

## Hiring Great Employees

The toughest decisions in organizations are people decisions—hiring, firing, promotion, etc. These are the decisions that receive the least attention and are the hardest to “unmake.” Peter Drucker.

So what’s the big deal about hiring the right person? If we make a mistake, we just let them go and hire someone else. But do you really?

Curt Coffman of the Gallup Organization recently asked “eight great managers” the following questions:

1. How soon after you hire someone do you know they’re not a good fit for that role? Consensus answer: “one week.”
2. How long does it take for your organization to deal with the miscast individual? Consensus answer: “ten years.”

“As time goes by we just keep lowering the expectations on that person.” says Coffman.

So you can see why it is so critical to make sure you hire great people.

A few tips:

1. Adhere to all state and federal hiring rules. The last thing you want is to be sued for discrimination so consult with qualified HR consultants or attorneys for sound practices to keep you out of trouble.
2. Ask your employees for referrals. Offer them a bonus, contingent upon the new employee completing six months of service.
3. Determine the most important characteristics and skills for the position. Hire attitudes and teach skills. It is easier to teach someone to do a job than it is to change their attitudes. For example, you wouldn’t hire someone in sales who does not have a positive, assertive, outgoing personality. How do you teach that?
4. Use prepared open ended questions that address previous experiences. The best predictor of future behavior is past behavior.
5. Use all your resources. Using only interviews to hire, gives you about a 14% chance of making a good match. Adding references checks and assessments will improve that probability to about 75%.

And finally, if you do make a hiring mistake, don’t wait 10 years to correct it.

**“People are not your most important asset. The right people are.”** Jim Collins in “Good to Great.”

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