By
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Top Priorities

Well-defined recruitment sourcing and assessment processes are critical for business success.

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Securing top talent is one of the most important business objectives to obtain long-term competitive advantage and profitable growth. It's therefore critical to establish effective and efficient recruitment and assessment processes to support that objective. These processes are frequently left solely for the human-resource function to design and implement, and are not always viewed as a top business priority. While sourcing and investing in a technology, software package or implementation vendor are usually well-defined and orchestrated business processes, securing top talent tends to be more haphazard. Recruitment processes need to be redesigned and more effectively deployed, leveraging technology advances. A strategic sourcing and assessment approach for human resources is now a necessity and a critical business priority.

While there's generally a need to overhaul the overall recruitment and assessment processes, there are a number of key enhancements that will significantly improve most existing recruitment processes, including:

• Ensuring that hiring managers provide the recruiters with a strong understanding of the business, talent needs, performance objectives and value propositions of the companies.

• Defining specific talent needs in terms of near- and medium-term performance objectives and desired competencies, not just accountabilities and responsibilities.

• Gaining agreement within the hiring teams (recruiters, interviewers and hiring managers) on the "must have" and "nice to have" selection criteria in terms of key competencies to better enable an effective assessment and selection process.

• Conducting structured interviews to obtain evidence supporting each specific competency area, requiring all interviewers to go through interview training and providing specific examples as evidence of desired competency areas.

• Establishing, measuring and monitoring recruitment process time frames for each part of the process (not just the overall time to fill) to drive specific process improvements and achieve recruitment process timeliness.

• Building strategic relationships with third-party recruiters to best represent the organization in the marketplace at each level rather than a plethora of purely contingent recruiters just feeding names.

• Using performance-based retainer agreements with third-party executive search firms to best align the interests of the hiring and search firms.

• Acquiring and deploying recruitment technology systems to best enable and integrate processes across the organization.

Assessing top talent usually relies upon the interviewing skills of the people conducting the interviews, as well as in some reference and background checking to avoid bad hires. Strengthening interviewing skills and processes, as well as deploying other assessment tools, would significantly improve talent evaluation. Good strategies include providing interviewing skill training on a regular basis; using case studies in an interview for creative problem solving traits and using multi-interviewers to gain insights on team and political skills; conducting consistent personality tests with all prospective hires; testing specific skills when appropriate for a position; and requesting written plans of action for the first 100 days prior to hiring to evaluate planning and writing skills.

Recruitment and assessment of key talent is too important to leave solely in the hands of the recruitment function in most organizations. It's critical that the senior management team establish effective processes along with supporting training and performance measurement/monitoring to be effective. **BR**

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