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Recruiting for your organizational values fit

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BY CHARLOTTE D. HUNTSMAN AND DON MARTINEZ

With the unemployment rate in the United States at one of its lowest percentages in several years (less than 3%) and in Guam with a percentage rate of less than 5%, organizations are in a race to find the best candidates. Hiring the best candidate is every company's goal when recruiting for vacant positions. Candidates are assessed for their competencies and benchmark their qualifications, education, knowledge, skills and abilities against the job description and expectations of the leadership for that position. However, skills and competencies are often not a determinant of succeeding with an organization. What most companies fail to assess is organizational fit: how the candidate will fit into the organization's culture and also, the culture of their potential team.

So what exactly does organizational fit mean? This can be defined as when an employee's professional and personal values and beliefs align with and complement the company's values and beliefs.

Unfortunately, many companies have their mission, vision and values on their website or written in the employee handbook, but never really live it. Companies need to pay more attention to this and define exactly what their organizational culture is

Let's say that the company has defined its culture. Why should they hire candidates that fit into their corporate culture? Here are some reasons why:

- To reduce turnover no matter how much knowledge and skills someone has in a position, if they feel like they are not included in the culture, they will leave the company. A company must learn to be transparent from the first touchpoint with the candidate to when they are hired. They should share things such as management styles, how the department operates or even something as simple as lunch with colleagues. Being transparent could be the key to unlocking a candidate's success and longevity within the company.
- To increase employee engagement getting all employees (current and potential) aligned with the vision, mission and values of the company will help them be more engaged. For candidates, they must see that engagement in the way the company interacts with them. The actions of the recruiter and hiring managers must reflect the values and beliefs of the company. If a candidate sees the engagement from the beginning, they will be excited and engaged through every step of the recruitment process. When they are hired, the engagement will trickle into their work and positively affect the company.
- To increase productivity a person who fits into the culture wants to see the company succeed, and thus will work diligently to see that success through. The person is accountable and feels like part of the end goal.

The key to hiring the best candidate is being open with them about the position and asking the right questions. Conduct a realistic job preview, which allows candidates to experience the work they applied for beforehand. This gives them a more realistic understanding of what the work entails. Unfortunately, realistic job previews are difficult to do mostly because of the candidate's time they can spend. So, if that cannot happen, use questions or scenarios during an interview to help illustrate the work environment. Below are some questions that bring up the subject of organizational culture that can be incorporated in interviews:

- 1. Every company has its own quirks its "dysfunctionality quotient," so to speak. How dysfunctional was your last company, and how much tolerance do you have for dealing with a company's shortcomings and inconsistencies? This question is used to assess a candidate's insights into the problems they faced when battling their last company's shortcomings and inconsistencies as well as the solutions they've provided in attempting to overcome those organizational flaws. It will also allow you to determine how positive or negative the candidate is with his/her answer(s).
- 2. How would you describe the amount of structure, direction and feedback you need in order to excel? This question is asked to assess how independent the candidate is and if they thrive on feedback or not.
- 3. How do you approach your work from the standpoint of balancing your career with your personal life? This question can be asked to engage in a person-to-person values session. You may get to know the candidate's driving force for working.
- 4. Paint a picture of the culture you'll create if we hire you. This question can be asked to understand the candidate's vision on how work will get done.

There will be follow-up questions that may come after, which will hopefully provide more insight on how truly the candidate thinks about work and if they will fit in your culture. With these questions, a company is not looking for the right answer but rather assessing whether or not the way they respond is a fit for the organization. Recruiting for your organization's culture along with the right knowledge, skills and abilities is the formula to hiring the best fit candidate. **mbj**



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