

# **The Recruitment Puzzle Making Good Hiring Decisions**



## INTRODUCTION

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This recruiting booklet was developed for the Company in order to assist them with future hiring decisions. It is intended to be resource material for designated Managers charged with the responsibility for hiring and who have completed the company-sponsored training. Further advice regarding recruitment may be obtained from The Employers' Choice Inc.

Making good hiring decisions is a challenge for some organizations. The cause of "bad hires" can be traced to a number of problems the organization may have with the structure of the hiring process. There are a number of reasons for this including:

- Poor assessment of organizational needs;
- Job requirements too vague;
- Poor sourcing of suitable candidates;
- Inadequate candidate assessment techniques;
- Poor assessment of the fit between candidate abilities and job needs;
- Poor assessment of the fit between candidate and other members of the team;
- Poor utilization of second opinions;
- Lack of skills testing; and
- Inadequate initial training.

Prior to interviewing, you need to establish your recruitment strategy. This booklet will take you through the process of doing both.

### ***The Decision to Hire***

Hiring is an investment activity. Effectively, you are investing in the future success of the organization by making the organization more productive.

It should not be assumed that you need to hire a new person for every vacancy. Jobs may be filled through internal methods such as promoting from within or through job enrichment. With this in mind, a supervisor that wishes to begin hiring should follow the following steps:

- Define what the needs are using the Job Definition section of this booklet.
- Obtain permission to hire by the President.
- Seek the guidance of The Employers' Choice Inc. for recruitment assistance.
- Follow the recruitment process identified in this booklet.

## ***Definition of the Job***

In order to adequately recruit for a position, you will first need to define what is required. This involves looking at both the department/area of the job and the job duties themselves.

## ***Assessment Questions For The Department/Area***

When you have a position that is open, you need to assess the needs of the area and determine how best to fulfill that need. Questions that you should ask yourself include:

- What services need to be provided by the department and by whom are those services currently being provided? Are there gaps? Make a list of the gaps. Job descriptions should be used in this exercise as they typically provide better clarity on the tasks being completed.
- That said, is there a better (more effective/more efficient) way to get the job done? Does this involve changing current responsibilities of the present employees in the department? If so, identify the changes and the training that may be required. Seek input from the other supervisors in related areas. Whatever aspects of the services that are not being covered should create a second list for recruiting purposes.

## ***Assessment Questions For The Position***

The following questions should be answered by the supervisor.

- Organize the task list from above in terms of both primary importance to the organization and actual time spent completing the task.
- Using the lists you made above, list the critical skills and special knowledge that are required to complete the tasks.
- Separate the critical skills into the “must haves” and the “nice to haves”.
- Determine what skills/experience/educational background is necessary to perform the job with a minimum of competency.
- Determine the depth of experience required. This is an important judgment to make. You need to determine how much previous exposure to the job requirements is necessary. Most hourly positions require 0-2 years of related job experience. It is important to avoid overstating experience requirements in order to avoid boredom and thus higher turnover or morale issues.

## ***The Job Posting***

The job posting is one of the most important aspects of the recruitment process. We recommend that the following be included in a posting:

- The Organization
  - ◆ State the name of the organization, its product/service and any important goals as they relate to the position.
- The Role
  - ◆ Include 4-6 of the most important and regularly occurring job duties. Describe the duties in a way that gives the potential applicant a sense of the types of activities that are involved.
  - ◆ Include the title of the position or level as appropriate.
  - ◆ Describe the reporting relationships.
- The Fit
  - ◆ Identify the skills and experience that are required for success in the role. In particular, describe any qualities of a candidate that may be important for a fit. Consider whether teamwork, independence or decision-making ability is important to the job.
  - ◆ Identify the extent of industry experience that is necessary for satisfactory performance of the work.
- Response Deadline
  - ◆ Set a deadline for responses, no later than three weeks following the date of posting.
  - ◆ Be sure to identify acceptable response methods, e.g. in-person, fax, e-mail address.
  - ◆ Indicate your preference for applications to be made by fax or e-mail and identify your request for no phone calls.

## ***Sources For Posting***

There are numerous options for posting a vacant position. In your industry, posting through newspapers may not be the most efficient method.

Please consult with The Employers' Choice Inc. before posting any position.

## ***The Application Process***

You should request that all job applications be made via a job application form, or at a minimum, through a resume. This will enable you to shortlist these applications and select those that meet the minimum skills/experience profile for the job.

The easiest way to do this is to create a chart and assign scale points to each one of the criteria. An example for recruiting a Receptionist might be:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Previous Phone Experience on System with &gt; 10 Extensions</b>	<b>Word Processing Experience</b>	<b>Customer Service/Order Taking Experience</b>	<b>Working Experience Greater Than &gt; 2 Years</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b><i>Points Allocated</i></b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>18</b>
Smith	0	3	5	5	13
Jones	5	3	2	5	15
Kennedy	2	0	5	5	12
Johnson	5	3	5	5	18
Macon	5	3	5	5	18

In this scenario, you would likely interview candidates Jones, Macon, and Johnson.

### ***Telephone Interviews***

Once you have selected candidates for consideration, you need to perform telephone interviews. The phone interview is really a fact-finding activity that will save you and others the time of an on-site interview when there is clearly no match.

When calling the candidate, especially if you are calling him/her at work, ensure that the person is free to speak to you without distractions. If not, arrange for a better time to conduct the interview.

It is important to prepare questions prior to making the phone call. Some areas that you can probe further that can help you assess the skill/experience fit include:

- Verifying dates of employment;
- Verifying reasons for leaving employment;
- Summarizing work experience;
- Obtaining pay history;
- Verifying education;
- Providing an overview of the physical/sensory requirements for the job as well as the working conditions; and
- What else should I know about your qualifications for this job?

## **Questions to Determine Fit**

In addition, you may want to ask the following additional questions to assess fit:

- What would you change about your most recent job? What aspects of it do/did you like the least?
- What aspects of your job do/did you like the best?
- What are you looking for in your next job?

## **The Close of the Telephone Interview**

It is important not to mislead any candidate as to their chances for employment with The Company. At the closing of the telephone interview, we recommend that you say the following:

*“Competition is keen and I have not yet completed my telephone interviews, but I want to thank you for taking the time to speak with me. I would like to know whether, after speaking to me about the position, you are still interested in having your application put forward to the next step? (If yes), Great! It will take me a few more days to get through the telephone interviews. If after review we feel that you belong on the short list, we will call to arrange for an interview. (If no), We will call you back to let you know that you did not make the shortlist. Again, thank you.”*

## **Interview Questions**

Interviewing is an art that takes practice and concentrated efforts. Generally, you want to pose questions about 20% of the time and listen to answers about 80% of the time. We advocate that all interviews be conducted in teams of at least two people.

## **Some General Tips on Interviewing**

1. Describe the position at the beginning of the interview (the tasks, working relationships, etc.) and refer back to the position throughout the interview.
2. Keep questions simple. Ask one at a time (except, if the job requires complex thinking, you might want to ask a 3-part question, for example, to assure that the candidate can hold onto all three parts).
3. Group questions in thematic bundles. When they've answered your question, ask yourself if you understand the answer and if it was appropriate to the question. If not, rephrase the question and try again.

4. Ask all applicants the same questions. This enables you to ensure fairness and consistency in the interviewing process.
5. Avoid all potentially discriminating questions. Questions that you may not ask include:
  - Are you married? Do you have children?
  - What is your status here in Canada?
  - How old are you?
  - What high school did you attend?
  - What church do you belong to?
  - Have you ever been arrested?
  - I detect an accent. Where are you from?
  - Do you have any disabilities?
  - Are you going to get pregnant in the next year or two?
  - How did you end up in a wheelchair?

In addition, there are some problematic questions, which in certain contexts can be considered discriminatory. For this reason, The Employers' Choice Inc. should be consulted before any of the following questions are asked.

- What is your absenteeism record?
  - Do you have a car?
  - Can you work regular overtime?
  - Will you submit to drug tests?
6. Take notes.
  7. Do not fill silences during the interview. It is important to allow silence for thinking and reflection by the applicant.
  8. Obtain employment references and verify the stage at which the references may be checked.

### ***Some Suggested Questions***

Always begin the interview by verifying, again, some of the employment information contained in the resume and gathered in the telephone interview. This will enable you to determine if there are any other gaps or inaccuracies in the information provided.



In addition to the initial questions, we recommend that you utilize the **behavioral-event** approach to interviewing. The behavioral-event interviewing approach is based on the premise that past behavior will predict future outcomes. It is an approach in which the candidate will recall past experiences. In selecting most behavioral-event interviewing questions, begin with the statement, "Tell me about a time when . . ." We have developed some suggested questions based upon some common criteria for positions. You should select questions that will elicit information about critical skills required to perform the position competently.

### **Ability/Willingness**

Tell me about a time when you experience something at work you found difficult to handle. What did you do?

Tell me about a time when you had to make a quick decision on something and there was no one around who could help you?

Tell me about a job responsibility that you've really enjoyed doing.

### **Communications**

Tell me about a time when you had to solicit the support of someone who was very different in style/personality from you. How did you approach the situation?

Tell me about a time when you had to please multiple bosses, each with their own idea of how things should be run. What was involved, and how were you successful?

### **Teamwork**

Tell me about a time when you needed to get an understanding of another's situation before you could get your job done. How did you get that understanding and what problems did you encounter?

Tell me about a time when a team you were working with fell apart. Why did it happen? What did you do?

Tell me about a specific accomplishment you achieved as a group member. What was your role?

### **Quality**

Tell me about a time when someone *complimented you on the quality/accuracy/presentation of your work.*

## **Organizational Skills**

Tell me about a job or project you worked on where you had to gather information from many different sources and then create something with the information. (Look for process or sequencing skills.)

Tell me about a situation when an emergency caused you to reschedule your workload/projects. What did you do?

## **Manageability**

Describe the best manager you ever had. What made him or her stand out? How was he/she able to motivate you?

Tell me about a time when you felt adequately recognized for your performance.

Tell me about a time when management had to change a plan you were committed to. How did you feel and how did you explain the change to others?

## **Ending the Interview**

Once you have completed asking the questions, give the applicant the opportunity to ask questions or to add anything else he or she thinks may be important for you to know in making your decisions.

You should also ask again if the candidate is prepared to go forward to the next stage of the candidacy process. If the answer is yes, then it is important to inform the candidate of the next steps, which may include:

- Giving the applicant an indication of whether future interviews will be required, whom they are with, and the approximate time frame for the decision-making process.
- Telling the applicant who will call him/her and when.

Thank the applicant for his or her time.

## ***Once the Decision is Made***

Once the top candidate has been selected, it is the supervisor's responsibility to check references and verify education as appropriate. Once this is completed, a written offer should be presented from the Hiring Manager.