

## How to hire the right employee

Just a few decades ago the process of finding and hiring the right employee for the right job was, surprisingly, easier than it is today. Back then, an employer would put an ad in the paper or contract with an employment agency; resumes would be reviewed, several candidates would be interviewed, and an offer was made. But today with the Internet, a steadily burgeoning population, and a global economy with hundreds more job categories than ever before, navigating the employment minefield for both job applicants and employers can be a tricky business.

Before simply making an offer to the person with the most impressive resume, it is very important for managers to take the time to search for the best employee, because some industries are plagued by high turnover for various reasons. Employers should carefully screen candidates to be sure they are going to be happy with the duties, responsibilities, work environment, and advancement opportunities (or lack thereof). A satisfied employee will be more likely to stay in a job longer. And the ability to minimize turnover will keep an organization running smoothly and efficiently. It is more beneficial to have a candidate with a good attitude and a willingness to learn than a skilled but unmotivated one.

The strongest strategy for regularly attracting and retaining quality employees is to implement a thorough recruiting and behavioral-based hiring process to ensure you are selecting the best candidates for the job. Develop a recruitment plan and then track all results so you can clearly evaluate the cost per candidate, per recruitment process. Document the sources that bring applicants to you, so you will know where to invest recruitment funds and where to network to attract the most diverse set of candidates.

As you begin evaluating applicants, use a variety of established pre-hiring assessment tools to determine their knowledge, skills, and abilities. For example, employment agencies usually conduct a brief telephone interview, a behavioral assessment, hard and soft skills testing, and finally a behavioral interview. While screening an applicant, use standard questions and consistent scoring methods to keep the results objective and measurable so applicants' qualifications and results can be compared easily.

It is important to select candidates who exhibit predefined behavioral traits appropriate for your organization and are comfortable working in the environment of your organization. Study the traits of your current top performers and determine what makes them fit well with your organization. While there is no one specific formula that defines the "perfect employee," certain key behaviors will serve as a guide to finding a diverse pool of candidates with similar traits:

- Works well under time pressure.
- Able to handle emotionally stressful situations.
- Can be adaptable/flexible.
- Internally motivated to achieve goals.
- Able to perform well when engaging in repetitive tasks.

In addition to focusing on hard skills such as data entry and listening skills, assess cognitive abilities such as multitasking, problem solving, and attention to detail. Personal characteristics such as conscientiousness, honesty, integrity, and emotional maturity help determine whether a candidate is a reliable and focused worker.

If you feel that a candidate is the right person for your job, be sure to hire quickly. Hiring and retaining quality employees will have a positive impact on all aspects of an organization, including customer satisfaction and performance. Selecting the right people and managing them well can not only reduce turnover and increase retention, it can also help a company harvest its next generation of executives.