A guide to creating a supported returner program

The map below provides a high-level overview of the stages of developing the returner program. The tools to support you during each phase can be found on page 12.



your business will be critical in supporting you to mobilise teams and create energy for the program.



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essential criteria.

EVALUATE AND ADJUST

It is useful to consider the supported returner program as a process that is always evolving. With that mindset, program managers should regularly collect qualitative and quantitative feedback from both returners, their managers, and other team members about their experiences of the program and improvement opportunities. Feedback should aid adaptation and further development of the program.

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SUPPORTIVE ECOSYSTEMS

Aiding a sense of belonging is a critical success factor for individuals returning to work. Providing a robust support framework that assists returners to form relationships and build networks will likely help maximise returner satisfaction and lead to a more successful and permanent hire.



INTERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT

The assessment process must be relevant and comfortable for the candidate while also enabling the business to determine fit. The focus of the interview should be on creating a relaxed and friendly environment for individuals whose confidence may be low. Interviewers should consider the values and behaviours of candidates, as well as determining technical knowledge and experience. The goal should be to unearth the transferable skills and experiences from both the working and personal lives of the candidate. A successful process will ensure that the candidate thoroughly understands the shape of the program on offer so they can make an informed decision.



EMBED

Once you have successfully implemented a returner program, you will be well placed to build your learnings into your ongoing talent strategy. Many of the learnings from running a returner program can be disseminated more broadly across your business to foster an inclusive culture and support the attraction and retention of a more diverse workforce.

THE RETURNER JOURNEY

While induction programs often begin the day the employee commences at a business, best practice suggests that this process begin as soon as the returner is offered and accepts the job. Consider the supports that may be required before the first date of employment and identify the training needs ahead of time, to help returners deliver in their new roles as quickly as possible.

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