

LEADERSHIP MATTERS E-ZINE

Leadership Matters is a publication designed to explore the workplace issues today's managers and supervisors face.

Hiring Winning Talent

FIVE COSTLY MISTAKES OF HIRING

Business Issue

Melissa was one of four managers serving on a hiring committee for an insurance company. For the past four weeks the committee had interviewed seven candidates for their Director of Marketing position. After candidate eight, the HR director, Judy, called the committee together discuss the process. The dialogue went like this:

Melissa: "We've been at this for four weeks and we still don't have two really great candidates to choose from."

Tom: "Yeah, I don't know how much more time I can take out of my days for this. I'm swamped."

Ray: "None of the candidates quite hits the mark, I'll admit that, but can't we narrow it down to two and settle on one?"

Gina: "I agree with Tom and Ray, rather than spending more time interviewing more candidates let's just pick one we can live with."

Melissa: "I hear what you are saying, but I don't want to settle for someone that really doesn't fit with what we are looking for."

Judy: "Melissa is right. I wouldn't recommend the committee picking a candidate that you are not really satisfied with. You would be better off identifying what is missing from what we've seen, and then tailor a new advertisement."

Some Perspective

Unfortunately, the committee overruled Melissa's best instincts and the advice of the HR director. They "settled" for a candidate, and three months later the new hire was already having difficulty with the position. This scenario illustrates just one of the five costly mistakes of poor hiring practices. Rather than hiring the right candidate for the position, they jumped the gun. In the end, it was a classic example of a bad hire.

According to a recent Metlife Employee Benefits Trend Study released in January, 74% of businesses are expecting competition for talent to escalate over the next year. With recruiting emerging as one of the top concerns for employers, no one can afford to make bad hires.

And according to a 2004 Gartner report, organizations are more focused on applicant tracking and automated requisitioning. For effective hiring to be possible it must include well-oiled and executed practices, strategies, and techniques.

Most people would agree that hiring a well-qualified candidate makes a tremendous difference to the organization's effectiveness and to the bottom line. Imagine for a minute if your company had a regular practice of settling for new hires with average job skills and abilities. Now, imagine that you instead had a regular practice of hiring the best-

qualified candidates who would perform at 20- 40% above average in job skills and abilities. That's hiring well and adding to the performance of the company.

In most organizations, the top performers are four times as productive as the weakest performers. Ask yourself this: "Am I hiring winners?"

Despite the obvious need and importance of hiring the best from available talent the first time, the process still has its challenges.

Common and costly mistakes we see include:

1. Not having well-defined selection criteria
2. No prepared question strategy mapping out the right questions
3. Absence of an interview structure that allows for multiple points of view and well-defined roles and responsibilities during the interview
4. No clearly defined evaluation and review process that allows you to compare "apples to apples"
5. Settling for less than the best qualified candidate for the position

A Solution

The fact is that today's managers and supervisors are asked to lead the interviewing and selection processes when they are not trained and equipped to. They don't use a structured process, they haven't been trained in interview and selection skills and strategies, and they may use team members who also have not been trained; or they try to go it alone. The odds are that inconsistent success with hiring will continue.

Your goal is to, through the right kind of training, develop a hiring team that will impact the ability of managers and team leaders to:

- establish an efficient process that reduces the time it takes to interview and select a qualified candidate
- maximize new hires' productivity by ensuring that candidates are a good fit for the job
- ensure team cohesion and support for new hires by involving team members in the process

There is a solution. Training your teams with programs such as *Hiring Winning Talent* helps managers, supervisors, and team members understand how to use a structured process to identify, select, and hire the best and brightest people; people who truly fit the work requirements and the requirements of the organization.

To learn more about our *Hiring Winning Talent* course and other leadership courses available in both classroom and online e-learning formats: go to <http://rpchr.com/online-e-learning.html>

Essential Skills of Leadership
Essential Skills of Communicating
Hiring Winning Talent
Retaining Winning Talent
Coaching Job Skills
And more. . .

Quote for the Month:

"After finding no qualified candidates for the position of principal, the school board is extremely pleased to announce the appointment of David Steele to the post." – Philip Streifer

With appreciation,
Ken Ivey, Vice President
RPC

Sources: Gómez-Mejía, Luis R.; Balkin, David B.; Cardy, Robert L. (1995). *Managing Human Resources*, Prentice Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey. *Hiring Winning Talent*, (2006). Vital Learning Corporation. Human Capital Institute, http://www.humancapitalinsituted.net/tracks_effective_hiring.html. Accessed: March 15, 2006. Rogers, Rob (January, 2006). *High Performance Is More Than a Dream—It's a Culture*. Training + Development.

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