

Hiring Practices

Have Come A Long Way

By: Teresa Ward



Teresa Ward, president of Teresa's Family Cleaning and New York State's Small Business Entrepreneur of the Year, is often considered Long Island's foremost authority on cleaning homes and businesses to create a cleaner and healthier environment for all. Our highly sought after, award-winning weekly newsletter provides timely cleaning tips and other important Long Island information and charitable events for homeowners, businesses and not-for-profits. Visit us at www.TeresasFamilyCleaning.com to sign up and receive your copy today!

Gone are the days of simply hiring anyone with a pulse.

All too often, the hiring of employees for a company is a practice that is done carelessly out of convenience.

Many times, people are enlisted quickly to ensure that there are enough hands to perform the jobs and/or services.

Much time is spent training these people; it should be the other way around.

More care should be taken on whom we hire more than the training of the wrong individual, as improper selection has many downfalls.

Repercussions of a neglectful hiring methodology range from inferior quality of work to high turnover rates.

No company wants customer dissatisfaction resulting from poor workmanship and low productivity — and nobody wants the results of employee turnover, which will most certainly include lost time, aggravation and increased hiring costs like advertising and training.

Yet, many managers have either not thought about new hiring techniques or just feel they do not have the time to seek them out.

If, however, they made the investment of time and a little expense, hiring managers would see that their company just might benefit from a better quality employee all around.

There are different methods an employer may use as a better means of hiring employees.

There is, of course, changing the interview.

The interview is usually the most common way of screening applicants.

The types of interviews vary greatly and a manager may consider changing the types of questions asked or adding some to include thoughts about behavior, attitude and knowledge instead of general nice to meet you, where do you live, how did you hear about us questions.

Positive results are more readily reached by asking the “right” questions in a set, structured way.

Unstructured interviews are often ineffective.

Interviewing may be a useful tool in finding a person who seems pleasant enough and may be able to do the job, but interviewing alone will not reveal if that person will stay with your company.

There are many reasons why an employee leaves a job.

A good hiring manager must be able to determine what will make a person stay at the job and be productive, and then apply that knowledge into their hiring method.

Learning a person's characteristics is usually the key in deciding if that particular applicant will stay for the long haul or walk out the door in a couple of weeks.

So, instead of just an interview, a good idea is to test the prospective hire.

This Is (Not) A Test

An intelligence test usually measures aptitude, verbal ability and reasoning skills.

This type of test is fine for hiring teachers or nurses and those that must have mental capabil-

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ities to compute or engineer something, but it will not reveal the “staying power” of a person.

There is also the personality test, which has become quite popular.

Using a series of character-identifying questions, a manager may be able to see positive and negative traits of a candidate.

This will help them determine if the person will be satisfied with the job, the salary, their coworkers and the nature of the company.

It gives an idea of the kind of person he or she is, their likes and dislikes, etc.

But again, this will not disclose the prospect of a long lasting relationship.

My residential/commercial cleaning company uses personality testing.

This confidential test is a series of questions developed to measure a very important component — attitude.

The attitude of a person, more than intelligence, personality or any other trait, is a bottom-line indicator of an employee’s potential for long-term employment.

The personality test reveals a person’s experimentation with drugs and their workplace drug use attitude, their supervisory, work ethic and workplace theft attitudes, their prospects for long-term employment, customer service and their safety and risk avoidance attitudes.

The test does not take long and is calculated electronically without any computation by the interviewee.

Revamping your hiring practices to include new interviewing techniques can help you avoid trepidation.

Another piece to the hiring practice should include having hiring packets that include:

- An equal opportunity employee statement
- Space for applicant's employment history
- An acknowledgment of the company's "at will" employment policy — for non-union companies
- A drug test authorization form if applicable
- A consent form for background checks — if you use a third-party company to do them
- A review of the company's policies and procedures, which must have a place for a signature — an important document stating that you communicated your policies and the employee

understands them

- Form I-9, the Employment Eligibility Verification document. The U.S. Department of Justice's Immigration and Naturalization Service requires that individuals you hire are legally eligible to work in the country and this form has a list of acceptable documents a new employee can use to establish their identity and employment eligibility.

Although sometimes expensive, using a third-party to do background checks may be very useful.

They can uncover criminal records, motor vehicle records, credit history, education verification and employment verifications.

Many guidelines and tips can be downloaded from various websites including that of the U.S. Department of Labor and other government sites.

If It's Broke, Fix It

Another good idea is to maintain records for people you have interviewed, whether you hire them or not.

This will save a lot of time with repeat applicants and should be kept in a completely separate drawer with notes.

These simple changes in hiring practices have raised my entire company's standards and my employees' morale.

It has not only allowed me and my clients to feel more comfortable with our employees, it has also saved us money.

I now have the time to focus my attention on other pressing matters of my business.

Gone are the days of going through dozens of employees, poor service, frustration, stress on good workers, wasted training dollars and the negative impact on my company from customers that had a bad experience with a less than desirable employee.

Training employees to do the work is the easy part.

With the help of the personality test and maintaining documentation, we will continue to do our best to hire only the people with good overall attitudes and good customer service skills.

Maintaining a safe, productive work environment is now a lot easier, too.

We have come a long way. *CM*



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