7 STEPS THAT HELP MANAGERS HIRE THE BEST

by

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Managers who use my pre-employment tests, interview training, or attend my speeches often ask me, "What is a comprehensive step-by-step method to hire the best?"

Here are seven (7) steps that help managers hire the best. Definitely use the Steps 1 – 3. You get even more in-depth applicant evaluation by adding Steps 4 – 7. Of course, change the order of steps to suit your company.

STEP 1 = BRIEF INITIAL SCREENING INTERVIEW (BISI)

BISI uncovers job-related bio-data or biographical data. This gives you objective data you can uncover in a 15-minute phone or in-person BISI.

How do you start? Make a list of bio-data similarities of your best employees in a job. For example, let's say your best employees (a) held jobs during high school (HS), (b) post-HS worked only 1 or 2 full-time jobs before applying at your company, and (c) held each post-HS job two or more years.

Voila! You quickly screen-in applicants who have those three (a, b, & c) bio-data, and eliminate applicants who do not have those three bio-data.

If the applicant's bio-data is similar to your best employees, then you can continue to Step 2 = Pre-Employment Tests.

STEP 2 = PRE-EMPLOYMENT TESTS
Big research projects prove pre-employment tests are the most accurate method to predict – or forecast -- an applicant's success or failure. Tests are far better at predicting job success than interviews or other prediction methods. So, make sure your applicants take pre-employment tests.

You need to use the correct pre-employment test. You test applicants for skilled, professional or supervisory jobs, using pre-employment tests that predict – or forecast – both (a) intelligence plus (b) job behavior, like interpersonal skills, personality, and motivations. For applicants for lower-level, unskilled and semi-skilled jobs, you give applicants a test to forecast three crucial dependability concerns: (a) work ethic, (b) theft/stealing, and (c) substance abuse.

Importantly, always conduct a "Benchmarking Study" to customize intelligence and behavior tests before you start testing job applicants. That will identify the test scores that indicate an applicant is likely to succeed in your company. Ask an industrial psychologist how you efficiently customize tests via benchmarking.

If the applicant gets good scores on the pre-employment test, then definitely do Step 3 = In-Depth Interview.

STEP 3 = IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

Horrible news: Research shows most interviewers are terrible at predicting if an applicant will succeed or fail. So, never use only a job interview to make hiring decisions. Here are tips to help you interview better.

Start by listing 6-9 job-related qualities you absolutely must find in the person you hire. Use your list to create an interview form – to help you ask the applicant about each quality, and have room to take notes.

Beware: Never tell the applicant the qualities you are looking for. For example, if one of the 6-9 key qualities is teamwork, do not ask, "Do you like or do well with teamwork?" Instead, ask an indirect question like "What did you like most in jobs you had? Also, what did you like least?" Listen carefully. An applicant who likes teamwork will ooh-&-ahh about collaborating and working with people. An applicant who dislikes teamwork will not mention such activities.

If the applicant impresses you in the In-Depth Interview, then proceed to Step 4.

STEP 4 = ROLE-PLAY or WORK SIMULATION
Would you buy a used car without first driving it? Of course not!

Well, job applicants are 'used cars.' Every applicant tells you they can do the job. But do not believe it until you make the applicant show you key job skills via role-playing.

For example, with a sales rep applicant, you can act as a prospective customer, while the applicant pretends to be a sales rep. Use a checklist to identify what sales skills the applicant does and does not display. For an admin assistant job, have the applicant do admin work you will require on-the-job, such as typing, computer use, and spreadsheets.

If the applicant does well in this, then move on to Step 5.

STEP 5 = REALISTIC JOB OBSERVATION (RJO)
Although the applicant did well in Steps 1 – 4, you must discover if the applicant truly desires to do required job tasks. How? Have the applicant spend 2-4 hours tagging along with, and observing, one of your employees doing the job. For instance, a sales applicant should spend 4 hours watching one of your sales reps. Or, a laborer applicant could spend half a shift observing one of your company's laborers. After this RJO, find out if the applicant actually would like doing the job duties.

Research revealed giving applicants a RJO results in (a) less applicants accepting a job offer, but (b) applicants who accept a job offer are less likely to turnover. Reason: They saw first-hand what they would do on-the-job and want to do it.

STEP 6 = REFERENCE & BACKGROUND CHECKS
For an applicant still in the running after Steps 1 – 5, do
a. Reference Checks – calling the applicant's ex-bosses
b. Background Checks – finding job-related records, e.g., criminal, credit, and driving

STEP 7 = ONE EXECUTIVE APPROVES HIRING DECISIONS
Hiring productive employees is ultra-important to a company's profits and growth. As a safeguard, give a specified executive data you collected in Steps 1 – 6. Then, the executive can (a) approve hiring an applicant rated excellent on Steps 1 – 6, and (b) refuse to hire an applicant who rated only low on Steps 1 – 6.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO HELP YOU HIRE THE BEST
You now have seven great methods to discover if the applicant has qualities you need in the person you hire. Definitely use the first three steps – BISI, pre-employment tests, and in-depth interview. To be even more careful, you also can use the last four steps.

Some managers worry about how much time this will take. Answer: Anywhere from five minutes for a lousy applicant who bombs the BISI to a few hours for an applicant who does all seven steps.

Ask yourself: How much time, energy and money do you waste when you hire the wrong applicant? And how much is it worth to you when you hire the best?

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