

HIRING

The Interview: It's More Than Personality Structured Questions Facilitate Comparison, Ratings Capability



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Many hiring managers complain, "Good people are hard to find." Could it be that they don't know how to properly assess the most successful employees? According to many experts, this is the case.

Experts believe that hiring mistakes occur frequently because of improper, incomplete or inefficient interviewing. In fact, for many hiring managers, the process of interviewing and selecting an employee can seem like a hit-or-miss proposition.

If you're considering hiring new employees as the economy recovers, ask yourself, is it time to restructure your interview model to ensure the best hire every time? To begin to change, you must give into the notion that employees are among your greatest assets. Then respect the process as you would any other important process in your organization. There is no question that interviewing is one of the most important aspects of every manager's job. The benefits of a more effective interview will help reduce recruitment costs, lower turnover and discrimination lawsuits, increase productivity and help corporations achieve their goals.

There are two broad types of interviews to consider: unstructured and structured. Unstructured interviews, the most common of the two, are characterized by a somewhat informal, conversational style. Questions are generally not specified in advance. A formalized scoring guide is not usually utilized. The major drawback of this technique is the lack of direct comparisons among applicants since not all applicants are asked the same questions and a rating system is not used to assess applicant fit.

Alternatively, structured interviews are much more formalized. They are characterized by a series of behavioral, job-related or psychological questions

developed from a study of valid job criteria. An applicant's answer to these questions is graded in a formal fashion and the scores are compared at the end of the process. Each question is anchored with a superior response and a poor response, which are used to facilitate scoring.

The interview process begins after you have attracted the most qualified candidates to join your team. There are many ways to gather 10 to 20 quality candidates. You could advertise/post the position on the Internet job boards, seek out employee referrals, use networking or work with a staffing service to streamline the process. If you choose to do your own recruiting, you must be creative to attract the best applicants. Therefore, organize the details and goals of each position. Write out the skills and abilities that will be required to be successful in the position. This is imperative to ensure you will attract the best people.

Don't get caught up in the biggest mistake most managers make – selecting a candidate because you like their personality and looks. Personality alone will not make a new hire successful. Past performance is one of the best indicators of future performance. You must evaluate skills and abilities first, and subsequently decide if he/she has the right personality traits to fit in your organization.

Remember, the most effective interview process must include a thorough job description with emphasis on the skills and abilities required to deliver measurable goals, a structured interview guide and an evaluation tool.

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