Hiring: building the right team.

Attributes that makes a good team member.

Job descriptions are great, but they are deliberately focused on the tasks needed to fulfill a position

Character attributes are as important and sometimes they are only become evident over time. In a job interview try to structure questions and listen intently to identify the traits of the candidate.

These traits make a good design employee:

» **Curiosity**: Curious people are always learning because they are continually questioning and challenging conventions. They introduce a fresh perspective to an old problem.

» **Empathy**: Great team members imagine their feet in the shoes of others – other designers, other clients, and/or the end market. They are tuned to connect. That's a good thing.

» **Generosity**: Having great knowledge/talents/skills as an individual isn't half as valuable as sharing one's knowledge/talent/skills. Generous employees are great team players.

» **Egoless:** Designers have to believe everything they present is perfect but that ego needs to be tempered with a good dose of humility and the ability to accept differing opinions. Egoless employees don't care who came up with what idea. They are more interested in finding the right solution than in holding on to the belief that they have already found the one right answer.

» **Communicator:** Great ideas mean zilch if they are stored in someone's head. Being able to articulate why a design is perfect/the market is too broad/the strategy isn't sound, is invaluable.

» **Flexibility**: Design studios are commercial businesses built to deliver a product or service to market. Preciousness is not a trait you want. Flexibility to change is paramount. It's entirely possible designs will undergo a plethora of changes and might even be scrapped altogether. There is no room for even a hint of preciousness. Flexibility suits the agile approach: produce ideas quickly, provide timely feedback and push for rapid iterations of a concept. It's much harder to get attached to ideas that are produced quickly than to something that took weeks.

The interview.

There are many resources available that outline what to ask, see and do in an interview. If you're not confident in conducting an interview, research the skills needed or hire someone else to interview on your behalf.

Watch and listen.

During the interview, make every second and every action count. Observe well – notice stuff. Sometimes it's the unsaid and body language that say more than anything else.

Be prepared.

Don't waste time looking for things or reading an earlier sent CV in front of the candidate. Craft questions beforehand to get started but don't be afraid to go off script.

Smile.

It's the first step to ensuring the candidate is at ease. Nobody presents well when they are nervous.

Don't interrogate.

The better the interview process the less chance of a bad hire but that doesn't necessarily mean longer interviews are better.

Two x 30 minute interviews may tell more about a candidate than an hour interrogation. It means both sides have had time to regroup, digest the conversation, and think about what else needs to be covered.

Manage expectations.

If it's not a fulltime job, say so. And be transparent about who will make the final decision and when. Have empathy. Most of us have sat at both sides of the table.