

A smiling woman with blonde hair in a braid, wearing a white chef's shirt and a striped apron, holds a black plate with a gourmet dish. The background is a blurred kitchen setting. The entire image has a teal overlay.

PEOPLE

Excellence

# Introduction



**One of the best things about the tourism industry is the people you'll meet when you're part of it.**

**Of course, there are the guests who come from far and wide to visit your business. But there's also your staff – the people who make your business special and the industry what it is.**

The people in your business are critically important. Their skills and attitude can make a huge difference to your visitors' experience and provide the essential point of difference between your and other businesses.

Looking after them is also critically important. There's a lot you can do to make sure you attract, train and keep the best staff for your business. In doing so, you're looking after the people on both sides: your staff and your customers. It's a win-win approach, and ideally, it's one of the most enjoyable parts of running your business.

In this guide, we'll give you some tools and tips for:

- recruiting the right people
- providing training and professional development opportunities
- retaining your staff
- letting staff go.

# Recruiting the right people

To build your dream team for your business, you'll need to:

- identify the types of roles you need to fill
- write job descriptions for those roles
- advertise the position/s
- assess and select the right people for job.

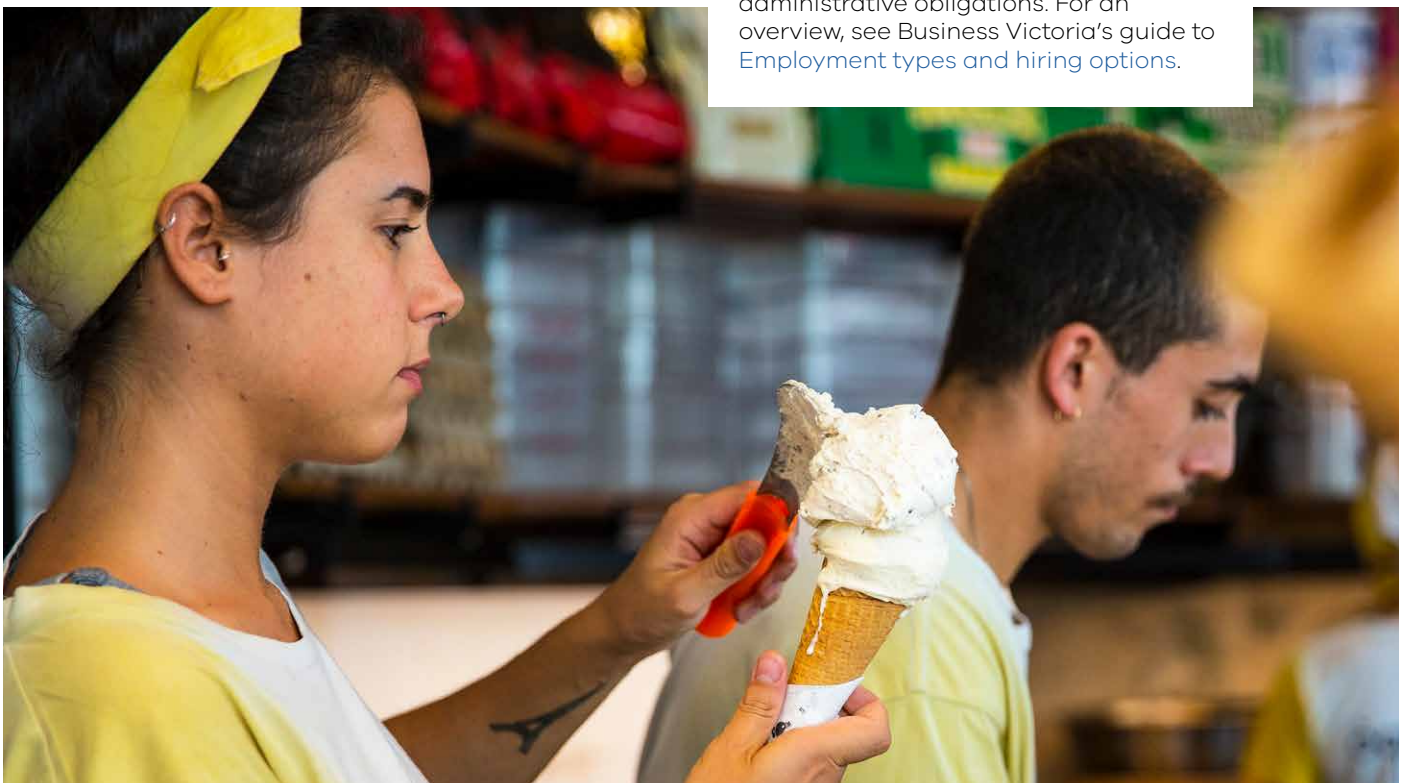
To start with, you'll need to assess your business and staffing needs. Look at the skills and capacity you have, the skills and requirements of your business, and where you need to hire staff to fill the gaps.

A handy resource for assessing your staffing needs is Business Victoria's guide to [Workforce planning](#).

There are a number of different ways to engage staff to meet your business needs:

- permanent or fixed-term employees
- casual employees
- apprentices or trainees
- employment agency staff
- contractors and sub-contractors.

Each method has its own benefits and different legal, supervisory and administrative obligations. For an overview, see Business Victoria's guide to [Employment types and hiring options](#).



*A job description doesn't have to be a long document.  
It just has to cover your business needs.*

### Writing the job description

A job (position) description outlines the qualifications, skills, experience and cultural fit of the ideal candidate for the role. It should cover what you expect from the person hired in that role, and include key performance indicators and how these will be measured.

A brainstorm is a great way to develop a job description. Start by jotting down as many of the ideal attributes of the candidate and the demands of the role you can think of. Revise the list, fill any gaps and organise it into your job description.

A job description doesn't have to be a long document. It just has to cover your business needs.

If you'd prefer to follow a template, you'll find plenty online and through industry associations. Business Victoria has templates available for download in its [guide to writing job descriptions and ads](#).

Be wary of making your job description too daunting or unrealistic – you don't want to scare off potential candidates who may be a great fit, but don't quite have all of the exact skills and qualifications you're after.

### Advertising the job

Next, you'll need to write and place an advertisement for the job/s you need to fill. This could be as simple as sticking an ad in your window or posting it on Facebook, or involve a more complex process such as advertising on recruitment websites or engaging a recruitment agency.

Either way, when you're writing your job ad, make sure you sell the benefits of working for your business. It's not always all about the money, so think too about lifestyle benefits, professional development opportunities, and even things like the fun and excitement the job might offer for the right candidate.

Choosing where to advertise will depend on the job and your business. Options include:

- your place of business
- your social media channels
- recruitment websites
- a recruitment agency
- industry associations.

Using a recruitment service can save you time and money. While the initial outlay of recruiting through an agency may seem expensive, every hour you save by outsourcing is valuable time you can spend running your business.



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Don't forget to look within your business to see if an existing staff member may be suitable for a new role, even if it means they'll need some training. Hiring from within can be a great morale booster for other staff. It shows that your business values its staff and is willing to invest in their future. It also saves on recruitment costs.

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Another option is contacting tertiary and vocational training providers that offer work placements as part of their training. See [Industry resources](#).

It's always worth putting the word out through your network too. Word-of-mouth can be a very effective advertising method.

Successful recruitment might also mean finding staff from non-traditional sources. Flexibility in offering working conditions that fit with people's lifecycle and their lifestyle could open up a whole new field of potential recruits.

## Hiring staff

Now you have a list of potential candidates, it's time to choose the right person for the job. You'll need to assess the job applications and conduct interviews to choose and hire the successful candidate.

For tips on how to go about this, see Business Victoria's guides [Conduct interviews and choose staff](#) and [Job interview and reference check questions](#).

Once you've found the right person for your business, there are a few things you'll need to take care of in the hiring process. These include:

- rates of pay, including penalty rates
- OHS
- PAYG and payroll tax.

To make sure you've got everything covered, see the checklist in Business Victoria's guide [Hiring staff for the first time](#).

## Resources

For a comprehensive overview of everything you need to think about when you're recruiting staff – from conducting a skills gap analysis to writing a formal letter of offer – see the [Staff recruitment](#) section of Business Victoria's website.



# Training

**Training and professional development is important for you and your staff, your business and the industry. You'll find opportunities for professional development through training providers, industry programs and even through your own staff.**

## **Skills gaps and training needs**

If you're one of the many people entering the tourism industry for a career or lifestyle change, you may need to do some training to make sure you have the skills you need for your new business. And as your business grows, you and your staff may need to up-skill to keep up to date with changing business needs. Conducting a skills assessment is the best way to identify your business's skills gaps and training needs.

## **Business and industry benefits**

Not only does training help to keep a business running smoothly, offering professional development opportunities is a great way to attract and keep good staff. Career progression is often a strong motivator for existing and potential employees to join or stay with a business. As such, training and professional development can be a very effective staff retention strategy. It's a good investment for you, your staff member and your business.

It can benefit the wider industry too. If every business commits to staff training it builds a greater Internal Labour Market (ILM). It means that as people change jobs within the industry, they're bringing their skills to each new role and business. This means you're more likely to have a pool of well-trained, skilled people to choose from when you're hiring new staff.



*One of your best resources is your own staff. Make the most of your staff's talent and experience by offering them the opportunity to train other staff.*

## Planning

Ongoing and systematic development for you and your staff takes some planning. Ideally, your workplace skill development program will include:

- skills gap analysis
- training needs analysis
- human resource planning
- individual training plans.

For more tips and templates, see Business Victoria's guide [Train and develop staff](#).

## In-house training

One of your best resources is your own staff. Make the most of your staff's talent and experience by offering them the opportunity to train other staff. It can be a great, cost-effective way to develop everyone's skills – the trainers as well as the trainees.

If you and/or your staff are training others, you may want to consider signing up for a 'train the trainer' or workplace training and assessment course. This can help make sure you provide a consistent standard of training across the business.

## Training providers

Need help? From TAFEs to private training companies, there's a huge number of training providers out there to help with your business needs.

Most organisations can provide tailored training to meet specific business needs, so it's worth building a relationship with a training provider that really understands your business.

When you're looking for training programs for yourself and your staff, aim for nationally accredited courses. Equipping yourself and your staff with nationally recognised qualifications can be a great motivator for learning new skills, and helps to build a better workforce – everyone benefits.

## Industry programs and opportunities

There are plenty of inspiring opportunities to learn new skills without even having to enter a classroom. Industry programs include:

- the annual [Lynette Bergin Tourism Award](#), offered through the Victorian Tourism Industry Council
- the Developing Tourism Leadership programs offered through various Regional Tourism Boards
- the [Young Tourism Network](#)
- Visit Victoria's Tourism Excellence guides and International Mentoring Program
- Destination Melbourne's [Melbourne Tourism Leadership Program](#) (MTLP)
- Business Victoria's [small business workshops](#).
- Australian Tourism Export Council's [ELITE](#) and [KITE](#) programs.

For more details about these and other industry opportunities, see [Industry resources](#).



# Retaining your staff

**When you've got the right staff for your business, you'll want to do everything you can to hold onto them. It's not always all about the money. Simple measures such as offering recognition, professional development opportunities and/or flexible working conditions can all help with staff retention.**

Studies show that while remuneration is a big factor, other aspects such as job satisfaction, a positive working environment and work-life balance are actually more important. Feeling valued as an employee is important too. Recognising staff value and performance is particularly important in high-pressure work environments such as restaurants.

Developing and providing career paths for employees is one way to encourage them to stay and grow within the industry. Sometimes this means being prepared to see employees pursue other career options within the industry. What may feel like a short-term loss may actually provide a long-term benefit to you and your industry. As they say, 'what goes around, comes around'.

Thinking about working conditions and work/life balance is also important. Providing working conditions that fit with your staff's lifestyle can be repaid with greater enthusiasm and loyalty, and can open up a whole new pool of potential employees. For example, structuring a schedule around school hours could be enormously attractive to employees with children. You may be able to structure a job so that it can be shared between two people, or may even work in collaboration with businesses that might otherwise be considered competitors, especially where skills are in short supply.





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**Other simple measures for staff retention include:**

Performance bonuses, special allowances and incentives to increase employee satisfaction

Subsidised dining and accommodation (for staff and close relatives)

Tickets to events and other leisure activities

Regular, formal recognition of performance and achievement (a simple 'thank you' note for a job well done can boost employee satisfaction)

Opportunities for further training and development

Opportunities to perform higher duties and to be temporarily remunerated accordingly

Opportunities to work from home on occasion.

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Looking after your team with well-planned training and supervision can help prevent staff turnover, which can be expensive and disruptive for your business. Strategies to consider include:

- Include a probationary period in your employment contract (usually three months).
- Ensure your staff know what is expected of them (provide written job descriptions that include reporting lines and key performance measures).
- Establish regular catch-ups with your staff to ensure they understand their job requirements and to give them constructive feedback.
- Allocate the necessary supervision time, guidance and training to enable your staff to reach your expected standards.
- Take a genuine interest in workplace wellbeing and pay attention to problems and complaints as they arise sometimes the trigger for a resignation is something that could have been easily dealt with when it first arose.

### **Your responsibilities**

To look after your team (and your business), make sure you know and understand your legal obligations and workplace requirements. See Business Victoria's guide [Employer responsibilities](#).

### **Letting people go**

There are times when it is in the best interests of employer and employee to part ways. Handling the situation professionally and sensitively can lessen the impact it has on the employee and your business.

To make sure you understand your employer responsibilities and to ensure any dismissal is fair and lawful, see the [Ending employment](#) section of the Fair Work Ombudsman website.

# Industry resources

Want to develop your skills, and those of your staff? There are plenty of resources available, from formal training, scholarships and work placements to informal channels such as networking and industry briefings. Many are available for free or at a low cost.

As a starting point, we recommend keeping in touch with industry associations for information about seminars, courses and conferences relevant to your interests and industry sector. (See Networking in Business Excellence.)

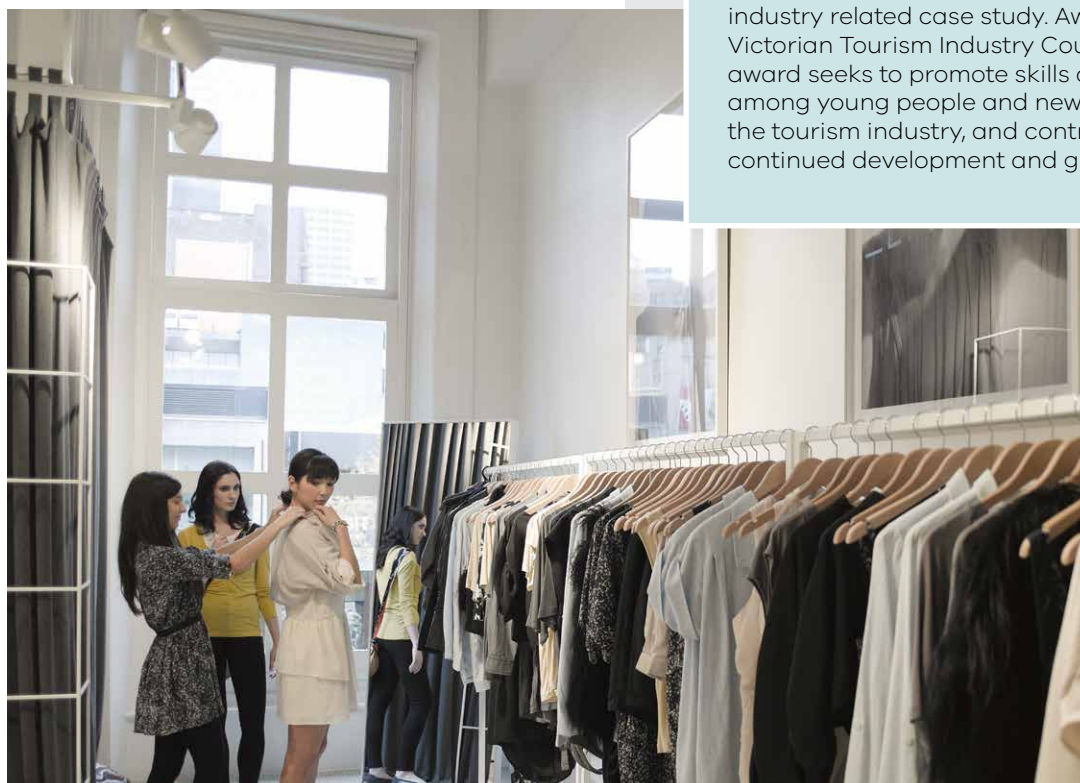
We also recommend the programs and professional development opportunities below:

## Business Victoria

Business Victoria runs low-cost workshops throughout Victoria about recruiting and keeping the right staff. Its [website](#) has lots of great resources and handy templates.

## Lynette Bergin Tourism Award

The annual [Lynette Bergin Tourism Award](#) offers up to \$8,000 for the recipient to undertake an industry related case study. Awarded by the Victorian Tourism Industry Council (VTIC), the award seeks to promote skills and excellence among young people and new entrants in the tourism industry, and contribute to the continued development and growth of tourism.



### Victorian Tourism Awards

The annual [Victorian Tourism Awards](#) is a business development tool designed to increase the level of professionalism and standards across the Victorian tourism industry.

Included among the various categories are three individual awards that recognise personal and professional achievement and contributions:

- Outstanding Contribution By An Individual
- Outstanding Contribution By An Volunteer
- Young Achievers Award.

### Young Tourism Network

The [Young Tourism Network](#) (YTN) is a Victorian member-based networking group that aims to connect young people in the Victorian tourism industry and all affiliated sectors and businesses, such as travel, leisure, hospitality, marketing and events. The network is run by a committee of members who work and study within tourism related fields.

### Vocational Education & Training in Secondary Schools

[VET in Schools](#) (VETiS) provides a vocationally oriented program of studies for senior secondary students. VETiS programs are typically delivered through partnerships between schools, industry and Registered Training Organisations, and often include opportunities for students to participate in structured workplace learning.

### Melbourne Tourism Leadership Program

The [Melbourne Tourism Leadership Program](#) (MTLP) is a leadership course delivered annually by Destination Melbourne, designed for people seeking to build networks, refine their leadership skills and be an active part of Melbourne's future growth as a global visitor destination.

### Vocational and tertiary education co-op programs

Many vocational and tertiary education providers include work placement programs as part of the training they deliver. The programs are designed to reinforce learning through direct workplace experience and to prepare students for the workplace. For employers, involvement in these programs can provide the opportunity to see how potential recruits operate in the workplace and can form part of a structured recruitment strategy.

Contact your local vocational or tertiary education provider for details.

