



7 DEADLY HIRING MISTAKES

To Avoid Hiring Unproductive Employees, Beware of These Employment Methods

By Gregory M. Lousig-Nont, Ph.D

“It’s hard to find good help these days.” We’ve heard this old song all our lives. Unfortunately, using the same old hiring methods will yield the same old employee problems. Instead of taking hiring too lightly, beware of these seven deadly hiring mistakes.

Hiring too quickly

Nature abhors a vacuum and so do employers eager to fill a vacancy. Hiring in desperation often leads to settling for less than the best. Often times, compa-

nies are so motivated to fill a position that they hire the first reasonable person who walks through the door. Wrong!

Hiring by “gut feelings.”

The employer rationalizes, “I had a gut-feeling that I should hire him, so I did.” However, appearances are deceiving. It’s hard to believe that an employer still hires based on that “little voice” inside his head. How many times have you been disappointed by your own “street smarts” when it comes to hiring?

Hiring people because of impeccable references.

How many job candidates aren’t smart enough to provide you with references that will assure them a glowing critique? Enough said?

Hiring because former employers had no criticism.

Because of the potential for lawsuits, employers today are reluctant to reveal

information about a former employee, especially if it's negative. Also, no matter how deserving they were of the dismissal, many employers harbor unresolved guilt about having to fire someone.

Refraining from being negative in an

inquiry, they feel, may be the best way to atone for their "sins."

Hiring because the applicant "aced" the interview.

Having attended seminars or classes on effective interviewing, many job seekers

today are prepared or even "groomed" for the interview. There are certainly an abundance of books on the subject. And some people, namely sociopaths, are masters of deception. Because of their charismatic personality and manipulative manner, sociopaths are shoo-ins for almost any job for which they interview.

No matter how skilled the candidate is, nor how sharp his skills, sans work ethic, he will not make an exceptional employee.

Possessing an almost uncanny ability to quickly size up people, they have the capacity to tell the interviewer exactly what they want to hear.

Hiring because of an impressive résumé

A good résumé can't perform on the job. Anyway, who can't buy an imposing résumé today? Just check the phone book, where résumé services companies abound.

These masters of hype have a talent for transforming the most meager of job

histories into the great American novel.

Hiring because they come highly recommended.

We've heard from many employers who hired someone because the new employee's virtues were lauded by a friend or colleague, only to be stunned later when the employee didn't pan out.

While your compatriots may not deliberately set out to steer you wrong, they may also be operating under false assumptions. Relying on a friend to furnish you with a good employee is almost as unreliable as depending on a "feeling."


For optimal hiring, it is recommended that companies use a reliable and scientifically valid honesty and integrity test. Honesty tests are written psychological instruments that claim to identify people who have a tendency toward dishonesty or irresponsibility in the workplace.

These tests also can assess a job applicant's honesty and other positive attributes.

It seems values occur in bundles. Responsible parents who teach their children honesty also instill in them other positive values. In a study on honesty tests at Ohio University, there was found to be a correlation between those who scored high on the tests and those who possess a solid work ethic, valuing work for its own sake.

No matter how skilled the candidate is, nor how sharp his skills, *sans* work ethic, he will not make an exceptional employee.

Downsizing has become a way of life for

companies, large and small. It is more important than ever to hire productive and honest employees. Honesty tests are one solution to the problem. 

About the Author

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