

10 Steps To Hiring & Keeping The Right Employee

By Donald Griffith

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About '10 Steps to Hiring and Keeping the Right Employee'

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With a customer list that includes Major League Baseball, National Basketball, US Olympic teams, Oracle Corp., And a select group of insiders, such as Robert Kiyosaki (Rich Dad) And Steven Covey, Don Griffith and the Winslow Research Institute have helped to improve over 117,000 people's lives

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10 Steps to Hiring and Keeping the Right Employee By Donald Griffith

Hiring the right person for the job at hand is important to the smooth operation of your business and to the morale of the other employees. There is nothing worse for you, your company, or the new person that is being hired than to find out that fit of person and personality to the job is just not going to work. The new hire will leave under less than optimal conditions, existing employees will begin to jump ship or you will be left with the unpleasant task of firing the person you just hired.

Firing is probably the most painfully conclusion for all the parties involved.

The ability to hire the right person for the right job is not something most managers are born being able to do. It is a learned process that could take years to perfect. Along the way it is important to use the knowledge and experience of the people that have gone before you. Read articles on the art of hiring. Find classes on communications and interviewing tips. Learn all you can to become the person that can hire and keep the right people on a consistent basis.

Not only is the process of hiring a complicated and time consuming task, but it can mean the difference between tranquility and disaster in your company. Hiring the wrong person for the job can snowball into existing employees becoming unsatisfied and choosing to move on. It could result in loss of customers or clients. The wrong person can mean that you have to start the hiring process all over again (only multiplied).

To avoid the hire then fire syndrome, you need to take steps to ensure the person you choose for the position is a right fit. In order to stay on target you need to be prepared, be sure to understand the position and the other people, use all the tools available to you, and understand the interview process from top to bottom.

You have to be willing to invest time and money into the pre-screening process, the interview and the final evaluation. The hiring process might be expensive, but it is nothing compared to the expense of training a new employee only to have that employee quit (or to have other existing employees walk away) with little or no notice.

The hiring process is an art and a science that can no be rushed. It is not something that should happen on a whim. It can take quite a bit of time and effort to prepare properly for a round of interviews. It is important that you start as early as possible so you don't get caught in a time crunch. Rushing a decision is what leads most people into making the wrong choice. When it comes to hiring, patience and preparation are invaluable tools.

There are basically ten steps that you should follow when you are in need of a new employee – either for an existing position or for one that is being created within the company. These steps are designed to help you identify the right person for the position and follow up with ways to keep the same employee for the long term.

Make a Plan

The more time and energy you put into the hiring process, the more likely you are to get a candidate for the job that will fit well and will stay around for awhile. If at all possible, you should have one person dedicated to the hiring process. Otherwise, you need to have a hiring plan in place for those times when the need does arise.

1. Set a budget.

It will cost money to find any person for a position with your company. You need to determine upfront how much you are willing to spend to get the right person. This is an investment in the future of your company and not just monies that you are tossing away.

- a. Employee cost – someone will have to spend the time and energy interviewing, reviewing resumes and ultimately making the decision. Determine the number of man hours you are willing to allocate towards the project. There needs to be plenty of time to gather the necessary information that will allow the best choice to be made for the position. It may be that you want the employee (or employees if you choose to use the committee approach) could work off clock hours towards the project and receive a bonus (equivalent to the amount you determined to spend in man hours).

- b. Advertising expenses – today's market is wide open when it comes to advertising positions with your company. You can utilize the internet, print options (like newspaper or magazine), mail out notices or even fliers. Plan on spending a portion of the employee's monthly income (that will be hired) in order to get notice out to the right prospects.
- c. Miscellaneous expenses – all those other expenses that you may not have thought about. It is sure to include some training or guidance for the employees chosen to implement the interview process. There will also be some cost (although minor compared to other expenses) for printing any evaluations form or sheets that you develop. You will also need to allot money for personality tests or aptitude tests that you will be giving to potential employees.

2. Lay out a time line.

There needs to be a set amount of time that you are willing to wait and search for prospective employees. Limit your search to several weeks if the position will allow for that much time. You can ensure that the best people around have heard about the position in one way or another.

- a. Determine if the placement (or replacement) is an immediate need.
- b. Determine the amount of backlog that will occur every day or week that the hiring is postponed.
- c. Balance the need of replacement with the willingness to speed through the process.

3. Put together a committee.

Instead of putting all the pressure, responsibility and stress on one individual, have several people go through the initial stage of processing the resumes and applications. This is particularly valuable in cases where there are a large number of applicants. It is too easy to get caught up in the review process and lose objectivity when faced with a large number of files to review. Having multiple review personnel (or a committee) will make the process one that will be more fair and balanced.

4. Know the law.

There are certain things you can do and ask during the interview process. Be sure that you understand the law and that you adhere to the letter of that law. It might be a wise measure to allow your legal representative to look over your advertisements, job description, evaluation sheets, applications and any other written material you might have when it comes to the hiring process. You might also want to consider letting the legal team review interview questions ahead of the process.

5. Have a Contingency Plan.

After all is said and done, your first round of advertisements and interviews might not illicit the right person for the position. Have a plan in place that will allow you to hold off on your decision for a bit longer.

- a. Let existing employees work in that position for a limited time. It may turn out that you had the right person for the job under you roof the whole time.
- b. Ask the supervisor to take on the responsibilities or to divide the work among the existing crew.
- c. Hold off on the work that the new employee would be responsible for doing until a suitable candidate can be found.
- d. Hire a temporary replacement (through a temp agency) to keep things running smoothly until a permanent placement can be found.

Even if jobs are TEMPORARILY transferred to other employees in order to ensure that there is no back log in work, compensate those employees for the added work they are accomplishing. It is imperative that you not leave existing employees overloaded for long periods of time.

Understand the Position You are Filling

There are many intricate components that go into creating a position in your company. Understanding the details will help you to match the right person with the job and ensure a long time employee.

1. Research the job description.

Having a detailed job description is a must for every position in the company. It should explain what actions or activities will be expected of that employee and from that employee.

- a. Make a chain of command list so the employee (and prospective employees) will understand who they are working under and who is working under them.
- b. A list of expectations for the position will ensure that everyone knows who will be doing what.
- c. Laying out the pay scale will help everyone to understand what the income will be from each job.
- d. Benefits from the positions need to be written down. It is also important to detail when each of the benefits will take effect.
- e. The number of hours that are expected to be worked should be included in the job description.
- f. Opportunities for advancement will help everyone understand the potential that each job holds beyond the existing position.
- g. Educational requirements – this should include the minimum education that will be acceptable, the maximum that will be acceptable and the ideal educational level that is desired for the position.
- h. Experience requirements – this should offer an experience equivalent to educations (5 years experience is equal to a bachelor degree) to be determined by you on an individual position bases but laid out in the job description.

If there is not currently a job description then that is the first step you need to take to filling the job with the right person. Include the amount of experience that would be equivalent to the educational requirements and allow for a mixture of education and experience to get the best rounded applicants.

2. Ensure the right salary.

You have to pay for good employees to get good employees. Be sure that the salary or wage that is being offered for the position is not only comparable to the market but also a value for the work that is expected from the new employee.

- a. Use the internet to research opening salaries available in your community for similar jobs.
- b. Plan a sliding scale salary that will give some compensation to applicants with more experience or education.
- c. Keep up with living expenses that will have to be weighted against moving to a new job – offer compensation packages for relocating.
- d. Be sure that the benefits package that your company offers is comparable to other companies in the area and in the industry.

Keep in mind that a world wide market that exists today expects salaries to be equal no matter where the job may land physically. The internet has gone a long way to remove borders – and that includes being able to excuse lower salaries because of the lower cost of living in a region.

3. Understand the team dynamics.

Once you know what the job consists of, it is time to interview the co-workers (especially in situations that involve a good deal of team work). It can be as important to know what personalities the new employee will be working with on a daily basis as it is to know that new employee.

- a. Review the files of potential co-workers and make notes of any specific needs that might need to be addressed.
- b. Consider the working style of the supervisor and the team.

- c. Make a diagram that represents the team and the point that the new employee will fill within that existing team.
- d. Be sure that the new employee will be able to work cohesively with the others that will be around.

It is important to bring a new player into a team that will be an asset to that team. The new employee will have to be the missing puzzle piece for the team. Bringing in an employee (no matter how capable or experienced) that is corrosive or aggravating could lead to that new employee leaving the job or the exiting of other team members.

To create a cohesive team, the new employee will need to mesh with the existing team. This will require an evaluation of the existing employees and possible consultation with those employees concerning the team member qualities that they think is most important. Be sure to plan some team building exercises or outings once the new member is hired.

Get Organized for the Hiring Process

When it comes to comparing anything, you need to have a benchmark so that you are “comparing apples to apples.” The best way to ensure the process is to put together an applicant evaluation sheet for your use (or for the use of whoever will be conducting interviews or sorting through resumes or applications).

1. Create an evaluation system.

Include a measurement system that gives points for different aspects of the resume or application (1 point for high school education up to 5 points for college education).

Make a break down of all the criteria put forth in the job description into measurable assessments – education, experience, interests, hobbies, or anything that will serve to help the applicant in the position he or she is seeking. Use the system to create a list of items that will match all the criteria in the job description. Group the items together when possible and rate the groups according to importance (if education is the most important then it should be at the top of the list).

The idea is to have a tangible way to compare all the applicants evenly. Have a place to total up the points so that you are able to quickly compare the different applicants. This will help you weed through a large number of applications or resumes without too much work or second-guessing. Place all the top scorers at the top of the pile. Be sure to give some consideration to applications that score well in the most important sections for this particular job.

2. Make a list of qualities or personality traits.

Write out a list of descriptive words that would be beneficial to the position that you are trying to fill. A strong leader is needed in a supervisory position but might cause conflict in a lower position if that applicant doesn't also have a strong ability to follow directions and work with others. Having a list of valuable qualities for a position will allow you to see in a quick reference the potential and applicant might have for the job.

3. Make an Applicant Evaluation Sheet.

This will be the system you use to conduct the research and then interview portions of the hiring process. It should include must ask questions and research requirements and space for making notes during the evaluation process. Keep in mind that the more information you can accumulate the better your decision will ultimately be. By creating the evaluations system you will ensure that you are looking at all candidates on a level field and choosing the one most suited to the job requirements and the company's needs.

Finding the Right Applicants

The hiring process can be difficult enough, but finding the right applicants in the first place can be mind numbing. There are an unlimited number of options for locating potential employees. Use the budget and timeline that you created at the first of the process to determine which path is right for you.

1. Running print ads is the easiest and most commonly utilized way to advertise positions for hire. The upside is that they are not particularly expensive. The downside is that it is hard to stand out in a sea of black and white print. If you can create an ad that will stand out to the readers then this might be a plausible option.
2. Use your existing files to formulate leads. Go through past applications and resumes and send out letters to qualified applicants about the position that is opening up.
3. College recruiting is not as well utilized as it could be. Although many large corporations will attend open recruiting weekends at the large institutions, you need to learn to use the college and universities in your area. Create a working relationship with the professors that teach in areas that are utilized by your company. Volunteer to meet with students and discuss career options. Open the door to interns so that current students can get a feel for the working environment. Be sure to also attend (or have an employee that attends) the recruiting weekends as well.

4. Community Job Fairs are becoming a popular way for potential employees and employers to come together. Usually these events are sponsored by the City Employment Commissioner (or the person who oversees the employment figures for the city). Be sure that your name is on the list of employers who are interested in attending these events.

5. The internet is becoming the ultimate recruitment tool and job location tool. There is a wide range of options available – from free services where anyone can post any ad to pay to post services that will charge by the posting or even by the response. Stick to the sites that DO NOT charge the potential employee. Also, use your budget that you set at the beginning of the process to determine the path that will best meet your needs. (Warning: Be sure to do some research in regards to any organization that you are considering doing business with. Request references and check the Better Business Bureau in their area to see if they are on the up and up).

6. Head Hunters can be the easiest (but most expensive) path to finding the right employees for your needs. These people are experts in the field of matching job seekers with job providers. If you do not have the time or can not spare an employee to search out potential applicants then this might be the best choice for you.

Invest in Personality Tests and Evaluations

There are a wide range of personality tests on the market day. These tests can be utilized to give you insight into the likes and dislikes that a person is prone towards. It could help you to see potential where it has been missed or it could be the key to helping you avoid a disaster in the making. You could also choose to use aptitude tests to show individuals, future team mates and supervisors the areas that the applicant is most likely to excel.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is one of the most utilized personality questionnaires in the market today. It was originally created during World War II to help women entering the workforce for the first time. Today the test is used to match personality preferences and individual behavior with potential employment opportunities.

Which ever direction you choose to go, do not limit individuals according to the test. Once there are established and is a proven asset then let them help decide the path that their future will take above and beyond any test results.

Do More Preparations

Once you get the applications in hand and have narrowed down the pile (and placed them in order of preference), it is time to review the applications even farther. Using the Applicant Evaluations Sheet that you created earlier, begin to review the top applications or resumes.

1. Contact former employers or schools to talk with people that have worked with the applicant. Allow yourself plenty of time to ask about performance, conflict resolution and overall impression that the applicant exhibited during the time the reference or employer was in contact with him/her. Always ask the question, "Why would you recommend this person for this position?" Be sure to put responses on the resume or on your Evaluation Sheet.
2. Make notations on the evaluation sheet or on the resume about questions you may have concerning the information on the resume or questionnaire. Pay

particular attention to any time lapses and be prepared to ask questions in regards to the time line.

3. Look over the personality tests and use the information to help you formulate more questions or thoughts about the applicant. Compare the test results to the job description to determine the potential fit that the applicant presents for the position.
4. Attach the first evaluation form, the Applicant Evaluation Sheet and the personality tests to the resume or application for easy access.

The Actual Interview

All the time that you have spent getting ready for the interview will make the process go much smoother for you and for the applicant. Call and schedule interviews for the times when you are most alert (if you are at your peak in the morning then keep them in the morning hours). Set aside time for the interview and time for you to follow up with notes and reviews after the interview.

Interviews are designed to give you more insight into the individual than can be determined on paper. Although the resume and tests will help to guide your decisions, they are ultimately designed to get the applicant in the door. It is the interview that will usually be the determining factor when it comes to receiving the job offer (and ultimately result in employment).

1. Consider the whole person. It is important that an applicant be capable of presenting a professional front, no matter what the position may entail.
 - a. Evaluate the attire. Is the clothing professional or thrown together? Does the applicant appear to be unkempt or is clean shaven and presenting a fresh front?
 - b. Consider the demeanor of the applicant. Look at how she stands or sits. Take into account how she interacts with other applicants or with existing employees in the area. Watch the actions and appearance of

an applicant before, during and after an interview (considered by most to be a highly stressful situation). It could give strong indications of how future reactions to stressful situations might play out. Be sure to consider any cultural traits that an applicant might exhibit and do not count off for those actions.

- c. Take into account the time that the applicant arrives. If she is right on schedule that is a good sign. If he is early then that is a sign that he was prepared for the unexpected. If the applicant is late give him a chance to explain before marking him down for timeliness.
- d. Reflect on the attitude of the applicant. Look at how she responds to employees or other applicants. Take into account her tone of voice, body language and actual words.

2. Ask the right questions. The key to a successful interview is to get the applicant talking – about her experience, likes and dislikes and expectations. You need to include questions that will result in these types of responses. Be sure that your questions are open ended and can not be answered with a simple yes, no or one word response. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions in this exercise (as long as you feel they are answered honestly and with sincerity). These are asked to show the ability of the applicant to think on his feet and also to help you evaluate the applicant at the end of the process.

- a. Where do you see yourself in five years?
- b. What are the top reasons you are the best candidate for the position?
- c. What are your goals with our company?
- d. What drew you to this particular position?
- e. What are your expectations of this job?
- f. What do you feel is our expectations of the employee in this job?
- g. What do you feel is the greatest accomplishment in your life to date?
- h. How can you improve the company with your employment here?
- i. How do you plan to excel at the position?
- j. What is the most important benefit that you can receive from your employment with our company?
- k. Why did you decide to leave your last job?

- l. How will your past work experience help you with this job?
- m. What do you feel is your best asset for work?

3. Listen to the answers that are given. It is too easy to focus on the next question. By not listening and giving the interviewee your full attention you may miss something valuable towards the evaluation process later. Ask the question and then take notes from the answer on your Evaluation Sheet to help keep you focused.
4. Observe the candidate while the answers are being given. Body language speaks more loudly than all the words a person can use. You have to look at the candidate to truly understand what the answers are saying. Observe a bouncing leg or tapping finger to know that nerves are getting the better of the situation. Watch the candidate's reaction to the questions you might ask – are the answers already on her mind or does she need time to think about them. (Once again, in today's multicultural and global world, do be sensitive to the different cultural traditions that some religions, countries, and people may have).
5. Give the candidate a chance to ask any questions that may have come to her mind during the interview process. Be as open and honest with the candidate as you expected her to be with you.
6. Offer the candidate a final chance to share anything that is important or might prove valuable when it comes to making that final decision. You should use this time once again to make notes on the Evaluation Sheet.

Now the Real Work Begins

After all the hard work of preparing for the interview process and all the hours spent talking with and listening to the potential employees, it is time for the task of choosing the final candidate and letting down all the other candidates as well.

1. Use the Evaluation Sheets. See which candidates scored highest in the areas that were most important to you and to the future co-workers. Compare all the components of the evaluation, tests and interview.
2. Look over the responses that each candidate gave to questions during the interview. Consider everything from appearance to final appeal when you are looking at the interview process.
3. Make a stack of good, better and best candidates. If the applicants don't fit into one of the categories then go ahead and put them in a pile for "not interested."
4. Compare your notes with any that the committee might have. It can help to have more than one voice during this process.
5. Consider all the information and the position you are currently trying to fill, but also think about the potential of the applicant and the future of the company. It is important that you hire for today but plan for tomorrow.
6. Choose the final candidate. Notify that person in writing of your desire to offer them a position with the company. If you have agreed in advance to call the candidate then you can choose to notify the person by that method. It is a good idea to still follow up with a letter.
7. Notify the other candidates that you have chosen someone for the existing position. For those that made it to the good, better and best pile, you might notify them that you will be keeping their resume on file for future openings. For the applicants that didn't make the cut at all you need to keep your

notification plain and simple. "Thank you for taking the time to interview with our company. We have decided to go another way at this time."

Bringing the New Employee Onboard

It is a good idea to prepare the new employee and the existing employees for the upcoming transition. Take some time to send out memos and notices and to meet with each member of the team before the new employee arrives for work.

1. Meet with the new employee before the first day on the job. Give her any paper work (such as an employee hand book) so that she will understand the rules and regulations before she arrives. Offer to take her on a tour of the facilities and show her where she will be working. Do introduce her to the others that she will be working with.

2. Meet with the existing employees to share information you feel is important (like past experience or educations) and to offer them the chance to ask any questions that might have about changing dynamics.

3. Set up a mentor program so that a veteran employee can assist the new comer and act as an advisor about things as simple as using the coffee maker or complicated as complaining about the treatment of a supervisor.

4. Plan team building programs and events for a week or so after the new employee has settled in to the position. It will allow everyone to begin to get use to each other, but will be before problems have had a chance to arise. The exercises will help you to create a cohesive unit from the mixed personalities that form your company.
 - a. Ropes courses and trust walks are great ways to get the group working as team instead of as individuals. There are companies that will bring a low course to your facility, but for the high courses (with zip lines and other adrenaline pumping activities) you will have to find a facility near by or that offers overnight accommodations.

- b. Retreats can be a time to for bonds and learn how to get along. Many hotels and resorts offers retreat options and even have experts that can lead your retreat along the course that you desire.
- c. Dinners and social events will give the employees time to get to know each other on a more personal level and will help to create cohesion among the group. It might be a good idea to keep the alcohol away from these events.

Keeping the Employee

The hiring process can be stressful – both for the one doing the hiring and the one trying to get hired. The best way to avoid the stress is to keep the employees you have around for the long haul. In today's society it can be difficult to find long term employees.

Most people are as quick to change jobs as they are to change hairstyles. The best way to keep the employees that you hire is to make them happy.

1. Offer great benefits that increase and improve with time invested in the company. You might consider things like stock options and even partially paid vacations for employees that reach benchmark years in the service of the company.
2. Move employees up the employment ladder. When it comes time to find a candidate for a new position, look in-house first. Even if you have to spend a little extra training or educating the interested employee for the position, one that has already been loyal is likely to remain loyal and it will be an investment well worth making.
3. Keep salaries competitive. If you don't want your current employees to stay to the competition then be sure to compensate them monetarily so that they won't be enticed.
4. Give regular encouragement in the form of letters, awards, bonuses and other tangible acknowledgements for work that are accomplished.
5. Encourage continued education and even offer to subsidize the training. Not only will the employee feel that you are supporting her goals, but she will become a better employee from the newly acquired education.
6. Offer the employee new responsibilities or positions. Sometimes the respect that comes with the opportunities can be more valuable than all the promotions or raises in the world. Being a mentor to a new employee or

teaching a seminar to fellow employees can go along way towards showing an employee how important she is to your organization.

The process of hiring the right employee to fill the job you need is as much art as it is science. You have to develop a keen understanding of people, personalities and the job at hand. It requires juggling the present needs with the future demands. All the while you have to know that one mistake can bring chaos to the organization you are working to build up.

It is important for you to take some time to prepare for the hiring process. To do it correctly, the first time through, you have to prepare. There needs to be time to lay out a plan, money to implement the plan, and even more time to evaluate the plan and choose the new employee.

When you decide that you need a new employee (or when it comes time to replace a former employee) then you will need to understand the job that is to be filled, including the job description and the co-workers surrounding that job. It will be valuable to make notes and lists of the traits you will be searching for from the applicants.

You will need to find potential applicants from the huge field of potential employees that are available. Traditional forms of advertising can be used. Word of mouth from existing employees to friends and family is always beneficial. Technology has opened up a whole new world of potential applicants.

Once you have your applicants and begin the process of interviewing you have to get them speaking, listen with your eyes and your ears and take thorough notes along the way. You will need to know the applicants answers to your open ended questions and how those applicants responded with body language as well as words in order to give a complete evaluation of the encounter.

In the end, you will use all the information you have gathered to choose the candidate that is most suited to your needs (and capable of adapting to your future prospects). The real test then comes with keeping the employee satisfied and a part of your company's family.

It is difficult hiring the candidate that is perfect for the job, but the challenge doesn't end there. You also have to find creative ways to keep the employee away from greener pastures.

Hiring the right person for the job at hand is important to the smooth operation of your business and to the morale of the other employees.

Do it well and you'll have the foundation for a spectacularly successful business.

About The Author

Donald Griffith Speaker/ Author – From the Winslow Research Institute, speaks on achieving peak performance, Team Building, Leadership and implementing Marketing programs that get results.

With a customer list that includes Major League Baseball, National Basketball, US Olympic teams, Oracle Corp., And a select group of insiders, such as Robert Kiyosaki (Rich Dad) And Steven Covey, Don Griffith and the Winslow Research Institute have helped to improve over 117,000 people's lives

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