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THE QUINTESSENCE CORPORATION
Cultivating Potential into Performance and Profit

What To Ask Before You Hire

Few things can waste more valuable time and resources or cause more morale problems than mismatching the person and the job. As a busy executive, you want to get the most out of your people while protecting your investment in their training.

Good employees turn up, not by magic, but through good hiring practices, and smart hiring starts with smart interviewing. After you've asked the usual "resume" questions -- job history, education, salary expectations, etc. -- probe your prospect with questions that will illuminate their hopes, goals, inclinations, and reservations.

1. "Tell me about yourself. All the exciting and interesting things."

People offer revealing replies to that question. So many people, even some top executives, say, "Oh, there's nothing exciting about me." You learn a lot about people's self-esteem when they answer that question.

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'Probe your prospect with questions that will illuminate their hopes and goals.'

Six Secrets to Creating Leadership Momentum

No matter where you are in your career, taking the leadership role in your organization is a given. Here is the lesson about creating leadership momentum. It's not about you - it's about them.

True leadership begins through valuing others. In working with many law firms, major corporations and associations, everyone plays a leadership role, from the receptionist all the way through the organization to the top dog.

Does everyone on your team consider themselves a leader? *Why not?* What can you do to help others see their role?

Keep the following **LEADER** acronym in mind as you lead your team, your personal life and more importantly, your self!

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Motivational Quotes

It is change, continuing change, inevitable change that is the dominant factor in society today. No sensible decision can be made any longer without taking into account not only the world as it is, but the world as it will be.

-Isaac Asimov (1920-1992), Science Fiction writer

The potential of the average person is like a huge ocean unsailed, a new continent unexplored, a world of possibilities waiting to be released and channeled toward some great good.

- Brian Tracy

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2. "If you could wave a magic wand and create a perfect environment to work in, what would it be like?"

Suppose the potential employee answers, "I don't like to have someone breathing down my neck. I like to be left on my own, to make up my mind how to do things." You know immediately that this is the wrong person for a job that's heavily supervised. (Choose someone who says, "I enjoy a lot of feedback" instead.)

Consider both the demands of the job and the working environment. If a quiet, personable individual replies, "I love working with people, but I'd like to have my own space," be sure that's possible. Work areas quickly become private domains, and rightly so or people wouldn't take pride in them. But if the job requires sharing a table with the coffee machine, your employee may not last or do the job well.

3. "Describe the best boss you ever had. What made him or her so special? Describe the worst boss."

If the description of the worst boss sounds anything like you, you know that person won't be happy working with you.

4. "What's your hobby?"

There are many questions the law does not allow an employer to ask -- whether a person is married for instance. But you may want to know something about a person's private life to determine if the hours or job demands are going to be stressful. For instance, if you need an employee who is bright and alert at an early hour and his hobby will keep him up late on weeknights, you both may have a problem. Or if her hobby requires occasional time off to participate, the time to discuss the appropriateness of this is now.

Some Questions to Ask Yourself -

Before you sit down with a potential employee, ask yourself:

5. "What am I offering this person besides money?"

What opportunities for growth, excitement, achievement, and fulfillment go along with the paycheck? Enthusiasm, motivation, and persistence are rarely proportional to salary. Often they are in inverse ratio. (Why else would anyone choose to be an artist, performer, teacher, or writer?) Self-motivated employees are great, but it never hurts to spotlight some incentives.

Continued

But once you've got the right people in the right jobs, your own job still isn't over. Ask yourself:

6. "How do I keep my people highly motivated, productive, and eager to come to work in the morning?"

Your answers can be critical to a happy, productive, low-turnover organization. Here are some suggestions. Start by making the job fun to keep employees from getting stale. Share the big picture with them, so they realize their contribution is part of an important whole. Solicit their feedback and act on it to prove to them that they are really making a difference. Then watch your people respond with hard work, loyalty, and enthusiasm.

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Web Site Of The Month

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L – Listen.

You cannot hear anyone's message if you are talking to yourself. Stop the mental terrorism and self chatter and say to yourself, 'My mind will not wander, I will give this person the respect they deserve.' Do you want respect when speaking to others? You get what you give.

E – Educator.

Knowledge Management is a hot topic. You can only turn the tacit knowledge (process and data) into explicit knowledge (application and wisdom) through positive communications. Knowledge is power to some people and they are not willing to share. These people and ultimately their companies are, simply put – doomed.

A – Adaptability.

Blessed are the flexible for they shall not be bent out of shape. Adapting to change is critical. The old theory of managing by fear is long gone. Boomers, Generation X and the Millennials (Gen. Y) must be adapted to!

D – Delegate.

Releasing your authority and responsibility through delegation creates excellence in leadership. Fear? Sure! Give them the objective, hear it in their words (eliminate 'Do you Understand?' and replace with 'I want to make sure I explained it well, could you please play it back in your own terms.')" Most importantly, let them try it their way.

E – Empathetic.

Communicate with the intention of the other person in mind. Leaders can become ego centered and power hungry. Remember it's about them not you. Record yourself. Listen to the intent of the conversation. Is it about you or them? (Then erase the tape!)

R – Role model.

They watch every move you make, every sentence you speak. Want to motivate your group? You must work at creating a positive environment. Too touchy, feely for you? Tough. It is what works. Have fun, speak positively, stay focused and your team will follow.

What part of this acronym do you need to polish? The real secret to leadership momentum is understanding what you can do better. You are not going to change others - just yourself!

By Marsha Petrie Sue, E-mail: Marsha@CommunicatingResults.com



ONE MINUTE IDEAS

L

E

A

D

E

R

Manage By Walking Around

Answer one employees e-mail message a day with a personal trip to their office or desk. This is a good way to find out (first hand) what is going on within their department.

Be A Troubleshooter

When you run into a problem at work, try to think of two or three possible solutions before you take the problem to your boss. This will show that you are a problem solver and a thinker.

Core Values

Aside from vision, an organization in a state of change must rely upon its core values to serve as a basis for acceptable behaviors, decision-making, and delegation. Identification and communication of core values become a very important part of your strategic plan.

Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world.

Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

- Margaret Mead

Teach Your Employees' Communication Basics

Sharpen communication between you and your staff members by following these guidelines:

- **Really listen; don't "wait to talk."** When employees are speaking, focus on what they're saying and try to understand their complete meaning. Don't let your attention wander because you're thinking about how you'll respond.
- **Be concise. Don't monopolize the conversation.** Get to the point and give employees the chance to share their ideas.
- **Keep an open mind. Reserve judgment.** Consider all points of view and possibilities before you respond.
- **Show respect.** Convey your commitment to listening through your body language as well as through your silence. Don't slouch, fiddle with papers or carry on any side conversations.
- **Seek and confirm understanding.** When you're not sure exactly what someone means, ask for clarification. Then, to confirm that you understood, summarize what you heard.
- **Appreciate more than one right answer.** Each employee brings a different perspective to the discussion. Accept that problems can have more than one solution.

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