



ACCURATE HIRING

Hiring the "right" personnel can prove to be a daunting task. A chosen candidate can take up to a year to fulfil their potential & yield an attractive return on your investment.

The need to hire the correct person is clear. But be patient!! Risking your Company's reputation & prospective earnings, (not to mention costs incurred), with a questionable candidate is bad business. Avoid the pitfalls!! Successful hire **can** be yours.

WHY HIRING "RIGHT" FIRST TIME IS SO IMPORTANT.

The risks of employing the "wrong" person are:

1. The credibility of the Company in its marketplace.
2. Loss of trust with clients & resultant impact.
3. The effect of morale on staff (e.g. momentum, expectation, credibility, negativity).
4. Costs incurred. Surveys show that the cost of recruiting the "wrong" person can be significant (e.g. sales personnel the minimum is £32,000!!!)

COMMON MISTAKES WHEN HIRING

1. Poor quality evaluation of applicant response.
2. Not being clear to what exactly is required.
3. Inadequate preparation & planning of interview process.
4. Unable to assess experience & past performance.
5. Relying on an applicant's C.V. rather than the person.
6. At interview making an early decision on a candidate. Studies have shown that 80% of hiring decisions are made within the first 4 minutes; the rest of the time is spent trying to confirm initial impressions (how many £32,000 decisions are made in 4 minutes?).
7. Hiring on "gut" feelings (i.e. people you like rather than those who can do the job).
8. Hiring family or friends (judgement could be impaired).

THERE ARE NO GUARANTEES WHEN RECRUITING

AT 1ST FUTURE WE SUGGEST A FOUR-STAGE INTERVIEW PROCESS: -

STAGE 1

COMPATIBILITY INTERVIEW

Purpose: To identify activities, experiences and attitudes which COULD support a strong employer/employee relationship.

USE OPEN ENDED QUESTIONS - Do not lead the candidate

a) Education

- Measures goal orientation, self discipline.
- Are they serious about success?
- Competitiveness

b) Criteria

- What are they looking for?
- Do they have direction, a strategy?
- Have they thought about their own minimum requirements?

If yes, can the Company meet them?

c) Experience

- How does their experience to date match the Company's environment?

POINTS TO CONSIDER /QUESTIONS TO ASK

How were they managed

- i) By whom?
- ii) How frequently?
- iii) HDTFAI - How Do They Feel About It - (what did they most like and dislike about the way they were managed)

How were they trained

- i) By whom?
- ii) How frequently?
- iii) What philosophy of thinking was used? (relationship vs hard sell)
- iv) HDTFAI

Their working environment

- i) Working hours
- ii) Working conditions
- iii) HDTFAI

Describe a typical day

- i) When does it start?
- ii) How does it start?

What is their level of activity

About activity goals

- i) What are the goals?
- ii) How often are they achieved?
- iii) How much time is devoted to new business?
- iv) How does it end?
- v) Do they plan? - How? - When? - get specifics

What sales environment are they used to

- i) What would be the nature of the clients business & it's market size
- ii) How do they identify prospects - and what frequency
- iii) Who (job title) in the Company do they typically contact?

What are their most significant professional accomplishments to date. Why, were they so.

Other considerations

- i) Compatibility
- ii) Goals - winners do not step back because they are ambitious
- iii) Financial considerations (Ask for proof of earnings)

Ask the candidate to define "sales" in just a few words.

Does the above summary address:

- i) Finding needs. Meeting needs
- ii) Solving problems
- iii) Persuading, convincing or forcing. (Which type of person do you want ?)

Determine the level of personal upheaval. (E.g. the average person does not balance more than two major changes at any given time).

STAGE 2

BEHAVIOUR BASED INTERVIEW

Purpose: Endeavour to assess how a person will act in the future.

The Behaviour-Based interview uses past behaviour as a predictor for how a person will behave in the future.

The Behaviour-Based interview looks beyond buzz words and traits and has the additional benefit of being virtually impossible to prepare for.

Keys to successful Behaviour-Based interviewing.

- i) You must have a clear understanding of both the technical and performance skills required for the position and the marketplace.
- ii) You must develop open questions that allow you to gather SPECIFIC examples of skill performance. (GET FACTS not abstracts - NAMES, DATES, TIMES, PLACES, NUMBERS)
- iii) Evaluate the candidate's response to determine if there is, or is not, EVIDENCE of the skills required.

SKILLS DEFINITION

Are they:-

Able to maintain a calm, mature, problem-solving attitude while dealing with interpersonal conflict, personal rejection, hostility or time demands.

Able to interpret verbal and non-verbal behaviour allowing the development of acute perception and understanding of others feelings, needs, values and opinions; to be sensitive to and aware of personality differences and conflicts.

Able to start and persist with specific courses of action while exhibiting high motivation and a sense of urgency: willing to commit to long hours of work and make personal sacrifice in order to reach goals.

Able to clearly present information through the spoken word: influence or persuade others through oral presentation in positive or negative circumstances: listen well.

Able to relate to routine operations in a manner that is consistent with existing solutions to problems: conform to established policies and procedures; log work activities.

Able to communicate with others in a warm and helpful manner whilst establishing a rapport, & building credibility.

Able to define realistic, specific goals and objectives; then prioritising them.

COPING WITH TASKS

Ask for:

- a) An example when they had to deal with unreasonable expectations at work.
- b) Aspects of their behaviour that they consider mature and conversely immature.
- c) A specific event when they have had to cope with anger or hostility from another person.
- d) An example of a high stress situation where it was important to keep a positive attitude. What happened? (get NAMES, DATES, TIMES, PLACES, NUMBERS, LOCATIONS).
- e) An example of a time when they had to cope with the demands of personal rejection or interpersonal conflict.

COMMITMENT TO TASK (Ability to retain motivation and dedication once a specific course of action has been undertaken).

Ask for specific examples of:

- a) A time in which it was necessary to give long hours to the job. (E.g. when work had to be taken home, work weekends, or maintain unusually long hours).
- b) A time in which they were very persistent in order to achieve goals. (Getting the job done, especially when faced with obstacles or distractions, necessitates tenacity and a dedication to results).
- c) A time when they had to work very hard to reach a goal. (We recognise that being successful takes more than luck and that hard work is necessary in order to achieve).

When asking questions similar to the examples given the key to their successful evaluation is the spontaneity and detail of the response.

As we are all aware, part of being a sales professional includes the ability to "think on your feet". Therefore listen carefully to the specifics of the story and evaluate the storyteller, not only on the **content** of the example, but also their **ability** to deliver it in a clear, concise manner.

STAGE 3

PRESENTATION INTERVIEW

Purpose: To cause the candidate to demonstrate their sales skills.

In this interview, the candidate's objective is to "sell themselves" to the client in the form of a sales presentation.

We suggest that this is organised so that the "sale" is tendered in a manner in which the Company would normally expect to sell its services. (E.g. If the standard sales presentation utilises a sales visual, request the candidate to develop a visual for the purpose of marketing themselves).

The candidate will treat the interviewer as a new prospect with whom an appointment has been set-up and they are to meet for the very first time. (Note that for the purpose of this exercise both parties will act as if they are strangers to each other).

Offer the advice "plan your sales call accordingly".

Setting the stage in this manner gives the candidate complete control. It gives them the opportunity to demonstrate, not only their sales skills, but also their listening abilities, problem solving skills and attitudes.

EVALUATE:

- 1) Sales technique
- 2) Probing skills
- 3) Ability to present features and benefits
- 4) Problem solving skills
- 5) Objection handling skills
- 6) Closing skills
- 7) Planning and preparation they will do
- 8) Listening skills, and willingness to follow directions (did they do what you asked them to do)

This is their time to shine! sit back, enjoy the show and ask yourself, "how would I feel about this person presenting to my clients?".

STAGE 4

REFLECTIVE INTERVIEW

Purpose: To re-cap the entire process and, once again, cause the individual to be very conscious of the world which they are pursuing.

Do they have a clear picture of:

1. The Company's, and their own, daily activities.
2. The result the Company expects from them.

The reflective interview is designed to assure mutual understanding and clarity before an offer of employment is extended.

Examples of questions for consideration in the reflective interview are as follows:

1. What have they learned about the Company?
2. Why do they want to become part of it?
3. Ask them to describe a typical day, working for the Company?
4. What do they consider to be the biggest challenge in the position?
5. What role would they like to play in addressing that challenge?
6. What do they see as their future in this job?
7. Offered the job, would they accept it?
8. Why?

As you ask each of these questions, pay careful attention to the response.

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Of course interviewing is a two way process. Think about what information the candidate needs and remember that sales executives are very much in demand so **you** must do some selling. By planning your interview you will prove that your Company is professional.

Keep in mind what can influence a person's thought process when they are considering a change of job.

- a) Location
- b) Security
- c) People
- d) Type of Company
- e) Money
- f) Progression

Prepare for the interview - Find time to read the CV, - Establish rapport.

Sell yourself and your Company to EVERY candidate. Although you may not recruit the person in front of you they may become a customer.