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Recruitment, Selection and Onboarding in Retail

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Agenda



1. Welcome and Introduction
2. Recruitment and Selection
3. 6 Steps to Recruitment & Onboarding
4. Group Activity
5. Break
6. Interviewing Candidates
7. Onboarding and Induction
8. Future Trends

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Learning Aim and Outcomes

The Aim of this workshop is to give you an understanding of the key stages and procedures in Recruitment, Selection and Onboarding within the Retail sector.

By the end of this work shop you will be able to:

- Understand the importance of attracting new talent and the changes in recruitment and selection and how to manage it effectively.
- Explain the different approaches to recruitment and selection of Retail employees.
- Discuss how to have an effective Induction and Onboarding program for Retail employees.

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Recruitment and Selection

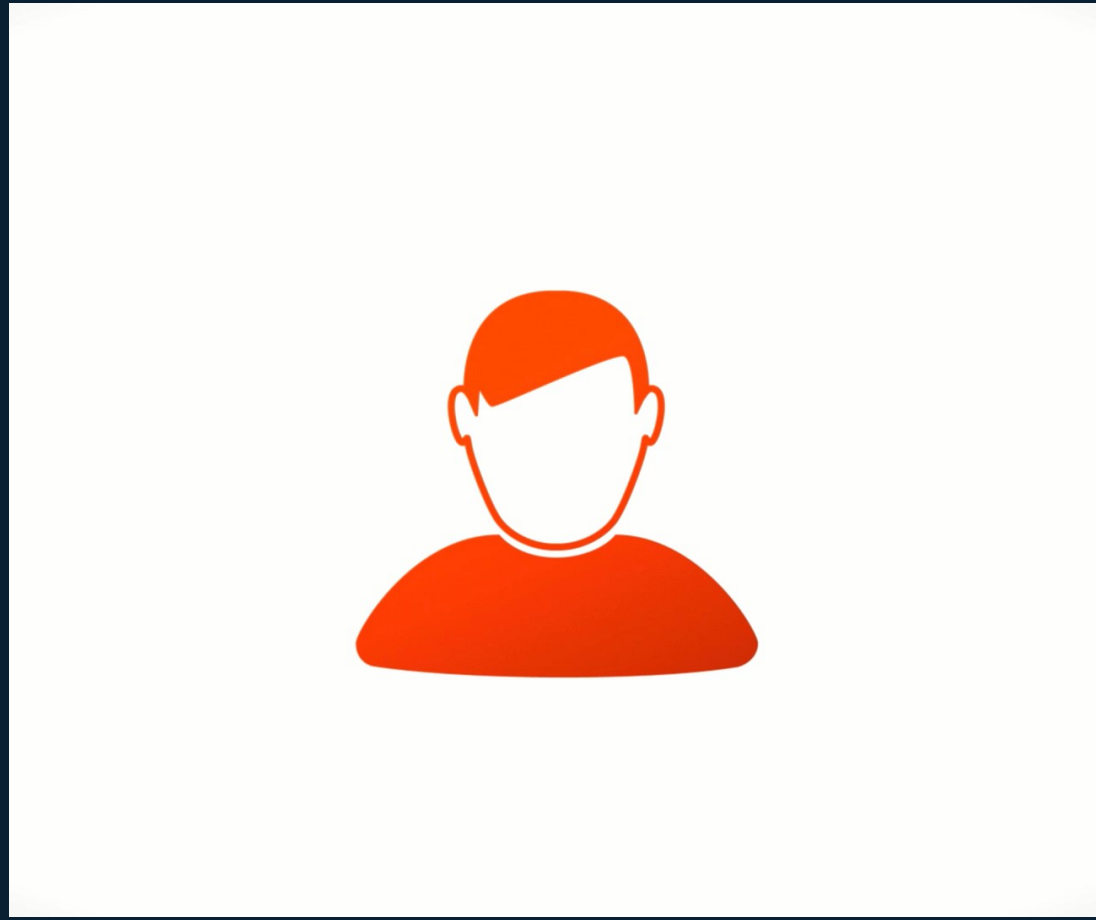
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What is Recruitment and Selection

Recruitment is the process of identifying and attracting potential candidates.

Selection is choosing the most suitable candidate from those attracted.

In Retail, where turnover is often high, effective recruitment and selection are critical to maintaining excellent customer service.



Why Recruitment matters in Retail

In Retail, employees are the **“face of the brand”**.

- If wrong hiring decisions are made they can impact the brand experience faced by customers.
- Poor hiring decisions can lead to poor customer experiences, higher turnover, and financial losses.
- Effective recruitment improves customer satisfaction, increases sales, and strengthens brand loyalty.

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Changes in Recruitment and Selection



Traditional job ads are being replaced by online portals and social media.



Video interviews and AI screening tools are now common.



There is a growing focus on soft skills like customer service attitude, not just experience.



Retailers seek adaptability and tech-savvy employees due to new in-store technologies.

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Digitalization and Social Media

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Job seekers use LinkedIn, Indeed, and Instagram to find Retail jobs.



Retail brands showcase company culture online to attract talent.



Instant communication and quick application processes are expected.

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Why Attracting Talent is Critical in Retail

Having the right staff means:

- Better customer service.
- Increased sales.
- Stronger brand image.

Lower recruitment costs over time. Retailers must actively seek out people who match their brand's values and service standards.



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Talent Attraction Strategies for Retail

- Engaging job advertisements.
- Social media marketing of career opportunities.
- Employee referral programs.
- Partnerships with universities or training providers.



The Role of Employer Branding in Recruitment

Employer branding shows why working for your company is great. Example: Starbucks promotes employee benefits ("partners") and career progression. A strong employer brand attracts candidates who align with company culture.



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Diversity and Inclusion in Talent Attraction



Retailers must represent the diversity of their customers.



Inclusive hiring brings varied ideas and perspectives.



Initiatives may include diverse job boards, unconscious bias training, and celebrating cultural events.

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6 Steps to Recruitment and Onboarding

6 Steps to Recruitment and Onboarding in Retail



1. Preparing
2. Sourcing
3. Screening
4. Selecting
5. Hiring
6. Onboarding

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Step 1- Preparing the Recruitment Process

Defining	Defining the role clearly.
Setting	Setting timelines.
Deciding	Deciding recruitment channels.
Establishing	Establishing who is responsible for each step.

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Defining the Job



Job Descriptions: Duties, responsibilities, working conditions.

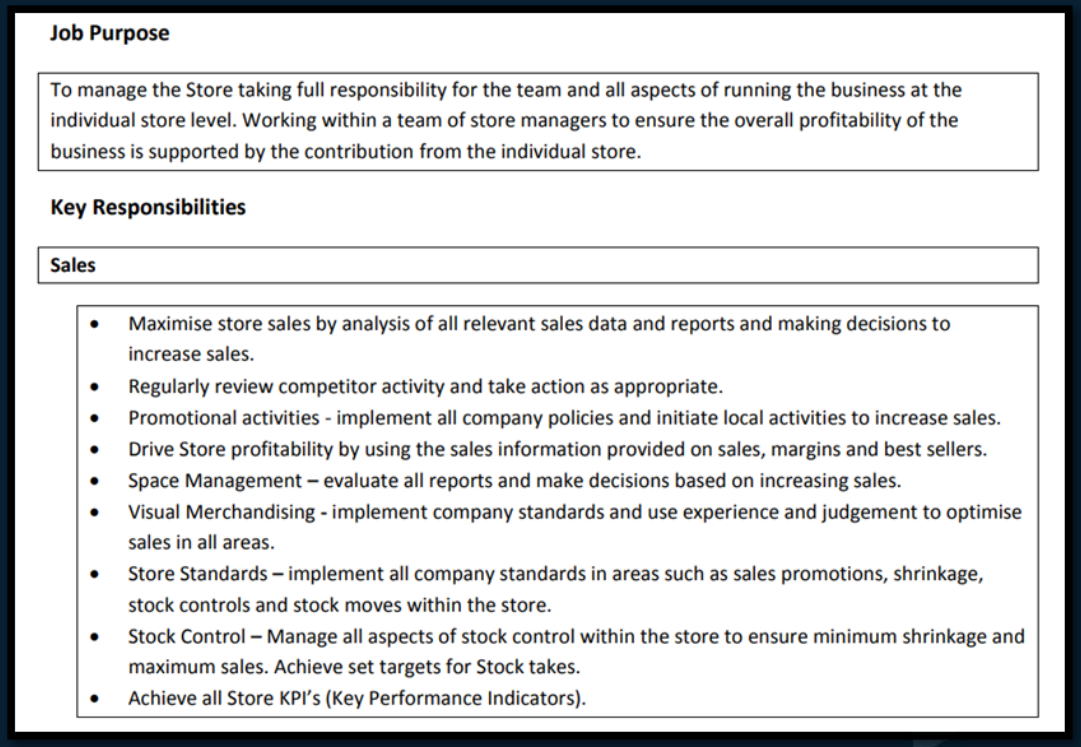


Person Specifications: Skills, qualifications, experience, personal attributes.

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Effective Job Description

- ✓ **Clarity –** Define the role and responsibilities
- ✓ **Attractiveness –** Use compelling language
- ✓ **Inclusivity –** Avoid biased terms/inclusiveness



Job Purpose

To manage the Store taking full responsibility for the team and all aspects of running the business at the individual store level. Working within a team of store managers to ensure the overall profitability of the business is supported by the contribution from the individual store.

Key Responsibilities

Sales

- Maximise store sales by analysis of all relevant sales data and reports and making decisions to increase sales.
- Regularly review competitor activity and take action as appropriate.
- Promotional activities - implement all company policies and initiate local activities to increase sales.
- Drive Store profitability by using the sales information provided on sales, margins and best sellers.
- Space Management – evaluate all reports and make decisions based on increasing sales.
- Visual Merchandising - implement company standards and use experience and judgement to optimise sales in all areas.
- Store Standards – implement all company standards in areas such as sales promotions, shrinkage, stock controls and stock moves within the store.
- Stock Control – Manage all aspects of stock control within the store to ensure minimum shrinkage and maximum sales. Achieve set targets for Stock takes.
- Achieve all Store KPI's (Key Performance Indicators).

Ideal Candidate Profile

Skills

Communication, teamwork.

Values

Passion for retail, customer focus.

Experience

Required or desirable.

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Internal and External Recruitment

Internal Recruitment:

Promotes loyalty and career progression.

Fills vacancies faster.

External Recruitment:

Brings fresh ideas.

Wider talent pool.

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Step 2- Sourcing Candidates

- Job Boards
- Company Website
- Networking
- Recruitment Agencies
- Employee Referral Scheme
- Online platforms



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Traditional and Modern Methods

Traditional:

- Newspaper ads.
- Store window posters.

Modern:

- Online job boards.
- Social media.
- Recruitment apps.

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Online Portals and Social Media



Indeed, LinkedIn for job postings.



Instagram to showcase company culture.



TikTok resumes and campaigns targeting candidates.

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Recruitment Agencies

Save time.

Provide access to pre-screened candidates.

Are useful for high-volume hiring (e.g., seasonal retail jobs).

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Employee Referrals and Promotions



Referral programs tap into current employees' networks.



Promoting from within boosts morale and retention.

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Screening Applications

- Screening checks candidates meet minimum criteria.
- Tools like ATS (Applicant Tracking Systems) automatically filter CVs.



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Step 3- Attracting Diverse Candidates



- ✓ Inclusive language
- ✓ Diverse Job Boards
- ✓ Employer Branding
- ✓ Training & Development

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AI in Retail

- AI being increasingly used for following recruitment tasks:
  - **Workforce planning** – identify skills gaps and analysing market data
  - **Sourcing** candidates through LinkedIn and other platforms
  - Developing **job descriptions**
  - **Screening**
  - Pre employment **assessments**
  - **Interviewing** and **Selection**
  - **Onboarding**

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The Role of DEI in Attracting and Hiring Candidates

- **Enhances Employer Appeal-** A strong commitment to DEI significantly boosts a company's attractiveness to job seekers and up to 67% of job seekers consider workplace diversity an important factor when evaluating job offers.
- **Expands Talent Pool-** Implementing DEI practices broadens the range of potential candidates by reaching out to underrepresented groups, thereby enriching the talent pool with diverse perspectives and experiences.

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The Role of DEI in Attracting and Hiring Candidates

- **Candidate Experience-** Inclusive hiring processes, such as using unbiased language in job descriptions and diverse interview panels, create a more welcoming environment for applicants, leading to a better overall candidate experience.
- **Drives Innovation and Performance-** Diverse teams are more innovative and perform better. Companies with inclusive workforces are 36% more likely to outperform their competitors.
- **Organizational Values**: A visible commitment to DEI demonstrates that a company values fairness and equity, which can resonate with candidates seeking employers whose values align with their own.

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How to have DEI part of the Recruitment and Hiring Process

- **Craft Inclusive Job Descriptions:** Use neutral, inclusive language in job postings to attract a broader range of candidates. Avoid gender-coded terms and jargon that may deter underrepresented applicants. Highlight your organization's commitment to DEI to signal an inclusive workplace culture.
- **Expand Candidate Sourcing Channels:** Broaden your recruitment outreach by engaging with diverse talent pools. This includes posting on job boards that cater to underrepresented groups, partnering with community organizations, and attending diversity-focused career events.

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How to have DEI part of the Recruitment and Hiring Process

- **Implement Structured and Unbiased Screening Processes:** Adopt standardized evaluation criteria and consider blind recruitment techniques to minimize unconscious bias. This ensures that candidates are assessed based on skills and qualifications rather than personal characteristics.
- **Provide DEI Training for Hiring Teams:** Equip all individuals involved in the hiring process with training on unconscious bias and inclusive interviewing practices. Regular training helps maintain awareness and fosters a more equitable evaluation of candidates.

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Group Activity

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Break Time



Step 4- Interviewing Candidates



- ✓ Plan and agree an interview process
- ✓ Consistent questions based on job description, ensuring fair evaluation.
- ✓ Nine grounds for Discrimination
- ✓ STAR Technique
- ✓ Diversity in Interview Panels
- ✓ Structured marking technique

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Conducting Interviews



Structured interviews (same questions for all).



Unstructured (more conversational).



Panel interviews (several interviewers).



Group interviews (observe teamwork).

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Using Tests and Assessments

- Situational Judgement Tests.
- Role-playing customer service scenarios.
- Competency based interview assessments.
- Personality tests to assess fit with company culture.

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DEI in Interviewing

1. **Standardize Interview Questions and Evaluation Criteria:** Develop a consistent set of interview questions and a standardized scoring rubric for all candidates. This approach minimizes unconscious bias by ensuring each applicant is assessed equally based on relevant competencies and experiences.
2. **Assemble a Diverse Interview Panel:** Include interviewers from varied backgrounds and departments to bring multiple perspectives to the evaluation process. A diverse panel can enhance objectivity and demonstrate the organization's commitment to inclusivity.
3. **Provide DEI Training for Interviewers:** Offer training sessions focused on recognizing and mitigating unconscious bias, as well as conducting inclusive interviews. Educated interviewers are better equipped to create an equitable and respectful interview experience for all candidates.

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9 Grounds for Discrimination

In Ireland, the Equal Status Acts 2000–2018 and Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 prohibit discrimination in employment, vocational training, advertising, collective agreements, and the provision of goods and services. Discrimination is unlawful on nine distinct grounds, each protecting a specific aspect of individual identity or circumstance:

1. **Gender Discrimination** based on being male, female, or non-binary (including transgender). It includes unequal treatment in areas such as pay, promotion, or job roles due to one's gender identity or gender expression.

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9 Grounds for Discrimination

2. **Civil Status** Covers all legally recognized civil statuses: single, married, separated, divorced, widowed, in a civil partnership, or a former civil partner. For example, a single applicant not being hired because they aren't seen as "stable" would fall under this ground.

3. **Family Status** Protects individuals who are parents of children under 18 or who care for a person with a disability. Discrimination might include refusal of flexible hours for a parent or caregiver.

4**. Sexual Orientation** Protects people who are heterosexual, homosexual, bisexual, or otherwise. It is unlawful to treat someone less favorably because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

5. **Religion** Includes all faiths, as well as those with no religious belief. Employers and service providers must not discriminate based on religious belief, practice, or non-belief.

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9 Grounds for Discrimination

6. **Age** Applies to all ages over 16 in employment and over 18 in the provision of goods and services. Age discrimination may involve older people being overlooked for training or promotion, or younger people being excluded due to perceived inexperience.

7. **Disability** Covers physical, intellectual, learning, cognitive, emotional disabilities, or mental health conditions. Employers and service providers are required to make reasonable accommodations, such as accessible facilities or adapted duties.

8. **Race** Includes race, skin colour, nationality, ethnic origin, and national origin. It is illegal to treat someone unfairly because they belong to a different racial or ethnic group, whether Irish or non-Irish.

9**. Membership of the Traveller Community** Specifically protects members of the Traveller community, a distinct ethnic group in Ireland. Discrimination here includes denial of services, education, employment, or accommodation based on Traveller identity.

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STAR Interview Technique

- The STAR interview technique is a structured method used to answer behavioral interview questions by clearly outlining past experiences. It helps candidates provide concise, relevant, and competent responses.

STAR stands for:

S – Situation: Describe the context or background of the scenario. An Example: “In my previous role, customer complaints were increasing due to long response times.”

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STAR Interview Technique

T – Task: Explain the specific challenge or responsibility you faced. An Example: “I was tasked with reducing our average response time by 30% within three months.”

A – Action: Detail the steps you took to address the task. An Example: “I implemented a new ticketing system and trained the team on quicker triage methods.”

R – Result: Share the outcome, ideally with measurable results. An Example: “We reduced response time by 40%, and customer satisfaction scores rose by 20%.”

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Step 5- Reference Checks

- ✓ Structured questions
- ✓ Legal & ethical considerations

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Reference Check Questions

Always verify the following from reference checks with a previous employer:

1) Past employment history start and finish dates of previous job roles/positions.
2) Reliability from previous employer this may be absenteeism and flexibility within the role with working hours or days.
3) Work ethic and conduct any dismissals or disciplinary.
4) Attitude and behavioral expectations that were carried out in the role.
5) Would the employer rehire the candidate again.

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Legal and Ethical Considerations

- **Obtain Candidate Consent** Always get written or verbal permission from the candidate before contacting references. This protects privacy and complies with data protection laws like the GDPR in Ireland and the EU.
- **Ensure Confidentiality** Handle the information received from references with care. Only share it with individuals directly involved in the hiring decision and store it securely.
- **Avoid Discriminatory Questions** Do not ask references about a candidate's age, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or other protected characteristics. This helps prevent biased or unlawful hiring practices.
- **Verify Accuracy and Relevance** Ask questions that are job-related and fact-based (e.g., performance, attendance, skills). Avoid relying on vague opinions and give the candidate a chance to respond to any critical information.

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Step 6- Onboarding and Induction

- Why do we need to do Onboarding and Inductions?
- How do you carry out an excellent Onboarding and Induction?
- What is the impact of doing these with employees?



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What is Induction and Onboarding



Induction: First few days — welcome, policies, expectations.



Onboarding: First few months — deeper integration into company culture and role.

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Key Components of Induction

- ✓ Meet the team.
- ✓ Store tour.
- ✓ Health and safety briefing.
- ✓ Company values and customer service standards.

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Importance of Structured Onboarding in Retail

Increases retention.

Boosts performance faster.

Improves employee satisfaction.

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3 Pillars to Onboarding

1. Preboarding
2. Orientation & Integration
3. Communication



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Mistakes to Avoid

- Rushing hires.
- Poor communication.
- Ignoring onboarding.
- Not measuring hiring success.

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Retention Starts with Onboarding



Employees decide early if they will stay.



First impressions matter when onboarding.



Onboarding must be engaging and supportive.

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Store Layout

- In retail, the "office" is the floor, the backroom, and the breakroom.
- If these spaces are neglected, employees feel like an afterthought to the merchandise



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Store Layout

- Retail is physically demanding. Providing the right "tools for the body" shows a level of care that fosters loyalty.
- Water coolers, suitable and stylish uniforms, high-quality mats at registers or behind counters
- Sturdy, well-organized shelving and rolling ladders etc…
- Canteen facilities very important
- **Any examples of retail employers making improvements in this area??**

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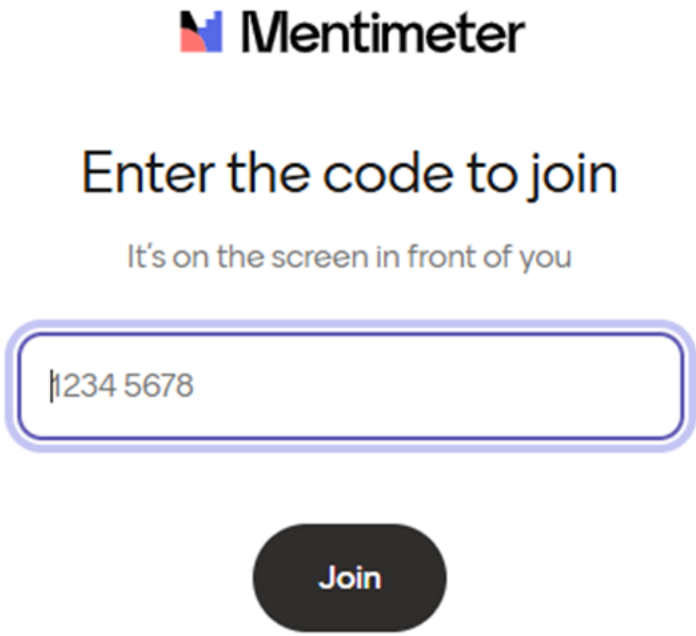
Future Trends

- Virtual Reality job previews.
- AI-driven talent matching.
- Focus on "cultural add" not just "cultural fit."
- Flexible work arrangements.

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Mentimeter Feedback

- Please type into your web browser menti.com and the screen shown should appear.
- Once you are on menti.com please enter the code to access the feedback questions
- Complete the feedback questions from today.



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Thank You

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