
OPINION


Why You Hired the Wrong Guy

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“Our new recruit should have performed better,” is a common executive gripe. “I mean just look at his background. He went to this school, had a PhD and had 10 years experience. But he still didn’t deliver the goods. Where did we go wrong?”

Many job descriptions read identical and the must-have qualifications and experiences become the guideposts for the hiring decision. However, these typical must-haves are not always a true indicator of future performance. The wrong person is selected far too often because little consideration is given to what the candidate actually has to achieve within the first six to 12 months. Some simple questions were simply not asked. Can the candidate achieve the specific 12-month objectives? Can this person give examples of achieving similar objectives in the past? Looking into the future is the key to recruiting a winner.

Steven Covey management classic, ‘Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,’ suggests we should begin with the end in mind when initiating a task. What does this mean when looking for our new star? Surely, if we give the agent a call with a list of haves - must have MBA, PhD, 10 years’ marketing or



project management experience - then we will be able to unearth the right talent to do the job. The problem with only focusing on the must-haves is that some executives focus on a ‘personality or cultural fit’. They pay close attention to English skills during the interview but only reach a superficial understanding of the candidate.

In Lou Adler’s book, ‘Hire with your Head,’ he suggests that we fast forward 12 months. Let us imagine that the new employee has been with your company for a year. What have they achieved? What are their accomplishments? Have they increase sales? Cut costs? Shorten a timeline for development? By looking at achievable, measurable, quantifiable and time-bound objectives this will help screen and select the best candidate to do the job.

When hiring your next star move the 12-month evaluation criteria forward to the beginning of the process. Once the measurable objectives have been clearly defined, the screening process takes on a more objective face. No longer is the interviewer so much focused on the fit for the company, but instead is making sure the candidate will be able to deliver exactly needs to be done.