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Columnist

Professional Development

5 steps to hiring the best people

When my mentor, the late Jim Cockman, first met with me to help me plan my business, I asked him what CEOs and companies want that I could provide for them. He said, *“Write down these 3 words: Find, Get, Keep. CEOs want to find the best people, get the best people, and keep the best people. You can’t help them find employees, but you can certainly help them get and keep the best people.”*

I’ve been dedicated to doing that for 15 years.

Here are 5 steps my clients (and many Fortune 500 companies) take to be sure they’re hiring the best job applicants.

Determine what behavior the job requires. People who recruit and hire employees feel they know how the job should be performed. Yet when I meet with a client, we discover that people who know the job have very different ideas about what it requires.

Three people from a company, who know the job well, fill out a Work Environment questionnaire. It’s a process that involves ranking statements as if the job itself were talking. The questionnaire says, “This job calls for...” followed by 14 sets of 4 statements. What they choose as the most important aspect of the job is #1; the least important aspect is #4.

You’d be amazed at how they disagree, because they each see the job as *they* would do it, and that can be very different. But they must all come to a consensus after some discussion. When that’s done, they go online and enter that data to get the report. Now, they have a highly accurate picture of the ideal job performance.

Assess the applicants’ behavioral style. There’s no way to determine how a person will do a job based on the job interview. That’s because applicants are on their best behavior and tell recruiters what they think they want to hear. A University of Michigan study found, “The job interview is only 14% accurate.” Before hiring someone, recruiters need to know how they’ll do the job and what motivates them to perform.

The solution is to have applicants first fill out an Interviewing Insights report to determine their natural and adapted (work) behavioral styles.

Assess the applicants' values/attitudes. Next, have applicants complete a Workplace Motivators report, which reveals their values. These are their passions and determine their attitude toward the job. Understanding peoples' values is vital before hiring them. For example, a company would be foolish to hire a salesperson who isn't powerfully motivated by making money. Not everyone is.

Match the applicants' behavioral style to the job profile. Compare the applicants' Interviewing Insights report to the Work Environment profile and hire those whose natural behavioral style comes closest to matching the job profile. These people will do the job the way the company wants it done; they'll be happy and productive, because their job duties require behavior that's natural to them.

Hire those who fit both profiles. Of course, you want to hire those who best fit all the criteria for the job, including their experience, skills, history, drug tests, and the other things you look at before hiring. But your job is only half done if you fail to determine their job fit. You can guess at it and be right 14% of the time. Or you can be sure by using pre-employment behavior and attitudes assessments.

There are many types of employee assessments on the market today and I recommend you begin investigating them if you're not already using them.

So now that you've hired the best, how do you keep them? Easy. By using the information in the assessments, you'll know exactly how to communicate with them, manage them, motivate them, train them, reward them, etc. The assessments give you this information and more.

Then you'll have a people manual for each of your employees, just like you have for your computers and other office equipment.

And which is most important? Jim Collins says in his book *Built to Last*, "People are not your most important asset. The *right* people are."

Annette Estes is a Certified Professional Behavioral and Values Analyst, Coach, and Consultant. She is a professional speaker and author of the book, *Why Can't You See it My Way? Resolving Values Conflicts at Work and Home*. Annette won Matrix Awards in 2004-05 from Women in Communications for her columns in *The Easley Progress*. The Estes Group is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year. Contact Annette through her website at www.CoachAnnette.com.

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