

The Art of Selecting the Right Candidate for the Position

Have you ever hired a candidate who was a perfect match for the job description only to find the person did not have the behaviors (personal talents) needed to be a team player? If you say yes, you are in good company because it happens often in the selection process.

Recently a client reported that a candidate made a great impression in the interview. Candidates, who need a position never become as good a sales person / presenter as when they represent their skills and talents. It is only natural for this to happen especially during this difficult time.

During the time I was offering a Team Building program to my clients, I profiled over 14,000 people whom I worked with one on one for nearly a year. During that time, I discovered there were many employees and managers who were in the wrong line of work for the personal talents they possessed. Their profiles revealed personal stress that some of them reported had been there for many years.

People grow up in environments that drive them to believe the life styles of their parents or guardians are right for them. However, that is not always the case. Most of us develop a set of skills that reward us from an early age but as we grow the first set of skills are no longer valuable so we develop a new set of skills. In addition to this process, we begin to form a set of behaviors that either matches our skill set or not. If they do not, the person becomes stressed until the behaviors and skills become coordinated, and the person becomes balanced and productive.

The trick for the hiring manager and the candidate is to match the candidate to the position. One would think that the candidate should know if the position they are applying for is right for them but this is not the case for many hires. When employees or managers are in work environments that do not match their personal talents, their stress levels will go up little by little every day. The candidate's resume states his/her work history is similar to the position you need to fill. However, if you do not have accurate information about what personal talents they possess you will not have a match, rather a hope and prayer it will work out for the both of you.

How to fix the problem

Job descriptions are not enough. Getting the job to talk about the key accountabilities will provide you and the candidate with a level playing field. You will know what you need and the candidate will know what is expected. The job description defines the technical skills needed for the position and the benchmark will define the personal talents the position needs for the employee to be successful in it.

Benchmarking a position calls for three (3) to eight (8) company stakeholders (employees who have a stake in the company being successful) coming together to form a consensus view for the following questions. What is the purpose of the position beyond what the job description calls for; what are the key measurable results you are looking for from this position beyond what the job description calls for; what are some of the current changes taking place in either the marketplace or the company that affects this position and what happens if this position is not filled?

The benchmark requires an open attitude of sharing ideas and concepts. If the boss is present, he or she needs to stop being so for this session. One of the outcomes of the session is a measure of the culture of the organization, which is critical to matching candidates to a position.

The results of the session need to have a consensus evaluation of the key accountabilities so a set of interview questions can be developed. These questions are for the interviewing process to determine which of the candidates have the personal talents needed for the technical skills of the position. When they do, they are a match and everyone is a winner.

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