



# THE COST OF A 'MISS-HIRE'

Recruiting a poor candidate can have big implications, writes John Hackett.

I read an interesting article recently by Jeffery Giesener, a writer and blogger on all things recruitment and he was discussing the cost of recruiting the wrong candidate into a company. He said that the industry "rule of thumb" is a recruitment mistake can cost you three times the candidate's annual salary. Not to mention the lost opportunity cost: lost business, potential clients, etc. And you're back to square one, looking for a replacement. So the stakes can be high when you are recruiting.

Giesener went on to say that employers often hire quickly and fire slowly, which will often exacerbate an already fraught situation. And, he adds, that a lot of employers base their recruitment decision on previous experience which he believes is actually a poor indicator of future performance.

So what is an alternative approach? According to Giesener the best strategy is to focus on a candidate's behavioural traits. He outlines four behavioural categories that should accurately predict how a person will perform on the job. These traits have nothing to do with intelligence, knowledge, experience or education. Rather, they have everything to do with how they are as people, how they instinctively do things, and the decisions they make from moment to moment. These traits are:

- 1 **Motivation:** what drives a person. Some jobs require people who are motivated by ego, others by ideals, or others, by what's best for the group, etc.
- 2 **Thought:** how a person gathers information and reaches a decision. One job could require people who are methodical and thorough while another might need those who can make split-second decisions based on minimal information, etc.
- 3 **Action:** how a person does his or her job. One job might require people who work best alone, while another needs those who work best in a group. Some jobs attract people who love variety; other jobs need those who prefer routine, etc.
- 4 **Interaction:** how a person communicates with and relates to others. Some jobs need people who are confrontational; another job needs someone who is accommodating, etc.

**ACCORDING TO GIESENER THE BEST STRATEGY IS TO FOCUS ON A CANDIDATE'S BEHAVIOURAL TRAITS.**

Giesener goes on to say that behavioural traits can't be learned - you either have it or you don't, but on the job information and knowledge can be, and once you recruit people who are the right behavioural fit, Giesener says they will learn on the job knowledge surprisingly quickly.

So, where to from here? Well, as an employer you need to identify the behavioural traits you require for success in each role within your business across the four key areas as outlined above. Once identified, you can then prepare a set of unique and "loaded" questions that you can direct to candidates in interview as well as to previous employer referees who have witnessed the candidate on the job in earlier roles. By asking an appropriate series of questions you are going to be able to reveal the essence of a candidates' behavioural style, "warts and all". In other words, you will expose what you need to know about that candidate's inner motivation, decision-making style, preferred work patterns and the way they interact, and how well that matches other top performers for specific roles in your business.

This will form the "yardstick" by which you can measure each candidate and the closest match for each role should be the best fit for that job. In turn, you will need to rely less on gut instinct and it should follow that there will be fewer surprises (and recruitment costs) down the line. **m**

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