

Specialists in the recruitment of Polish workers

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10 tips for using overseas labour effectively

By Chris Slay, Director, Skills Provision

Overseas employees are an alternative source of labour from artisan to architect and is not a cheap form of labour. There is now international competition for labour as we live in a global village.

The following is based on our 10 years' experience of using overseas labour, the last three being Eastern European, principally Poles

1. Prepare a reasonably detailed job description. This will help your agency meet your expectations and it will speed up the process. Include in this the language level that is desirable.
2. Consider the rate you wish to pay. This should always be in excess of the minimum wage rate, otherwise you will get a high turnover of staff. We will give advice on this once we have seen the job description.
3. To create focus we strongly recommend a performance related bonus scheme linked to each client's priorities. We will give advice on this once we have seen the job description.
4. Consider whether it is appropriate to inform your workforce that overseas workers may be joining. We would strongly recommend this and that you treat overseas workers as part of the team.
5. Consider Health & Safety issues especially signage.
6. Check out your recruitment agency at www.gla.gov.uk. This will list all agencies that are authorized by the GLA (Gangmasters Licensing Authority). If your agency is not shown as being licensed further enquiries should be made
7. Ensure your agency is adhering to current regulations in terms of registering workers with the Home Office UK Border Agency? Ignorance is no excuse and individual fines of up to £10,000 per offence can be levied
8. Ask whether your agency will help the workers with other requirements eg establishing a bank account, making National Insurance appointments.
9. If housing is provided it is prudent to reserve the right to inspect. Two to a room is common practice, any more should be questioned. The costs will vary throughout the country but should be no more than the costs of independent accommodation. Indeed a small discount is normally available.
10. If transport is available reserve the right to check any vehicle. It is common practice to use old "throwaway" vehicles but they should be maintained adequately and have an MOT certificate.

Most of these points are covered in more detail at www.skillsprovision.co.uk but do not hesitate to email me at enquiries@skillsprovision.co.uk or call me on 07977 131 389.