

Preventing Costly Hiring Mistakes

by Joe Tabers, CSP

Recently we were asked by two different organizations for our help in determining whether or not a couple of potential executive candidates were good “fit” for their management team.

In both cases, vice president positions were available and they had narrowed the field down to a couple of good possibilities. Both organizations had worked with us in the past; one organization had us conduct executive team building and effective meetings workshops, the other organization had us conduct an (effective coaching skills) workshop for their management team.

Can Assessments Help?

They had remembered our use of effective assessment tools during their training sessions and how valuable they were to their management team members. Now they were wondering if something similar might work in selecting a candidate who’s style would mesh well with the rest of their management team?

In order to reduce risk of potential discrimination claims we agreed to help after confirming that the client would agree to administer the same self-assessment tool for each candidate applying for the open leadership position. We also had two to four other managers (that knew the requirements of the vacant position well) assess the job as if it could talk - what would other ideal candidates look like.

This process was facilitated on-line by providing an access password for their executive candidates to conveniently complete the self-assessment from any location. Results were privately emailed back to their contact person in each organization followed by a one-hour consultation emphasizing the candidates strengths they would bring to the team as well as pointing out potential areas of concern or clash in management style with their corporate culture or other key managers.

Wow What a Fit!

The results? Both organizations felt this was an extremely valuable service. In one case the assessment report gave them greater confidence moving forward on extending an offer for an important VP position. In the case of the other organization, it helped them to choose a better organizational fit between two equally qualified candidates. And as a result provided greater reassurance that they were making the right choice the first time.

Most organizations can recognize a good skill/talent fit when they see it. The greater challenge however is recognizing if there is a good management/communication style/fit. One that is in line with their corporate vision, values and mission.

As a business leader you most likely know the costs involved with hiring mistakes at a high-level. A CEO I worked with said to me, “I wish we had done this a year ago, it

would have saved us thousands that we paid in a recent severance package of a mismatch we recently let go. Let this be a friendly reminder for you to consider taking a little extra time to assess your executive and management position candidates for some of those behavioral qualities often hidden during the job interview process. You'll be glad you did!

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