

In This Issue: **Hire in Haste, Repent at Leisure**

Test for Success
Tools, Tips, & Techniques for Avoiding
Hiring Mistakes and Developing People
From Helm and Associates, Inc.
And Kurt Helm

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Hire in Haste, Repent at Leisure

This subject may sound familiar to some of you, but bear with me for a moment. We all know that having a well-structured selection process, and being sure to use every step of it, is the key to hiring and developing the best applicants. However, the pace of business always seems to be increasing, and this can make sticking to every step of your selection process difficult. In an atmosphere of rapidly approaching deadlines and increasing numbers of tasks landing on your desk, all of them labeled, "Urgent," it is easy to look for shortcuts, ways to trim your selection process to make room in your schedule for the next thing to be done. Let's remind ourselves about why this is a bad idea.

A strong sense of urgency to fill a critical position can make us dumb. Research has shown, and common sense confirms, that the demands of a rapid work pace can result in snap decisions that are not always as carefully thought through as they should be. So, from time to time, we need to remind ourselves that skipping steps in the selection process to save time in the short run can end up costing us much more in the long run.

The reason that you have a selection process is that it is critically important that you get to know the applicant as well as you can before you make the hire/no hire decision. If you simply hired whomever walked in your door, you would end up hiring too many people who weren't suited for the job. Your turnover would skyrocket and the quality of your service and products would plummet. Employee morale would nosedive.

The goals of your selection process are, therefore, to help you get to know applicants well enough to avoid hiring those who, for whatever reason, are unsuited for the job, and to place those who are qualified appropriately in the organization. This is a challenging

goal. Think about how long it took you to get to know your significant other. (No matter how long the two of you have been together, the truth of the matter is that you are still getting to know that person.) Getting to know an applicant is just as important, but with more severe time constraints. As much fun as it would be, for example, you can't afford to take each of your applicants on a two-week camping trip in the Rockies. Such a trip would strip away the interviewing veneer and let you see the "real person," it is true, but – alas – the cost of this approach is just too high.

The solution is to have a thorough selection process and stick to it. You can create a well-rounded picture of the applicant with a selection process that includes, but is not limited to:

- Notes from the applicant's first contact with your company
- A completed application form
- Notes from the initial interview
- Performance Profile Results
- Notes from interviews with the applicant's prospective boss and coworkers
- The results of a background check
- Reference checks
- Drug test results
- Physical exam results
- And other forms of evaluation specific to the job in question

Once this selection process is in place, don't allow what some call "the tyranny of the urgent" to result in skipping any of its steps. Thoroughness and consistency are key to a successful selection process that enables you to hire the best-suited applicant and then, with an understanding of his strengths and areas of developmental need, set him up for success in your company.

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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