

# How to Hire Right EVERY TIME

Selecting Employees For A High  
Performance Organization



On Purpose  
Enterprises

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# How to Hire Right - EVERY TIME

In an unpredictable economy, it's critically important to have the right person in every job in your organization. In fact, having great people may be the most important strategic advantage your organization can have in the 'new normal.'

Hiring and selecting the right person is important whether you are replacing a senior level executive due to turnover or retirement; recruiting candidates to fill an open position; staffing a newly created position; moving current employees into different positions; selecting a person for promotion; or developing an employee for a future key leadership position as part of a succession plan.

To understand the value of hiring or selecting the right people for every position in your organization, take a minute and remember your best employees or the best co-workers you've ever had. They enjoyed their job, were really good at it, gave a little extra without being asked, were enjoyable to be around, had a depth knowledge about their profession, etc. When they left the company or retired, you missed them. You probably still remember their names.

Wouldn't it be nice if you could clone people like that? Wouldn't you like every employee in your organization to be just like them?

Unfortunately, traditional hiring and selection practices don't seem to work like that. Most experienced managers can remember that one particular employee hire that 'went bad.' They gave you headaches, problems and nightmares; they mishandled customer opportunities; they sowed discord among the staff - and maybe even created some legal problems for you. You probably still remember their names, too.



## Think back for a moment. Have you ever hired someone:

- who wasn't the person you really wanted, even after interviews and reference-checks?
- who became dissatisfied with the position after a short time?
- who was highly recommended but fell short of your expectations?
- who was just not good at the job they were hired to perform?
- who was a model employee in their previous position, but after promotion into management or leadership, was unable to perform the job as required?
- who sought a new role 'for career growth' but became unproductive, dis-satisfied or unmotivated in their new job?
- who seemed right for the job, but after being hired had character flaws, personal issues or problems at home that kept them from performing well at work?
- who just didn't mesh with their team or fit into your corporate culture?
- who did not disclose character or integrity issues in their past – prior to being hired - that created problems (personnel, morale, criminal, drug/alcohol, customer, legal, liability, etc.) and unwanted costs and complications?
- who looked professional, was "impressive", seemed like a "nice person" during the interview process – but was simply the wrong person for the job?
- who "turned into a different person" once they were hired?
- who became a 'prima donna' and demanded unrealistic changes in their working conditions in order to meet their expectations – rather than performing the job for which they were hired?

### **Sound familiar? If you've made one or more of these classic hiring and employee selection mistakes, you're not alone.**

Considering the real hard costs of poor hiring and employee selection like high turn-over, opportunity costs, lost productivity, personnel problems and potential liabilities, it all adds up to a real problem. And, unless you find a better way to hire and select employees – every time – the problem will repeat itself.

Hiring great people who love their jobs and perform well is critical to the success of any organization. It's also one of the most challenging and rewarding things you'll do as a business owner or manager of an organization.

A wise person once said, *"You're getting what you're getting because you're doing what you're doing; so if you want something different, you'll have to do something different."*

**So – let's try a new approach.**



# 9 Steps To Hiring The Right Person – Every Time.

## 1. Define what you want by writing a detailed job description.

- Start by asking yourself, “What would it look like if someone did this job ‘just right?’” Rather than just finding a person who might do the job well, take some time to carefully define the important aspects of the job. What tasks will the person perform, and what skills or experience should they have? Based on their potential team-members, your organizational culture or the types of customers they’ll be working with, what kind of personality, character qualities or communication style should they have? This way, you’ll hire the person who 1) is right for the job and 2) is excited about doing the exact job that you want done.

## 2. Develop an interview worksheet specific to the position and use it when interviewing every candidate.

- Each person who interviews the candidate, whether by phone or in person, should ask the questions on the interview worksheet, taking note of the candidate’s answers. Keep the job description attached to the worksheet for the interviewer’s reference. Include behavioral interview questions which require the candidate to describe actual situations where they handled clients, performed under pressure, solved problems, analyzed information or made decisions similar to those in the position for which they’re applying. Immediately following the interview, each interviewer should use a standard “grading system” to rate the individual’s performance in the interview. This ensures that interviews are conducted in a thorough, professional manner and helps you capture more of the critical information that will be useful in making your hiring decision later (see step 7).

## 3. Require all applicants to read the job description which includes a pre-determined ‘How To Respond’ process.

- Your ideal candidate should 1) really want the job, 2) be qualified and 3) go through some effort to get the job. Here’s why: if a candidate will not be diligent or follow directions prior to being hired, they certainly won’t behave differently after they’ve become your employee.



When a candidate responds as you've requested, it shows you that they pay attention to details, have done some homework and care enough to expend some effort in order to get the job. They are already demonstrating a work ethic – before they are working for you. For example, ask every interested candidate who responds to your position posting to send their resume with a short letter explaining why they think they are qualified for the position. IF – the candidate is qualified based on the position description and responds in the manner you've specified – proceed to Step 4

#### 4. Do a brief (20-30 min.) phone interview first – especially if the position will involve working with customers or routinely communicating with others. Do this before meeting for a personal face-to-face interview.

- Jobs that deal with people require effective communication skills. A phone interview will quickly determine if a candidate can communicate verbally, listen, build rapport, think on their feet and stay on track. If a candidate cannot communicate effectively during a short phone interview, be cautious. Note: some candidates have been coached to be charming, persuasive and professional in appearance - in order to get the job - but they may not be the right person for the job. Unless personal appearance is a critical aspect of the job, it shouldn't matter what a person looks like at this stage in the process.

If the initial phone interview is satisfactory, then proceed to a personal interview where you can get to know your candidate better and assess job-specific skills, presentation skills, personal appearance/dress (as required or appropriate); and pick up on any irritating quirks, mannerisms or other things that were not observable during your phone interview.

#### 5. 'Inspect what you expect' by performing a pre-hire assessment and checking the candidate's background and references very early in the process, which can prevent many employee problems before they occur.

- As a stated pre-condition of employment, get the applicant's written permission to perform any necessary reference-checks (i.e.; criminal background, credit checks, drug-testing, etc.) and a pre-hire assessment. Always perform these steps early in the process, rather than as part of the final interview or hiring process and never after making the candidate a job offer. This simple step can eliminate 'problem' candidates, and some will voluntarily withdraw from the application process.

A brief, inexpensive pre-hire assessment can provide you with useful information about the candidate's attitudes regarding integrity, reliability, substance abuse and author-



ity – which could contribute to problems later in their career. This assessment will give you valuable insights and specific questions to ask the candidate during their personal interview.

An informal reference check can be performed by calling previous employers to verify the information presented in the candidate's resume (positions held and job titles, responsibilities, dates of employment, etc.). To ensure a thorough and reliable check, however, use commercial reference-checking services. Once a person has been hired, it's much more costly and difficult to deal with problems or employer liability issues that could have been avoided entirely through pre-hire assessments, or proper reference and background checks.

## 6. Use quality assessment tools to determine the applicant's suitability for the position.

- New assessment technology can help you determine a candidate's potential fit with the job requirements, occupational interests, personality and behavior traits, promptness, integrity, customer service and sales skills, cognitive abilities (math and language skills), work ethic and other potential risk factors or contributors to job success. Specialized assessments can help determine a potential candidate's suitability to sales, customer service, marketing, executive, financial, leadership, supervisory and a variety of other careers and positions – prior to final consideration.

If a candidate interviews well, and has a close match to the position based on the assessment data, the candidate can advance further through the hiring process. A word of caution: never use an assessment as your only basis for selecting candidates. Instead, use appropriate, valid and reliable assessment tools as part of a good interview and selection process, as described here.

## 7. Conduct multiple interviews (see steps 2 and 4 above) – using peers, team-members or other employees – in addition to the hiring manager or supervisor.

- Every interviewer will gain valuable insights about a candidate, both positive and negative. A good candidate should give clear, consistent answers in every interview. They will also show a front-line employee or potential peer the same level of attention and respect they show the CEO or hiring manager. When the interviews are completed, gather your hiring team and compare notes from the interview worksheets. Did anyone note any concerns? Did all interviewers note similar answers to the questions on the interview worksheets? Did all have positive views of the candidate? If not, do additional interviews and dig deeper to determine the reasons for the differences between interviewers. When your 'hiring team' agrees on the candidate, proceed to step 9. If not, see step 8.

## 8. You've defined what you want, so don't settle for less.

- If you don't find the right candidate from this process, start over again. Set your standards high and insist on getting what you want. Remember how much time, money and productivity was wasted when you made that last hiring mistake. Given the high costs and negative consequences of mis-hiring like turnover and employee problems, it's worth the time and effort to find the right person for the job. Think about the impact that your best employees make on your organization's bottom line and success. Wouldn't you like to find more people that look just like them? Don't settle for less. Start over.

## 9. Make your successful candidate a conditional job offer, in writing.

- Your offer letter is an excellent opportunity to set high expectations and define the working relationship with your new employee, right from their first day on the job. This personalized letter from the hiring manager, direct supervisor or company owner/manager should include specific information about the starting salary and benefits, reporting structures and a copy of the job description (in step 1). Consider mentioning an 'introductory employment period' of 90 days, during which time their performance will be regularly evaluated by their supervisor or team-members.

After going through this process, your successful candidate should feel like they 'won', that they really are the best person for their new job. Congratulate them for their decision to join your organization, welcome them to your team enthusiastically and positively, remind them of your high expectations and let them know that their new position will be both challenging and rewarding. Your new employee is the right person for this job, so make them feel special. They are.

At this point, you may be thinking, "This process is WAY too complicated and time-consuming for my company. We need someone NOW!"

True – this method may take more time and effort than traditional method...at first. But once you learn it and make it part of your organization's hiring and selection process, you'll see the benefits.

The 'How To Hire Right' process is neither perfect nor fool-proof. You may need to modify or adapt certain parts to the needs of your organization, or to requirements of a specific position you're filling. But it is a different and better way. It will greatly increase your chances of hiring the right person for the job. In fact, you just may find great people who love their jobs, produce the desired results, stay motivated and stick with your organization for the long haul.



Remember: you'll never regret hiring excellent people who love what they do and get it done right.

On Purpose Enterprises is dedicated to helping you make the most of your most important asset: your people.

If you'd like to implement the 'How To Hire Right – Every Time' process in your organization, we can help.

Contact us today for a free 30 minute phone consultation.

**For more information, contact us:**

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