

Hire for Unique Ability, A Primer in Hiring Practices

by Josh Patrick

Many companies are successful with hiring only twenty-five percent of the time. This article shows you how to dramatically improve that percentage.



Introduction

John Aardvark was looking for a new operations manager. In fact, he seemed to be always looking for a new operations manager. He would continue to hire people who he thought were terrific, but after about three months he would realize he made a mistake and after six, start the whole process over again.

Does the above sound about right in what has happened in your own hiring operations? If so, you might want to start thinking about formalizing your hiring operation using some proven methodology of finding the right person to fill the jobs in your company.

You may have heard of the will do, can do and fit factor method of hiring. This article will expand on this simple method, adding some instruments that might help you find the right person to do the jobs that are important in your company.

First, will do – fit factor – can do method of hiring

John realized that he needed some help in finding the right person. He brought in an organizational development person who taught him a new way of looking at his hiring process. First, he learned to become very specific about what he needed in his operation manager and then he learned of some powerful techniques to help him improve his chances of getting the right person.

When hiring a new person you want to make sure that they first are going to fit into your company. This is what I call fit factors. You will want to list the traits that are important for everyone in your company and specifically what they will need to do for this job. So, in John's situation he has listed the following traits as something everyone in the company needs to be able to do:

- Be Customer Centered
- Be honest
- Speak well of others
- Always work for a win/win solutions
- Respect others who are different than you

In addition, the following environmental factors are important for the operations managers' job:

- Have the ability to lead the team
- Listen well to ideas of the people who report to him
- Be strong and impactful with the people he reports to

Without the ability to the above things well, John's operation manager doesn't have a good a chance of being successful. So, before John can even think about moving on to the next part of the hiring process, he needs to make sure all of his candidates will the fit factor well. Otherwise, the company will not accept the new manager and John will spend an inordinate amount of time trying to get the company to accept the style of the new manager.

The second area John needs to fill are the will do factors. These are the striving instincts of solving problems that are important and will make John's manager successful in his job. Some of the will do traits that John is looking for are:

- An ability to look at details and make sure operations are being done by the numbers.
- A willingness to try new ideas when presented, but not necessarily come up with new systems of operation.
- A strong want to have things done in a systematic program by people who report to him.
- A willingness to spend time in the field with his people making sure the job for the Customer is being done properly.

If John's new manager is not willing to do these activities, it's probable that the manager will be unsuccessful in the job. Because John's company requires a great deal of detail in the field, it's crucial that the operations manager have that level of detail.

John realizes that he has set up will do traits that are very different from his. He also knows that there is a potential for conflict between he and his operations manager. So, he will want to make sure that he explains this conflict to his new manager and makes sure that he and the manager treat each other with respect and celebrate their respective differences as strengths for the company.

The final area John needs to look at when hiring is the can do portion of his hiring program. These are the cognitive areas or actual skill sets someone might have. In John's case, he decided these are the important can do traits he needed:

- Someone who had great skills with computers.
- Someone who had experience working with vendors who supplied mechanical parts.
- Someone who understood routing procedures and had worked with GPS systems for effective routing of deliveries.

As you can see from the above list these are cognitive activities, things that you can determine in a subjective manner whether your candidate can or cannot do these activities. In my opinion, they also are the easiest to test for, so as a result, they often are the first things we look at in hiring and the things we place the most concentration on when bringing new people into our companies.

Using outside tools to help find the right person

The above three areas of fit factors, will do and can do traits can be broken down to the following parts of the brain:

- Fit Factors – Affirmative actions or what we would like to do when we are at work.
- Will Do Factors – Conative actions or striving instincts how we will use our energy to solve problems and produce actions.
- Can Do Factors – Cognitive actions or things that we learn and are often tested through IQ tests or skill based tests.

In some cases we look at fit factors as right brain activities, can do factors as left brain activities and will do factors as whole brain activities. All three are important and all three must be dealt with if we are to successfully bring the best people we can into our company.

John had written down what he wanted for people to join his company, but he wanted some extra help in finding the right instrument to help him decide if the person he was looking for could actually do the job successfully. However, he was concerned about the amount of time he was spending and the cost of the testing to get the right person.

John's problem of getting the right person was his real cost. Even if he had to spend an extra couple of hours of his time and spend a few hundred dollars on testing instruments he would be way ahead if he could

improve his rate of hiring successes. Just think about how much money you spend bringing a new person on board and what the opportunity cost as well as the actual monetary cost you incur when you pick the wrong person.

However, when using testing instruments, you must stay within the law. It's imperative that you check with your labor attorney before you start using instruments for screening. The government will take a very dim view of you using these instruments in a discriminatory method.

Will do Instruments - I suggest taking a look at the Kolbe Index for helping you determine whether your potential person is willing to do the activities that are important and will bring you success for your job.

Fit Factor Instruments - In many instances the interview will help you determine whether the person you're hiring has the moral fortitude you are looking for. You can also test for work preferences and strategies for dealing with others by using DISC or the Myers-Briggs instruments.

Can Do Factor Instruments - These will be tests such as arithmetic tests, typing tests, driving tests and other skill based tests you may decide to use in order to determine whether your potential hire has the skills needed to do the job you have open.

All the tests mentioned above can be found on the World Wide Web. I would suggest using Google for your search instrument, contact us or talk to your own hiring consultant about instruments they would suggest. However, I do strongly suggest that you start learning how to use these hiring tools as they can greatly increase your probability of getting the right person for the job you have open.

Conclusion

First, understand that having a standardized method of hiring people will help in bringing the right person on board. Second, make sure that you first concentrate on fit factors, then will do issues and finally can do factors. This is the order that will give you the highest probability of successfully bringing the right person into your organization.

Learn to use instruments that can help you understand your potential hires better. But, make sure you are on the right side of the law and bring in your labor attorney before you start down the road of using hiring tools to assist you in this process.

Your hiring process will improve and you might find yourself ultimately spending more time working on positive options for your company versus fighting to find the right person for the jobs in your company.

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