

HOW TO HIRE THE RIGHT PERSON

Hiring is a major investment. Like any investment, careful research, planning and execution will increase the odds in your favor.

We have all made bad hires. In all cases, the cause of the bad hire can be traced to one of the following reasons:

- Poor analysis of job functions
- Poor analysis of necessary personality-skill profile
- Inadequate interviewing and questioning techniques

The three most important concepts that guarantee a good hire are:

1. ABLE TO DO THE JOB?
2. WILLING TO DO THE JOB?
3. MANAGEABLE ONCE ON THE JOB?



The interview is a measured and ritualistic mating dance—and you have the choice of partners. It should have the appearance of a relaxed conversation and produce as much information as an FBI dossier. Seem like a tall order? Not when you check the following...

Client Checklist:

Defining the “ability” aspects of the job is a major step. However, there is a world of difference between “can-do” and “will-do.” Words like “character” and “behavior” and “personality” are important here. These words can be confusing, especially in business, where for many years they have meant an upright moral character and the demeanor of a gentleman or lady. It is difficult to use such loose definitions to help us hire effectively. Different jobs require different personality types.

There are 17 key personality traits, listed below, in three profile categories. These traits should be considered and evaluated by the prudent manager during an interview. Any or all could be important for the job you are trying to fill. Check which traits are important to you. The traits you require can affect the questions you plan to ask, and the meaning of the answers you subsequently receive.

PERSONAL PROFILE:

These traits can reveal basic character, a personal portrait that can broadly affect various aspects of a job.

Drive: Has a desire to get things done, goal rather than task oriented; has ability to make decisions and to avoid busy work; breaks overwhelming tasks into their component parts.

Motivation: Looks for new challenges; has enthusiasm and a willingness to ask questions; can motivate others through their own interest in doing a good job.

Communication: Can talk and write to people at all levels.

Chemistry: Does not get rattled and point the finger of blame; wears a smile; has confidence without self importance; is cooperative with others; demonstrates leadership by an ability to draw a team together.

Energy: Always gives that extra effort in the small things as well as the important matters.

Determination: Does not back off when the going gets tough; has the ability to cope; can be assertive when necessary; is at the same time, shrewd enough to know when it is time to back off.

Confidence: Has no braggadocio; is poised, friendly, honest with all employees, high and low; yet knows when to keep a secret.

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE:

These professional traits can reveal loyalty to a cause, person or company, and speak well of a person's reliability and trustworthiness.

Reliability: Follows up on self; does not rely on others to ensure that a job is well done; keeps management informed.

Integrity: Takes responsibility for own actions, whether good or bad; makes decisions in the best interest of the company, not on whim or personal preference.

Dedication: Has a commitment to task and projects; does whatever is necessary to see a project through to completion on deadline (this is the subtle difference between dedication and determination—from the personal profile—that will temper the possibilities of bullheadedness).

Pride: Has pride in trade or profession; takes the extra step and always pays attention to details to see the job is done in the best of ability.

Analytical Skills: Weighs the pros and cons; does not jump at the first solution that presents itself; analyzes the short and long term benefits of a solution against all its possible negatives; possesses the perception and insight that leads to good judgment.

Listening Skills: Listens and understands rather than waits for a chance to speak; has attentiveness that complements analytical skills.

BUSINESS PROFILE:

These are the characteristics that show a person understands you are in business to make a profit.

Efficiency: Always keeps an eye open for wastage of time, effort, resources, and money.

Economy: Knows the difference between expensive and cheap solutions to problems; spends your money as if it were his/her own.

Procedures: Know that procedures usually exist for good reasons, and won't work around them; has a

willingness to keep you informed; follows the chain of command (meaning that you get to know what's going on in your department before your boss does); does not implement own "improved" procedures or organize others to do so.

Profit: Know it's the reason we are all here.

Questions To Ask Prospective Candidates

LIKES AND DISLIKES QUESTIONS:

These questions gather valuable information without defining your needs or letting the interviewee tell you merely what you want to hear. These questions focus on an individual's broad ability to take the rough that goes with the smooth in every job.

- What would you change about your current job? What aspects do you like least? What aspects do you like most?
- What are you looking for in your next job?

These questions are logically the opposite of the first questioning technique. With an open-ended question, the interviewee can't get by with a monosyllabic answer as it demands an explanation in response.

- How do you succeed in working under pressure? Was there ever an occasion when things didn't work out quite so well?
- We're a fast growing outfit here, and there is constant pressure to meet deadlines and satisfy our ever increasing list of customers. How do you handle stress?
- We believe the customer is always right. How do you feel about that?
- Talk about a time when you had to work under pressure? How did the pressure situation arise? Who was responsible? What did you do? Why was this allowed to occur? Where did the problem originate?

Ask questions 20% of the time; listen to the answers 80% of time. Ask, and sit quietly waiting for the answers. The person asking the questions controls the conversation!

COMMUNICATIONS QUESTIONS:

- What was more important on your job, written or oral communications?
- What was the most complex report you ever had to write? What made it a difficult report? How did you handle it? Looking back, how would you have done it differently?
- Who caused you the most problems in executing your task? With whom were you most comfortable?
- Have you ever had to make unpopular decisions? Tell me of an unpopular decision you had to make?
- Whom did it effect? How long did it take for you to make? What did you learn from the event?

WILLINGNESS QUESTIONS:

- What personal qualities do you feel are necessary to make a success of this job? How many of these qualities do you possess? Give an example from your current job that demonstrates your persistence.
- How do you feel about your progress to date? In hindsight, what ways could you have improved it?
- Do you consider yourself successful? How do you rank among your peers? What are you proud of?

- What do you consider your greatest strength?
- Tell me about responsibilities you have enjoyed? Tell me about a project that really got you excited?
- In working with new people, how do you go about getting an understanding of them? Are you able to predict their behavior based on your reading of them?
- What type of person do you get along with best? What types do you find most difficult? How do you manage to get along with these? Tell me about a difficult situation with one of these difficult people?
- Tell me about an occasion when, in difficult circumstances, you pulled the team together? Tell me about the time when the team fell apart. When did it happen? What did you do?
- Do you deal with complex problems in your job? What are some of the things you find difficult to do? Why do you find them difficult? How do you overcome the problem? Where/when does this situation most commonly arise?
- What kind of decisions are most difficult for you? Tell me about a time when a quick decision had to be made?
- How do you organize and plan for a major project? Recall a major project you completed. How did you organize and plan for it?
- Do you set goals for yourself? Tell me about an important goal you set recently? What have you done to reach it? Do you always reach your goals?
- Tell me about when you failed to reach your goal?
- When you've a great deal of work that requires extra effort and time, where do you get your energy?
- Tell me about a time when an emergency caused you to re-schedule your workload/projects?
- How do you organize yourself for day-to-day activities? How many hours a week do you find it necessary to work to get your job done? (Check references to verify that he/she has worked this amount of time.)
- How do you plan your day? (Include four building blocks: 1. A set time to plan for the day; 2. Prioritizing the planned activities; 3. Steadfast adherence to these priorities; 4. Review the directional activities of the day before planning the next day's schedule.)

MANAGEABILITY QUESTIONS:

- How do you take direction? What are some things about which you and your boss disagreed? What are some things your boss did that you disliked?
- In what areas could your boss have done a better job? I would be interested to hear about an occasion when your work or an idea was criticized?
- How well do you feel your boss rated your performance?
- How did your boss get the most out of you? What do you think of your current boss?
- Describe the best manager you ever had? What made him/her stand out? How did you interact with this manager? How did you react to feedback, instruction, and criticism he/she gave you?
- Describe the worst manager you ever had?
- Would you like to have your boss's job? Tell me about a situation when people were making emotional decisions about your project. What happened and how did you handle it?
- Tell me about an occasion when there were objections to your ideas. What did you do to convince management of your points of view?

- I might find it easier to grasp if you could demonstrate this point for me: “When I say the solution is too expensive,” what would you say?
- For what have you been most frequently criticized? What do you do when there is a decision to be made and no procedure exists?
- Give an example of a time when you were told “NO.” What did you do in response? Describe a time you didn’t get an immediate “YES” from someone. What did you find necessary to do? What have you done that required you to ask for something you weren’t going to receive right away? How did you react? Tell me an idea that was rejected. What did you say and do after? What was the outcome?

RECAP THE INTERVIEW

- Are you interested in the job? What interests you most about it? How long will it take you to make a contribution?
- Should you be offered the job, how long will it take you to make a decision? Why should I offer you the job?
- What can you do for us that someone else cannot do? What special characteristics should I consider about you as a person?

INTERVIEWS OVER, NOW WHAT?

Here are two questions to think about.

1. **CAN THIS PERSON DO THE JOB WITHIN A REASONABLE TIME?** No candidate is perfect, nor is any company. Is this person 85% of what you want? Will they fit the group? Hire them if they have an exceptionally good attitude. Everyone needs some type of training and time to become effective. Of course, there might be someone better, but do you really have the time to look indefinitely? You have a job to do. You need people that are qualified and ready to go.
2. **DID YOU LIKE THAT PERSON?** Could you spend six hours in the car driving with that person? If not, don’t hire him/her.

If that person is who you want:

START CHECKING REFERENCES IMMEDIATELY. If still OK within a couple of days, get an offer to the candidate. You can’t dilly dally at this time or you will lose the candidate. He/she is probably interviewing with others, and you don’t have all year to decide. Be aggressive, take some chances, hire and get them on board. There is no manager on earth who makes 100% good choices. If you wait until Mr./Ms Perfect comes by, your competition will have already hired them.

DON'T FORGET SOCIAL GRACES. The candidate wants to feel important and needed. Once you decide he/she is the person, whatever you can to get that person on board. Talk with the spouse, have dinner with both, make them feel this is the best choice for their career. Make that extra effort to get them committed and accepting an offer. If you are busy or traveling, have someone else take over the courting phase. Personnel can also assist in following the offer and closing the deal.

STAY IN TOUCH EVEN AFTER THE OFFER HAS BEEN MADE AND ACCEPTED.

TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE. Other companies are wooing them and some will move quickly. Most people will take an offer from a company that makes them feel important. Money is not always the issue, as long as it is reasonable. Opportunity and feeling they are needed is what most people really want from an employer.

DO IT NOW!!

“I won't send you anyone I wouldn't hire myself.”

Dick Williams - Founded in 1988 by Dick Williams - semiconductor executive bringing firsthand experience to the search process - is well versed in areas of capital equipment, instrumentation, materials and chemicals. As a president, sales and marketing vice-president and an operations director and one-time job seeker, Dick understands recruitment from the candidate's point of view.



(925) 980-4991 | 7901 Stoneridge Drive, Suite 320 Pleasanton, CA 94588

www.dwasearch.com dick@dwasearch.com

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