

4. Four major information sources are written forms, tests, interviews, and references — best used in combination and with care.
5. The employer is a buyer in the labor market. Merely forking over the purchase price by no means guarantees satisfaction.

Pertinent to the labor market as much as any other is the old economist's adage, "*Caveat emptor*. Let the buyer beware." And let the buyer also remember that while systematic selection improves the odds of buying good performance, it cannot remove all risk.

Offering the Job

An offer can be made by phone or in person. A reasonable opening is to state that several qualified candidates were considered and extend an offer first to this applicant at a specific rate of pay. If there are lingering questions about the job description, company expectations, and conditions of employment, this is the time to clear them, so questions should be invited. Expressing expectations that the candidate will do a good job and enjoy working in the business contributes to starting the relationship on a positive note. If the applicant wants time to think about the offer before making a commitment one way or another, a time to reconnect can be set.

Once a selected applicant accepts the verbal offer, putting its terms into a letter or other written document confirms the deal and helps avoid misunderstandings. Even if not applicable to a given hire, the first five elements of mandatory written disclosure under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act make for a checklist of essentials to include in a written offer:

1. Place of employment
2. Wage rate
3. Crops and work activities
4. Period of employment
5. Transportation, housing, and benefits provided and their costs, if any
6. Existence of any arrangement under which the employer or contractor will receive commissions or benefits from sales to the workers
7. Existence of any strike or labor dispute at the place of employment

Disclosure of all seven items is required for all migrant and seasonal day-haul workers when they are recruited. It is required for other seasonal agricultural workers only if they request it.

Notifying Other Applicants

Letting people know that a job they had applied for has gone to someone else is an act of good business, as well as a personal courtesy. While in certain circumstances, notice by phone call works better, doing it by letter is usually easier and has the additional virtue of allowing for careful construction of the message.

Expressing expectations that the candidate will do a good job and enjoy working in the business contributes to starting the relationship on a positive note.