

THE 7 DEADLY HIRING SINS

How are salespeople hired? How were you hired? Did you take an assessment? Some kind of sales proficiency test? Were you hired for skill or attitude? Were you hired based on your test results or on gut feeling?

Hiring is expensive. Very expensive.

Hiring is subjective. Very subjective.

Training is expensive. Very expensive.

Firing is expensive. Very expensive.

You have 10 candidates who all are qualified. Who gets the job?

Hiring ain't easy, especially if you can't judge character.

Fact: Salespeople want to find the best job.

Fact: Sales managers want to find the best salespeople.

Fact: When managers hire people, they believe they're making the right choice.

Fact: They're also secretly hoping they don't make a big mistake.

Hard fact: Their intent is to hire the best-qualified, brightest and friendliest person every time.

Reality: Most managers ask the same questions over and over.

Reality: The reason managers make the same mistakes multiple times is because they just don't know better.

Reality: How are you supposed to know how employees are going to act in six months? How do you find out how they will conduct themselves when the pressure is on?

Grim reality: How can you know the work ethic of these people until after the honeymoon phase?

Here are seven deadly sins of hiring, being hired and staying on the job.

1. Looking at the wrong time and in the wrong place. Do you look to hire only when there's a need? That's a major mistake. Hiring in a crunch is managing by crisis. Try looking for people you want before you have a need. If you need a great salesperson, that individual probably isn't looking through the classifieds but is working for your competition. You need to solicit the best people in your industry.

2. Asking dumb questions. What kind of questions do you pose when you interview? "Can you name two strengths and two weaknesses you have?" Or perhaps "Could you describe your ideal environment?" Hiring managers ask these and other dumb questions because that's how they were taught. Try asking questions that engage the candidate to think. Ask scenario-based questions the candidate may encounter on the job. "What would you do if ...?" That will give you insight into how the candidate will react in the real world.

3. Making an offer just because you need someone. How many times have you made an offer to someone you know is not the best person for the job? It may solve your immediate problem, but a new set of bigger problems is right around the corner. Guaranteed.

4. Not setting clear expectations. Just because you understand what needs to be done does not mean your new employee understands. Ask candidates to explain what they think their responsibilities are so you know they understand. By taking this extra step in the beginning, you will eliminate confusion and frustration.

5. Not communicating to be understood. Many managers assume they are communicating effectively with their employees. Rule No. 1: Always ask job candidates to repeat the issue so you know that they understand. When employees feel

involved, they feel appreciated. Communication - or lack of communication - will likely pre-determine an employee's fate.

6. Forgetting to reward the ones you have already hired. The three basic needs all people have are to be liked, to feel important and to be appreciated. You can give a cash bonus, but if you do not appreciate them, or you fail to make them feel important to the team, they will leave. Rewarding employees is not optional.

7. Failing to create loyal employees. Loyalty is determined by your actions when an employee has a problem. The way you respond to problems will tell everyone how you feel about your employees. Loyal employees will create profits for the company.

Well, there's the reality of why - or why not - to take or keep a job. So many people love their job, but hate their boss, that there needs to be a book titled "How to hire employees who love you AND love their job." The subtitle would be, "Improve job longevity, employee morale and company profits."

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