



4 Key Benefits of Using Pre-Hire Assessments in Your Organization

By Bud Haney

Assessments are valuable tools that provide managers insights about their candidates, especially when used in the pre-hiring process. Pre-hire assessments can determine how an individual will fit in a specific job, identify the candidate's thinking and reasoning styles, and highlight relevant behavioral traits.

The job market is showing signs of life, with a few key sectors fueling the growth. These include manufacturing, retail, healthcare, leisure and hospitality, and professional services. With many job applicants out of work, underemployed, or looking to switch employers, hiring managers have their work cut out for them to make the best hire possible.

When filling an open position (whether hiring someone new or promoting from within), you want to select the person who is the best fit for the job and team, possesses the right skill set, and is the most effective and productive. To assist in that process, managers can use assessment results to:

- Match employees to the work culture
- Look beyond the résumé
- Place employees in appropriate jobs
- Create “fact patterns” for people in similar positions for use in future hiring practices

1. Assess cultural and behavioral fit.

Knowing your organization's work culture, as well as your own department or team, is an important aspect of

making successful hires. When striving for innovative ideas and productive employees, balancing personality types among employees is in managers' best interests. However, certain personalities and behavior styles will not be productive together.

Managers can use assessments to determine what unique traits new hires bring to the team, and where differences among individuals may cause conflict. A skillful prospect could be tempting, but if he or she won't gel with co-workers, you risk a lack of cohesion (and thus wasted productivity) and possibly sabotaging the entire group. When hiring new employees, it is important to choose someone who will easily mesh with existing team

members. Pre-hire assessments can help managers hire the best fit for the group and the position.

2. Look beyond the résumé.

Research has shown that the majority of résumés are not as accurate as one would hope. The market is extremely competitive, and those in the job hunt are trying to find advantages wherever possible. Assessments can help hiring managers look beyond the résumé and discover the deeper traits of each interviewee. A shining résumé can often mask someone who is not an adequate fit for the job or the team. Assessments can uncover the person behind the résumé to give managers a clearer picture of each potential employee.

3. Match skills and behaviors to your open positions.

Managers have a tendency to hire people similar to themselves, or to become enamored with a particular type of person. However, this approach is not always the best option for the team. Using employee assessments can help managers determine who has the knowledge, skills, and natural inclinations for a position.

To put it another way, a baseball team doesn't need three starting first basemen, nor do most bands need more than one drummer. Objectively assess your needs and the skills necessary to perform the job, and hire for those needs and skills. If you keep hiring the same type of person, you could end up with a team of first basemen who can't adequately fulfill the other roles on the team.

4. Establish patterns of success.

A final benefit of using pre-hire employee assessments is the ability to create "fact patterns" or "performance models." Assessments can be used to chart who has been successful in each position and identify common traits related to their success. Building a performance model involves using the results of previous top performers to create a model of where future applicants should fit if they are going to be successful at the job.

Specific positions require certain innate skills and behaviors. Performance models can make those attributes more obvious to hiring managers and help to set a standard for future employees seeking that job.

The available talent pool is plentiful and extremely diverse. This is cause for businesses to reconstruct their hiring practices. Using advanced tools, such as pre-hire assessments, can easily distinguish who has a true aptitude for the open position and who will fit with the team.

Assessments enhance the hiring process by adding quantitative data to a typically unquantifiable practice. Every hiring manager should strive to match

prospective employees to the culture of the company, place them in appropriate positions, and use fact patterns to predict future success. Assessments are helpful in the pre-hire phase, and offer the opportunity to continually simplify hiring practices. **N**

Bud Haney is the CEO of Profiles International. For more information, please contact jcaspole@AssessmentSpecialists.com.