



City Difference Maker

Tips to help you effectively manage and lead your employees

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Hire Right the First Time

How many of you just LOVE recruiting for new employees! I know I don't. I'd rather just keep the people that I currently have.

Well, sometimes we just don't have the choice, now do we? So it is very important that we do it right when we are faced with a "need to fill" position. Do we want someone in the position with the exact skill set or attitudes of the person who was in there before? My guess is that there are things you want the position to do in the future that maybe was limited by the past incumbent. You may also want a fresher attitude from someone who can get along with other people.

So Where Do You Start?

You need to update the job description to ensure you are going to get what you want of the position.

Where will you advertise? Who do you want on the interview teams? Work on interview questions that get to the concerns that you have of whether someone will be successful working with you. Ask behavioral questions such as, "Tell me about a time when you didn't agree with your supervisor? How did you handle it?" These questions may offer insight if this person will be an easy person to supervise. You may also ask more technical questions about how their background and experience relate to the technical needs of the position.

Hiring Decisions Are Like Marriages

Do we commit to a long-term relationship with a partner after two brief question and answer sessions? How much of an effort are you going to put into getting to know someone prior to offering them the job? Will you have a 30 minute interview and then send them up to your director for 15 minutes? Please, spend an appropriate amount of time to really get to know people before you are "stuck with them."

The 5 C's of Hiring

John Parkes from the Murdoch's retail chain has identified five very important things to consider when making selection decisions. You should contemplate what you are looking for and then create interview questions that dig into each of these areas.

Competent

Does this potential employee have the necessary skills and education to perform the tasks you're asking them to perform? Ask interview questions that probe into an employee's background to see if they have what you need. "Tell us about how your education and work experience are related to the needs of this position."

Capable

Will this person complete not only the easy tasks but also find ways to deliver on the functions that require more effort and creativity to accomplish? Being capable means that the employee has potential for growth and the ability and willingness to take on more responsibility. Ask them, "Tell us about a time when you were asked to do more than what was in your job description. How do you feel about having to go outside your comfort zone and do more than you signed up for?"

Compatibility

Can this person get along with colleagues and, even more importantly, can he or she co-exist with existing and potential citizen contacts? A critical component that can't be forgotten in terms of compatibility is the person's willingness and ability to get along with you as his or her boss. If a new employee can't get along with you, it doesn't really matter if he or she can get along with team members. Ask them, "What types of coworkers do you prefer to work with? What types of people drive you crazy? What do you expect in a working environment from your coworkers?" You may also ask them, "What really drives you nuts about your current supervisor?"

Commitment

When times get tough, will this person stick to it or will he or she give up and throw in the towel? Look for someone who has faced adversity before and successfully worked out of it. Consider questions such as: "What are your long-term career goals and where do you see yourself in 5 or 10 years;" OR "Tell us about the most difficult event of your work career and tell us how you dealt with it."

Character

Does this person embrace the same values of the organization? Are they ethical and honest? You need to be sure that you ask questions that try to uncover character issues. Ask them to tell you about a time when they were faced with an ethical decision at home or at work. How did they handle it? You could also put together a scenario that could occur in your department. Then ask them what they would do.

The bottom line is that you want to hire people you don't have to fire. If you do make a mistake, address it during an employee's twelve month probationary period. Don't allow the a poor fit to ride out a 30 year career just because you don't want to address misses in areas of the 5 C's.

As always, the Human Resource Office is eager to help you design a recruitment plan to get the right fit for your department.