

Q: How Do We Guide Managers to Ask the Right Questions When Interviewing Candidates?

A: What recruitment guidelines can we give to line managers who are involved in our recruiting/hiring process? How can we get them to ask the right questions or follow the right processes/procedures?

–*Searching for Answers, mining/oil/gas, Johannesburg, South Africa*

Having the right fit is the key to keeping talent on board. Although managers do have the clearest sense of which employees are the right fit for an organisation, they often see the selection process as a less-important part of their job. By "right fit" we mean a person whose skills (technical and interpersonal) and interests match the requirements of the position at hand, and whose core values are consistent with those of the organisation. Your managers need to spend time identifying the critical success factors for a position, preparing for and conducting thorough interviews, evaluating and comparing the candidates, and selling the job and the organisation. Here are some tips:

Determine Fit

Analyse the job and get input from others to clarify tasks, traits, and style required.

Prepare for your interview using a grid with your questions:

1. Create set questions to make certain the candidate has the skills and style you are looking for.
2. Ask behaviorally based interview questions about candidates' past experiences, and be consistent by asking them of all candidates.
3. Use appropriate testing and assessment tools.
4. Involve multiple interviewers to get diverse perspectives about each candidate.
5. Ask the candidates what would entice them enough to take your job vs. that of key competitors; make sure you are meeting their needs as well.

Sell the Candidate

- Be prepared to sell your position, team and organization by addressing the key issues raised by each candidate.
- Think carefully about what you and your team can offer and be ready to give specific examples. For example, if you are offering a great team environment and camaraderie, demonstrate that by having all team members meet and briefly talk with your top candidates.
- Think about your team or organisational "wow" factors--those things that differentiate you from all others. It might be your cutting-edge technology, ultra-creative environment or fun-filled atmosphere.

"Fit is it" when it comes to hiring. If you get the right people in the right roles on your team and for your organisation, you will absolutely increase the odds of retaining them in the future.

SOURCE: Beverly Kaye, co-author, *Love 'Em or Lose 'Em: Getting Good People to Stay* (Berrett-Koehler, 2005), July 17, 2006.