Recruitment – a new approach to an old topic

Sasha Eden, HR Manager & Ellie Corbo HR Advisor
28th August, 2013
This presentation will cover

• A snapshot of Neami National
• Pondering the recruitment challenge
• Adopting a competency based model for recruitment
• Adapting the recruitment process to fit the new model
About Neami National

• National NGO offering recovery oriented mental health support services

• 35 sites across 5 states

• Around 200 staff in mid 2009, 500 staff currently

• Strong investment in learning and development
Pondering the recruitment challenge
Challenges we faced

• Consistent quality recovery oriented service delivery
• Competitive environment for high quality staff
• Need to identify what differentiates high quality staff
What the research says

• ‘Employability skills’ (key competencies) are critical to job success

• Qualifications are not an indicator of employability skills

• Sense of purpose and alignment with organisational values are key to motivation at work
What is a key competency?

• Referred to as ‘competencies, employability skills, capabilities or attributes

• Sets of behaviours that influence performance
What is a key competency?

- “A competency is a combination of tacit and explicit knowledge, behaviour and skills, that gives someone the potential for effectiveness in task performance.”

Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006 p. 53
What is a key competency?

• “Sets of behaviours that are instrumental in the delivery of desired results.”

Bartram et al, 2002
Your experience

• Think of a staff member you value highly – why?
Your experience

• Think of a staff member you value highly – why?

• Think of a staff member who was poorly matched to the role or organisation – why?
Our Experience

• Poor match was most often due to a lacking in key competency
Adopting a competency based model for recruitment
Process

- Working group formed to develop recruitment & selection framework
- Research into best practice models
- Consultation with staff to identify competencies
Model chosen

- SHL Universal competency framework
- Model used globally, evidence based
- Based on 8 competencies sets that can be used to define any job
SHL 8 Universal Competency Sets

- Leading and Deciding
- Supporting and Cooperating
- Interacting and presenting
- Analysing and interpreting
- Creating and Conceptualising
- Organising and Executing
- Adapting and coping
- Enterprising and performing
E.g. Adapting and Coping:

- Adapting and responding to change:
  - Adapts to changing circumstances
  - Accepts new ideas and change initiatives
  - Adapts interpersonal style to suit different people or situations
  - Shows respect and sensitivity towards cultural and religious differences
  - Deals with ambiguity, making positive use of the opportunities it presents
Identifying our competencies

Methodology:

• Selected position to start with

• Focus groups to systematically identified which competencies were crucial to performing the job

• Adapted the 4 competency sets to suit the Neami context

• Consultation on adapted competency sets
Main competency sets

- Adhering to principles and values
- Working with people and building relationships
- Planning, organising and problem solving
- Adapting and responding to change and coping with challenges
How to measure a competency

• match each competency to behaviour dimensions

• behavioural indicators should be specific and observable to prevent subjective or biased assessment
Observable behaviours

Competency:
- Adapts interpersonal style to suit different people or situations.

Observable behaviours:
- speaks more clearly or slowly, in more detail or from a ‘bigger picture’ point of view depending on the audience
- If not understood, rephrases in a different way
- Adapts tone of voice, body language, eye contact.
Your turn
Your turn

• Choose a volunteer from your group to describe their job

• Share ideas on three key competencies needed for this role

• Pick one competency, and identify 2 tangible, observable behaviours that demonstrate the competency

• At the end we will ask a few volunteers to share
Adapting the recruitment process to fit the new model
The old process

- Long adverts outlining selection criteria
- Written responses to key selection criteria
- Formal question and answer style interview
- Reference checks
The new process

• Adverts that describe the benefits of Neami
• Competencies articulated in PDs
• Cover letter – ‘why Neami, why this role?’
• Phone screen
• Behavioural interview
• Meet the team
• Reference checks (including previous supervisor)
Section D: selection criteria

Working with people and building relationships
• listens, consults others and communicates proactively to address conflict
• Develops and openly communicates self-insight such as an awareness of own strengths and areas for development
• Speaks clearly, fluently and honestly to engender trust

Planning, organising and problem solving
• Is accountable and proactive about reviewing progress and outcomes
• Exercises common sense in making judgments and seeks solutions to problems

Adapting and responding to change, and coping with challenge
• Deals with ambiguity, making positive use of the opportunities it presents
• Maintains a hopeful and positive outlook even during challenging times at work
• Demonstrates self-awareness and ability to reflect and handle feedback well and learn from it
The new process

- Adverts that describe the benefits of Neami
- Competencies articulated in PDs
- Cover letter – ‘why Neami, why this role?’
- Phone screen
- Behavioural interview
- Meet the team
- Reference checks (including previous supervisor)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Looking for:</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. Tell us about a time you’ve been part of a significant change at work</strong>&lt;br&gt;(If little work experience, then comparable group context like study group, volunteer group, etc)&lt;br&gt;<em>Probing questions:</em>&lt;br&gt;• Was it a popular or unpopular change?&lt;br&gt;• How was the change implemented? What role did you play?&lt;br&gt;• What did you think worked well about the change process?</td>
<td>• <em>Adaptability and flexibility</em>&lt;br&gt;• <em>Ability to compromise, and find solutions to challenges</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Tell us about a time you advocated for, or stepped in on behalf of someone – what happened?</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Probing questions:</em>&lt;br&gt;• Did you feel that the person was empowered or disempowered by you stepping in?&lt;br&gt;• Did you discuss what occurred with the person afterwards?</td>
<td>• <em>Insight and self-awareness</em>&lt;br&gt;• <em>Understanding of self-empowerment</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3. Have you ever come across someone who is self-harming, or in an unsafe state, and won’t engage with you?</strong>&lt;br&gt;<em>Probing questions:</em>&lt;br&gt;• What was your immediate reaction when you discovered this? What did you do then?&lt;br&gt;• What impact did it have on you?</td>
<td>• <em>Ability to recognise and react to critical incidents</em>&lt;br&gt;• <em>Uses common sense to make sound, rational decisions</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The new process

- Adverts that describe the benefits of Neami
- Competencies articulated in PDs
- Cover letter – ‘why Neami, why this role?’
- Phone screen
- Behavioural interview
- Meet the team
- Reference checks (including previous supervisor)
Successes so far

• Significantly increased number and quality of applications
• Better process for selecting the right applicant reported by recruiting managers
• Positive feedback from applicants
• Reduction in performance management
Summary

• A competency based approach works, and leads to a better organisational match

• Embedding competencies across all areas of workforce development is critical for success
Questions?
Our vision
Full citizenship for all people living with a mental illness in Australian society

Our mission
Improving mental health and wellbeing in local communities

neaminational.org.au

Sasha Eden & Ellie Corbo
Human Resources Manager Human Resources Advisor