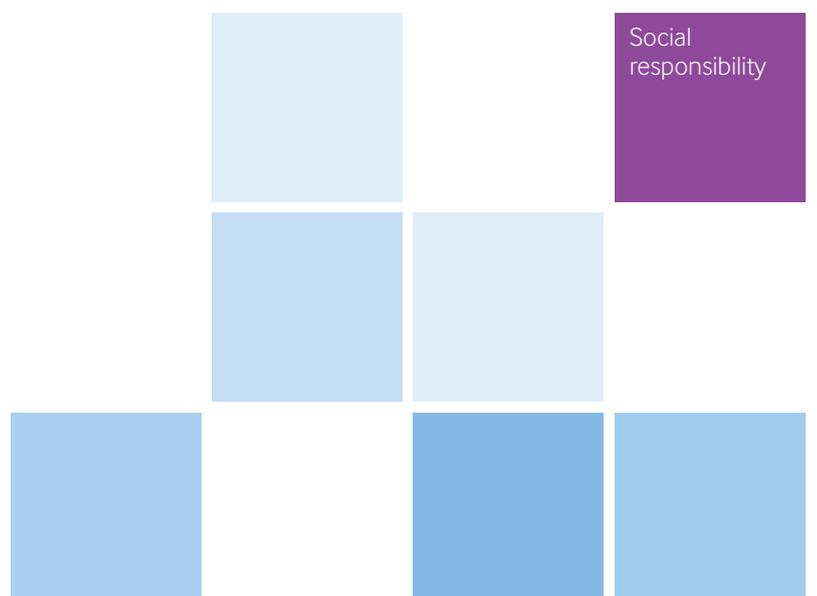


Community liaison officer team management toolkit

Tool 4

Recruitment planner



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Tool 4

Recruitment planner

IPIECA

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Purpose of this tool

This tool helps managers to plan the recruitment process. It focuses on five key areas of recruitment:

- 1) preparation;
- 2) advertising recruitment;
- 3) designing interviews;
- 4) candidate selection; and
- 5) interview follow-up.

The aim is to offer a range of methods and techniques that can be used in these different phases, together with a commentary on their usage. The planner incorporates generic good practice for successful recruitment, with a focus on the steps and processes that are of particular relevance to the recruitment of community liaison officers (CLOs).

Planning for successful recruitment

PREPARATION

Prior to designing CLO teams and recruiting CLOs, managers need to carry out the relevant background analysis into the local community context. The availability of ideal candidates will vary significantly, and the talent pool from which CLOs can be recruited may be limited. It is important for managers to understand this dynamic as they plan the desired team structure and composition prior to recruitment.

There is a lot of guidance on early community engagement and how to understand the community context. A suggested reference is the IFC's Good Practice Handbook entitled *A strategic approach to early stakeholder engagement: A good practice handbook for junior companies in the extractive industries*.¹ While aimed primarily at junior companies, it is relevant to all sizes of company doing early stakeholder engagement and has some useful advice on how to familiarize yourself with the local social landscape.

At this point it may be beneficial to hire a temporary Community Relations Advisor to inform the analysis and assist in planning and preparing the recruitment process.

ADVERTISING RECRUITMENT

Recruitment advertising needs to reach a wide audience, including local communities, some of which may be difficult to reach using standard approaches aimed at the wider audiences. An effective recruitment drive will employ a combination of methods. Table 1 on page 4 offers a selection of possible ways in which CLO jobs might be advertised, together with the pros and cons of each approach.

¹ IFC (2014). *A strategic approach to early stakeholder engagement: A good practice handbook for junior companies in the extractive industries*. International Finance Corporation, World Bank Group, Washington, D.C.
<http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/784051524469298172/A-strategic-approach-to-early-stakeholder-engagement-a-good-practice-handbook-for-junior-companies-in-the-extractive-industries>

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Table 1 Recruitment advertising methods—the pros and cons

METHOD	PROS	CONS
Advertising via local/national government employment agency	This is often an established method for advertising jobs locally and nationally. There is likely to be a system in place to advertise, while they are also likely to have current lists of job seekers.	Employment agencies may not reach all potential candidates, and may be based only in larger settlements.
Newspaper advertisements	Widely distributed; easy for companies to place advertisements.	Newspapers may not be distributed locally (i.e. at village level) and may not be published in local languages.
Radio advertisements	Radio often reaches a wider audience than print media, and often reaches smaller outlying settlements. Local language radio programmes can be heard and understood by those who cannot understand the language used in newspapers.	It may be complicated for companies to work with local radio stations in local languages.
Social media platforms	Social media platforms, such as Facebook, are widely used in certain contexts, and are particularly relevant for the younger generation.	Some potential candidates may not have access to the Internet or to social media platforms.
Community notice boards	These tend to be seen by all community members.	Visiting all local settlements may require travelling long distances, and travel may not be easy.
Nomination by community leaders	It may be convenient to work with local leaders; candidates will be trusted by the leadership.	Candidates may not be trusted by the wider community. There is potential for corrupt practices if government and public officials are involved in the hiring of company staff.
Selection by a private agent	A private agent could be hired to manage a whole programme of recruitment and simplify the process.	Private agents may not reach, or may not be trusted by, the local communities.
Recruiting from within the company	Local workers are known already, and are familiar with the project.	Local workers represent a limited pool of people, and may not have the required social/community skills.
Information distributed via existing local workers on the project	Information can be passed from workers who live in the local community to their friends and relatives. Local workers will be familiar with the project and be able to deliver information directly, either by word of mouth or by distributing pamphlets or putting up notices on community notice boards.	Companies will need to set in place clear processes for local candidates to pass on their CVs and job applications if they are going to do so via other local workers; there could be confusion, perceived conflicts of interest, or other difficulties if, for example, applications are lost.

DESIGNING THE INTERVIEWS

Interviews need to be designed to build a broad appreciation of the candidate’s skills and competencies. Table 2 suggests a number of different interview techniques, and describes how they might provide insights into particular skills, competencies and personal attributes that are required for the CLO role. Not all the techniques will be required in each interview, and managers will have to judge themselves which techniques are most likely to provide insights into each candidate.

Table 2 Suggested interview techniques

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	COMPETENCIES TO BE TESTED
Open discussion with questions	The candidate is invited to talk freely about their experience and skills, and about how they believe these are relevant to the job.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to understand the requirements of the job. ● Familiarity with, and understanding of, the local situation. ● Confidence/understanding of the candidate’s own ability to do the job.
Presentation by the candidate on dealing with challenges	A short presentation (with or without visual aids) by the candidate on a project they have been involved in, or on other relevant experience. The candidate explains how they dealt with a particular challenge or challenges. This is followed by a question and answer session.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Verbal communication skills. ● Presentation skills. ● Problem-solving capabilities. ● Ability to respond to challenging questions. ● Technical skills if using visual aids.
Analysis of a short article on the local situation	The candidate reads a short (e.g. half-page) article on a topic related to the local community or local society. He/she is then asked to select and explain key highlights and what these tell them about the local situation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Analytical skills. ● Familiarity with, and understanding of, the local situation. ● Understanding which aspects are sufficiently important to be highlighted, and which are not.
Explaining a basic procedure	The candidate is presented with a written procedure (e.g. a simplified grievance mechanism or emergency response procedure), and is asked to study it for five minutes and then explain the procedure in simple terms to the interviewers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to explain procedures clearly to community members. ● Ability to read and absorb written information under pressure.
Stakeholder mapping exercise	The candidate is asked to draw a stakeholder map of their own community and explain it to interviewers. If they are unsure of the concept of stakeholder mapping they should be asked to describe different stakeholder groups within their community, and explain how their interests and needs differ.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Stakeholder mapping skills. ● Understanding of community dynamics. ● Descriptive/explanatory skills.
Scenario work (ethical dilemma)	The candidate is presented with a scenario involving an ethical dilemma, such as a conflict of interest, and asked how they would deal with it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Problem-solving capabilities. ● Integrity. ● Ability to recognize and deal with ethical dilemmas.

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Tool 4: Recruitment planner

Planning for successful recruitment

Table 2 Suggested interview techniques (continued)

METHOD	DESCRIPTION	COMPETENCIES TO BE TESTED
Team scenario work (problem solving)	Two or three candidates are invited to solve a problem together using a role-play format. This might be an imagined community grievance (prepared by the interviewers), with candidates playing the roles of the CLO and the complainant(s), with the CLO responding to the complaint.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to work as a team. ● Leadership skills. ● Problem-solving capabilities. ● Ability to diffuse potentially tense situations.
Team scenario work (reporting)	One or two candidates observe the role play (above), and record and report on the outcomes and key learning.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Observation skills. ● Ability to record people's concerns and views accurately.
Reporting activity	The candidate is presented with a scenario and is asked to file a short report using a reporting form.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Simple written language skills. ● Ability to follow reporting forms. ● Ability to write short reports, capturing key points concisely.
Information management	The candidate is presented with various pieces of information, such as the results of an imaginary community consultation meeting, and asked to arrange them into given categories.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to make sense of relatively complex data. ● Ability to organize information into defined categories.
Key performance indicators (KPIs) exercise	The candidate is asked to choose from a range of KPIs to monitor a situation or the delivery of particular objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic monitoring and reporting techniques. ● Understanding of KPIs.
Identifying modes of community engagement	The candidate is presented with a number of short scenarios and asked which form of community engagement each one represents, i.e.: 1) information sharing; 2) engagement; 3) consultation; 4) negotiation; and 5) consent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ability to differentiate between different modes of community engagement.
Essay writing	The candidate is asked to write a short essay (1–2 pages) on a community development topic.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Advanced written language skills. ● Ability to form an argument. ● Report writing.
Interpreting	The candidate is asked to interpret from a local language into the project language.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic interpreting skills. ● Ability to explain issues clearly.
Numeracy test	The candidate is asked to complete a short numeracy test, based on tasks that they may be required to complete as CLOs, e.g. budgeting for a visit to an outlying community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Basic numeracy. ● Ability to use figures in planning. ● Ability to understand some of the logistics associated with CLO work.
Technology test	The candidate is asked to demonstrate their skills in using a range of technologies that are required for the CLO role, e.g. smartphone, computer, social media programmes, online reporting forms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A range of technological capabilities.

CANDIDATE SELECTION

While the techniques listed in Table 2 aim to help in the difficult task of testing the skills and personal attributes of candidates, the selection decision itself is not necessarily going to be made easier by gaining these insights. The decision is likely to be subjective and therefore may be difficult to explain to others, including the community itself.

Challenges might include:

- the reliability (or otherwise) of documentation;
- the quality of qualifications;
- language; and
- decision-making and the potential for corruption.

One solution to the above is to take a panel approach to candidate selection so that no single person is involved in the selection. Overall, the recruitment process needs to be as transparent as possible, both in the advertising, in communicating the selection process to candidates, and in the follow-up.

INTERVIEW FOLLOW-UP

The follow-up after CLO interviews needs to be systematic and thorough. Table 3 provides a suggested list of actions that can be taken following the interviews.

Table 3 Suggested follow-up actions after conducting the interviews

ACTION	PURPOSE	METHOD
Provide feedback to unsuccessful applicants	To ensure that all unsuccessful applicants for CLO positions receive a reply, if possible with some feedback on their performance and suggestions about further opportunities if appropriate. This is particularly important for local community applicants, as they will be in contact with the successful applicants in the future.	Write letters to unsuccessful applicants. If possible these should be individually drafted—this is particularly important for applicants from the local community.
Introduce the CLO(s) to the community	To ensure that the community understands what the CLO(s) will be doing in the community, how they will be able to help local residents, and how they will be able to communicate in the future.	Hold meetings with community leaders, and general community meetings, and distribute leaflets (e.g. with a summary of the grievance process and the name of the CLO to contact in case of a grievance).
Review individual job descriptions	To ensure that job descriptions meet the requirements established in Steps 1–3* and captured in the CLO Team Plan. * See the 'step-by-step guide' presented in Section 2 of the IPIECA Community liaison officers team building and management guidance .	Compare the full set of team job descriptions against the CLO Team Plan, based on the (project-specific) master list of community-facing responsibilities described in Tool 1 . Ensure that all responsibilities allocated to the CLO team can be met by the current team; consider how to fill any gaps (e.g. through training, collaboration with other teams, etc.).

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Table 3 Suggested follow-up actions after conducting the interviews (continued)

ACTION	PURPOSE	METHOD
<i>Review individual job descriptions (continued)</i>	<p>To ensure that job descriptions are appropriate to the individual CLOs, and that CLOs will not be expected to do tasks that they are not suited for.</p> <p>To identify gaps to be addressed through training.</p>	<p>Review individual job descriptions with CLOs to make sure they are happy with what they are being expected to do; use Tool 2: Competency framework to ensure that roles and responsibilities are appropriate to the level at which the CLO has been hired.</p>
Review the CLO team structure	<p>To ensure that the CLO team structure is sufficient to meet the requirements established in Steps 1–3* and captured in the CLO Team Plan.</p> <p>To ensure complementarity between CLO roles within the team. To ascertain whether the proposed team structure poses any risks for the well-being of CLOs, e.g. potential lack of backup support, and seek ways to address these risks. To ensure that the necessary support structures are in place, e.g. logistics/administration.</p> <p><i>* See the 'step-by-step guide' presented in Section 2 of the IPIECA Community liaison officers team building and management guidance.</i></p>	<p>Review roles and responsibilities in an open team meeting, encouraging discussion of strengths, weaknesses and mutual support. Encourage questions from CLOs about what they will be expected to do and what challenges they envisage.</p> <p>Identify any potential gaps that may need to be filled with logistical, administrative or management support, or through collaboration with other teams.</p>
Review the decision-making structure	<p>To assess whether CLOs have the appropriate levels of authority to make decisions in challenging situations.</p>	<p>Have the CLO team undertake a scenario exercise, testing out a number of different scenarios where CLOs will be required to make tough decisions. Invite CLOs to think up their own scenarios to work on as a group.</p>
Review communication channels	<p>To determine how CLOs will communicate with the team manager and other relevant teams.</p>	<p>Arrange a meeting with representatives of the other teams to: (a) get to know one another; and (b) discuss communication challenges.</p>
Review the CLO team's ability to meet the needs of the community	<p>To ensure that the CLO team is capable of meeting the needs of the community, including those of vulnerable groups.</p>	<p>Hold a CLO team meeting to consider issues such as community power structures and vulnerable groups. Use scenarios to test out CLOs' abilities to address challenging situations.</p>
Review the community risk profile	<p>To ensure that the CLO team is sufficiently resilient to face community risks. If there are any significant risks, to ensure that these are mitigated so that CLOs are not put at any risk simply through doing their daily job.</p>	<p>Review risk assessments together with the CLO team and ensure that all risks are mitigated. Identify potential areas of significant risk and assess whether further support from other teams is required. Seek this support if necessary.</p>
Check budget sufficiency	<p>To determine whether the available budget is sufficient to support the recruited team to fulfil the desired roles and responsibilities.</p>	<p>Check that the CLO Team Plan is fully funded. If there are gaps that could pose a risk to the project, inform senior management.</p>

IPIECA

IPIECA is the global oil and gas industry association for environmental and social issues. It develops, shares and promotes good practices and knowledge to help the industry improve its environmental and social performance, and is the industry's principal channel of communication with the United Nations.

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