

“In This Issue: How to Hire a Problem Manager”

Test for Success
Tools, Tips, & Techniques for Avoiding
Hiring Mistakes and Developing People
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How to Hire a Problem Manager
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No one hires a problem manager on purpose but, if it happens, the results can be devastating. Hiring a problem manager guarantees turmoil, conflict and likely turnover. It deteriorates teamwork, lowers productivity, and can run off valued employees.

The cost of replacing a manager can range from ¾ of his or her annual salary to as much as several times the annual salary.

This problem is made more difficult because the applicant’s desire to land the job means that he or she is on best behavior in the interview and in every other contact he or she has with the company.

However, if you insist, here are: “Four Ways To Increase The Odds That You Will Hire A Problem Manager”

1. Assume that what you see in the interview (that is, the applicant’s behavior, attitudes, personal style, the whole picture the applicant paints of him or herself) is what you’ll see on the job.
2. Don’t bother calling references, doing a background check or personality testing.
3. Don’t waste you other managers’ time by having them meet the applicant. In

particular, don't concern yourself with how well the applicant will get along with his or her prospective boss. The applicant is a grown-up; it is up to him or her to get along with the boss.

4. Don't bother getting a sample of the applicant's work. If he says he can do the job, that's good enough.

Using these four suggestions will almost guarantee that you will end up with a problem manager. On the other hand, if you would rather avoid problem managers, these steps can help you:

1. Recognize that an applicant's behavior in the interview is probably not his or her typical behavior. The applicant is "on stage," playing a role (the role of "Best Applicant for This Job.") Your job is to go behind the "look good" mask that applicants wear during interviews. You can do this in several ways:
 - Take the time to put the applicant at ease in the interview.
 - Conduct part of the interview process in less formal surroundings, such as at a meal or coffee break
 - Use all of the sources of information that you can gather about an applicant
2. If the initial interview is positive, call references, do a background check, and have the applicant complete a detailed personality inventory.
3. Set up interviews with at least two other managers, one of whom should be the applicant's prospective boss. The chemistry between the applicant and his or her prospective boss should be at least OK, preferably very good.
4. If possible, arrange to have the applicant provide a work sample. I have a number of restaurant clients who require their manager applicants to work an eight-hour in one of their restaurants alongside the on-board management team. This gives them a much better idea of the manager applicant's management style, how he or she deals with the pressure of a surge of customers at lunch, and much more.
5. Finally, bring together all of the applicant information you have gathered: interview impressions, the applicant's resume, the results of reference calls, background checks, personality testing, etc., and review it with the applicant's prospective boss and at least one other management level person.

While these suggestions don't guarantee you can avoid a problem manager, using them definitely stacks the deck in your favor.

Remember, People ARE your most important asset!

To Hire the Best, Test!

To Reveal Management Potential, Test!

To Diagnose Problem Behavior, Test!

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