

Hiring for 'Fit'

It's Easier than You Might Think & Essential for Long-Term Success



The idea of hiring for 'fit' is not a new one. Over the last several years, the idea of assessing candidates to determine who will be the most successful on the job has been discussed at length, researched and scientifically analyzed. The

results allowed testing experts, in cooperation with industrial psychologists and other behavioral sciences professionals, to create tests that uniformly measure qualities, aptitudes, traits and behaviors to assess fit for a specific position within a particular company. Add technology into the mix and we have something new – hiring for fit quickly and efficiently.

For those who have yet to accept that hiring for fit is necessary to your future growth and success, ponder this for a moment: the bulk of your current and future workforce grew up in a time of corporate downsizing, massive retirement/pension fund scandals, computers and the Internet. This workforce is taking their future into their own hands and bringing an entirely new set of priorities to the business community – and traditional loyalty is not one of them. Their top priorities are salary, healthcare/retirement benefits and flexibility or work/life balance. Others high on the list include: the ability to plan and follow a specific career path, making a contribution to the world and virtually complete control of retirement planning. All of this affects a candidate's fit for a job, a team and an overall company culture.

As an organization, obviously you'll have to change with the times, but you can avoid some drastic overhauls by finding employees whose priorities, aptitudes and attitudes correlate with their jobs and your established company culture. Doing this will reduce the burden on recruiters and hiring managers, improve employee job performance, reduce turnover and foster long-term, mutually beneficial relationships with your employees.

In order to accomplish all of this, employers must augment the recruiting process with behavioral-based assessments and interviews. Your first step is to select an assessment vendor. In your search, keep this in mind: all assessments

must have established reliability and validity according to EEOC Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures. If your vendor's assessments don't adhere to these standards, your company may be in violation of EEOC regulations.

- For a selection instrument to provide reliability, it must have a high degree of consistency.
- Validity measures the degree to which the conclusions drawn from an interview or a test are accurate. For example, test validation studies or test validity for a pre-employment assessment instrument is an objective measure that provides evidence that the test or

personality assessment tool actually measures what it purports to measure. Validation studies are undertaken and directed by a test publisher in accordance with guidelines issued by the EEOC and certain industry and professional standards.

Once you've chosen an assessment vendor, you'll need to identify the specific traits or behaviors you want all employees to have in addition to any job-specific traits to ensure you select the appropriate tests. At Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, all employees must be, "nurturing, kind and warm-hearted," according to senior vice president of human resources, Linda Matzigkeit. "It takes a special person to take care of kids, and



[even] if your job isn't patient-facing you do have internal customers." Relevant behaviors for casinos and resorts will, of course, be different, but should still focus on the kind of service your staff needs to deliver in order to create positive customer experiences.

Your next step is to set a benchmark for 'fit.' Typically, companies test top performing employees to arrive at a benchmark score. One of the nation's leading supermarket chains implemented behavioral testing to help process more than 50,000 job applicants each year. Working with the assessment vendor's industrial psychologists and test developers, the organization chose four of the 30 pre-validated, self-contained behavioral scales as the basis for analysis. The vendor assembled the four scales into a single test and administered it to 198 existing employees to help determine a benchmark score.

The rewards of hiring for fit reach far beyond the HR department and have the potential to transform your workplace into a highly-productive and desirable place to be.

- AirTran implemented a three-pronged assessment to measure basic skills, aptitude and personality traits for reservation agents and reduced the time it took new agents to get up to speed from 90 to 45 days and the time to hire from weeks to days.
- The supermarket chain referenced earlier

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added less than 15 minutes to the length of their online screening process and provided recruiters with a custom set of behavioral test questions based on answers provided during the assessment to help in the interview process.

- Children's Healthcare of Atlanta has been named as one of the top three children's hospitals in the nation and has been listed as one of the "100 Best Companies to Work for" by Fortune magazine.
- Embarq, a wired, wireless and Internet telecommunications carrier, uses assessments in three areas of high-volume or high-impact jobs: customer service and customer sales reps, service technicians and first-line supervisors.

They have realized a two-thirds reduction in turnover and determined that those employees who scored highest on the assessment had a 24 percent higher-than-average sales rate!

Whether you want newly-designed, modular/customized or off-the-shelf behavioral assessments, this tool is easier than ever to implement and its value to your organization is limitless. The Gaming industry has been showing more interest in using behavioral assessments to hire for fit in both front and back of house positions, but as you might have noticed by the examples used throughout this article, the slow adoption is preventing gaming organizations from realizing the same benefits seen in many other industries. As Gaming continues to grow and become more competitive on the Las Vegas strip, among Tribal Nations, on rivers and cities across the U.S. and countries around the world, the results of hiring for 'fit' could be what sets your property apart from the crowd to bring customers back time and again.

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