, ask detailed follow up questions to establish a good sense of how the situation was handled, and make a sound assessment of the applicant's skills against the selection criteria.

Remember it is important to let the applicant answer questions and engage in conversation without you prompting them, even if they are a little stuck. Where needed, clarify your question, but don't answer it for them. This gives a truer picture of the applicant's skills and abilities. Refer to the Managers Handbook for more details on interviewing.

Before or after each interview or during the 5 minute break, ensure the applicant completes the Consent Form and ID check. You (or the Operational Support Officer) are responsible for sighting 100 points of ID from each applicant. The only document you must photocopy is both sides of the applicant's driver's license. All other ID documents you must simply sight, and then sign the 100 point ID form to verify their identity. Applicants from recruitment agencies must sign the consent form for a police check conducted by Neami. Where an applicant already has a police clearance certificate, Neami will accept these provided they are no more than 6 months old.

6. Introduction to team members and service site (15 - 20 mins)

Following the interview, introduce the applicant to members of the team (at least 2) and give them a short tour of the office.

The purpose of this stage is to assess the applicant's skills and behaviour when interacting with a number of people at a time in an informal setting outside the interview. Important observations can be made during this informal stage including interpersonal skills such as ability to engage with other team members or a consumer who is present, flexibility to adapt to an informal circumstance, level of commitment evidenced through curiosity and asking questions, etc.

Following the short tour, enlist the support of 2 team members (who have previously been advised) to have a brief chat with the applicant about what the position is like on a day to day basis. Invite the applicant to ask the team members any questions to give them a better understanding. Remain engaged or close by to ensure you can observe the interaction, and seek feedback from your team members afterwards.

Following the conversation, offer the applicant the opportunity to look at the Strengths Cards or Values Cards used with CRM with you and a team member or panel member. You can explain briefly how these are used with consumers – give an example, and invite them to have a go. The exercise should be low key and presented as an opportunity for the applicant to get further insight into the role.

- 7. Select a preferred applicant** – The panel agrees on a preferred applicant (subject to references) after the interview and introduction to the site and team members. (within 3 work days of interview). The team members involved in the introduction to the service site should be consulted about their impressions of the applicant, and how this matches with the selection criteria. Team members do not have a decision making role, but contribute valuable observations to your and those of the panel.

If the panel cannot agree on a preferred applicant, then the applicants can be re-contacted by phone, re-interviewed, or invited back to the service a second time for a further informal discussion. You should use this follow up to ask thorough, probing questions and make observations to ensure you can make a good assessment of those elements that the panel was undecided about.

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- 8. Conduct referee checks on the preferred applicant** - Referees must include recent managers/supervisors (including the current one). If the referee checks are positive, contact the successful applicant by phone to offer them the position, informing them that the offer is subject to a successful police record check.
 - 9. Notify Unsuccessful Interviewee's** - Ring the unsuccessful applicants regarding the outcome within 3 working days. For applicants through a recruitment agency, contact the agency directly to notify of the successful and unsuccessful applicants and give feedback.

10. Notify HR of outcome

Save a copy of the excel report previously sent to HR, and include the outcome of the interviews. In addition to notifying who the successful applicant is, you should include in the main reasons the applicants were unsuccessful in the 'reason' column, and assign them a ranking indicating whether they would be a suitable candidate to consider for a similar vacancy at a different site or in the near future:

- **Ranking 1 – Would be considered for a similar position in the near future**
- **Ranking 2 – Is unsuitable for this position**

To guide you in making this judgement, you should consider whether you would offer the vacant position to this applicant if the successful applicant rejected the job offer. This information is retained in TechOne, allowing easy access to strong applicants previously interviewed. Remember that your judgement of the applicant's suitability must be based on the selection criteria.

Send the completed report to HR, together with Applicant Records.

- 11. Applicant Records** – Applicant information is confidential. You must send all completed Applicant Assessment Forms, Fit2Work Consent Forms and ID Check Forms to Head Office. Unsuccessful applicant records will be kept for 4 weeks then destroyed.

12. After Action Review.

The After Action Review is a short feedback session organised by the Manager responsible for the recruitment round. It may occur after the last interview, or in the coming days. It is an opportunity to discuss how the recruitment round went – what worked well or not so well and where improvements could be made. This information is then fed back to HR and contributes to the continuous improvement of the recruitment process. All members of the interview panel participate in the After Action Review.

New Member Start Up

1. **Send applicant info to Head Office** - Complete a Neami Employee Payroll Form (available on the intranet) and send this, with the completed Interviewee Pack for the successful applicant to Head Office. The following documents should be included:
 - A. Neami Employee Payroll Form (you complete this)
 - B. Fit2Work Police Check Consent Form (applicant completes this)
 - C. 100 Points of ID – Form and copies of drivers licence (applicant completes this)

Allow a minimum of 10 working days from the time you forward the documentation to Head Office before the new staff member starts. This time is needed for the start up process to take place. (e.g. If you send the documentation to Head Office on Monday 11th July, the start date must be no earlier than Monday 24th July.)

2. **Police Check Conducted by Head Office** – police checks are usually returned very quickly (within 60 seconds) using the electronic Fit2Work portal. From time to time, police checks are referred for manual processing. All letters of Offer of Employment contain a clause stating the employment is subject to a satisfactory criminal history record check. Where the new staff member has been overseas for 12 months or more in the last 10 years, an international police check is conducted. Neami bears the cost of the first police check, and will invoice the new staff member upon commencement for any additional overseas checks that are required.

If the police check is not satisfactory you will be informed. In this instance you should seek advice from your Line Manager and HR to assess the risks associated with offering employment. If a decision is made to offer employment, a contract with the staff member is established including the rationale for hiring, and agreed plan to ensure appropriate conduct whilst employed. This is kept on the employee's file.

3. **New Employee Pack Sent** - Payroll will generate an Employee Pack including a Letter of Offer to be sent to the applicant. Letter of Offer **MUST** be returned **BEFORE** the applicant can commence work. The applicant must complete all other required documents and send these back to Head Office no later than the Friday before their pay run. If documents are not received by this time, Head Office will be unable to process their pay until the following pay run. The Employee packs include the following:

- Letter of Offer
- Orientation Check List
- Probation Assessment
- Neami Staff Code of Ethics
- Fair Work Information Statement
- Tax Declaration Form
- Pre-existing injury form
- Neami National Employment Agreement
- Employee Personal details Form
- Driving Insurance History Form
- Super Choice (Hesta) & Hesta New Member Kit
- Fringe Benefit Information Pack

4. **Contact the new staff member before they start** – You're strongly encouraged to contact the new staff member a week before their start date to ensure they received the New Employee

Pack, completed the required forms and have posted them to Head Office. If the staff member has questions you can answer them, or encourage them to ring Head Office to clarify anything they are unsure about.

5. **Salary Packaging** – Fringe Benefits documentation doesn't need to be returned to Head Office prior to the staff member starting work. Salary packaging does not commence until the Salary Packaging Agreement is signed and returned to Head Office along with proof of debt. This sometimes takes several weeks while the staff member decides their preferences and provides the appropriate documentation. Assistance can be sought by ringing the payroll team at Head Office.

Orientation & Probation at Neami

Orientation & Induction

1. **Orientation on the first day** - On the new staff member's first day, ensure that you (or your delegate) are available to greet them and carry out the orientation. This will include introducing them to the service, their colleagues, explaining how supervision operates at Neami and starting to complete the Staff Orientation Checklist with them. The new staff member receives this in their Employee pack. They are also available on the intranet under *Human Resources*.
 2. **Explain training at Neami** - Describe the Neami training programs to the new staff member, and ensure they contact their State Training Officer to book into the next available induction course.
 3. **Complete the Staff Orientation Checklist** - Return the completed Staff Orientation Checklist to Head Office within 4 weeks of the staff member starting at Neami.
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Probation

1. **Commence the Probation Assessment** - At your first supervision session with the new staff member, start completing a Probation Assessment with them. This must be completed within their first 3 months of employment.

This assessment checks the capacity and ability of the staff member to perform all the tasks of their position. This is a time when the staff member's alignment with Neami's values and approach to service delivery is assessed. In addition their commitment to the team approach to support work will be assessed. The Probation Assessment period is a time when the staff member can assess Neami as well, its values, the direction and supervision they receive.

The CRSW Competencies Guide to Observable Behaviours will be a useful tool to assist you to complete the Probation Assessment.

All staff, regardless of their employment type (e.g. casual, ongoing, temporary contract) must complete a Probation Assessment. Refer to the Managers Handbook for more details on Probation.

2. Send completed Probation Assessment to Head Office no later than week 13.

- A. Satisfactory progress on the staff members Probation Assessment will result in confirmation of continued employment – Head Office sends a letter advising this. (for contracts, continuation of employment until end of contract applies.)

- B. Discuss unsatisfactory progress on a staff member’s Probation Assessment with your Line manager and the Human Resources Officer no later than week 8-10. Unsatisfactory Probation Assessment results in non-continuation of employment.

Recruitment & Selection Flow Chart

