

Ten Top Hiring Practices

Proven methodology for successful staffing at all organizational levels

Hiring is driven by opportunity and turnover. Employment contingencies are inevitable and frequently arise from the dubious assumption that companies possess unlimited financial resources and overreaching control. No amount of preparation, redundancy, risk management or financial resources can replace the need to hire new employees or eliminate employment contingencies. Business leaders are wise not to provide stakeholders with false assurance that turnover and contingencies will not occur at their company.

Organizations, especially successful ones, are frequently targeted for theft of their presumed fortunes and contest of their suspected control. Escalation from contingency, to dispute, to litigation, can occur suddenly and without warning. Best practices call for commercially reasonable and consistently applied employment strategies that begin with hiring done right and hiring the right people. A successful hiring program can prevent certain employment contingencies from occurring, and help to eliminate or mitigate attacks that harm company reputations and result in material financial damages and settlements.

Businesses capable of demonstrating that employment contingencies are due to reasonably unforeseen events or rogue individuals rather than flawed systems or patterns of inappropriate behavior tolerated by company leaders, will lessen severity, costs and collateral damages. For example: Businesses that require new hires to read and acknowledge policies and procedures related to the recognition and prevention of unlawful discrimination, and which consistently apply and enforce such a program without exception, will discourage actual discrimination and deter opportunistic individuals' attempts to falsely claim victimization from discriminatory practices.

1. Prior to conducting an employee search, business leaders are advised to interview and engage licensed professional advisors possessing verifiable employment, human resource, benefits, and related legal experience. It is important for leaders and their advisors to mutually develop comprehensive and fully documented employment strategies and programs, including but not limited to:

Understanding of and Compliance with Employment Related Laws and Regulations

- Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”)
- Employee Retirement Income Security Act (“ERISA”)
- Employment document filing, storage and retention
- Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (“EEOC”)
- Family Medical Leave Act (“FMLA”)
- Federal and state court administered wage garnishments including calculation formulas
- Federal and state labor law posters
- Federal Fair Labor Standards Act (“FLSA”)
- Federal, state and local payroll tax withholding and submission
- Federal, State, Local Government tax incentives or other subsidies that may be available for hiring veterans, minorities, disabled or disadvantaged employees.
- Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (“HIPAA”)
- Occupational Safety & Health Administration (“OSHA”)
- Pregnancy Discrimination Act (“PDA”)
- State wage and hour law, specifically regarding minimum wage and the delineation between hourly and salaried, exempt and nonexempt, manager and employee status, and overtime calculations and shift differentials
- State Workers Compensation Insurance

Ten Top Hiring Practices
Proven methodology for successful staffing at all organizational levels

1. (CONTINUED)

Completion of Detailed Job Description for Each and Every Position

- Job title
- Job title(s) position reports to
- Job title(s) and number of employees reporting to position
- Position purpose, major tasks, responsibilities, accountabilities and budgets
- Budgeted compensation, including bonus and commission plans, status such as hourly or salaried, exempt or non-exempt, and the availability of and calculation for overtime and shift differentials
- Employment status such as full time, part time, temporary, contract or leased
- Hours per day, hours per week, days per week, nights, weekends, 1st, 2nd, 3rd shifts, odd hours or on-call status, work breaks and meal times
- Intellectual qualifications such as experience, knowledge, skills, abilities, certifications, training and education
- Physical requirements such as sitting, standing, strength, manual dexterity, coordination, repetitive movements, pushing/pulling, lifting, walking, climbing, driving, materials handling and use of visual/auditory/olfactory senses
- Non-Physical requirements such as dealing with people, complaints, fast or slow paced environment, consistent or variable environments, complex, detailed, exacting or simple work, varied or repetitive work, professional environment, stressful or calm environment, interesting or mundane work, reading, writing and mathematics
- Environmental conditions such as temperature of air, surfaces, equipment or products, sound volumes, lighting levels, odors, smoke, dust, wet or slippery surfaces, physical contact and isolation precautions, traffic and weather
- Exposure to and/or expectation of participation in religious and/or secular holidays and celebrations
- Dress code such as uniforms, shirts, pants, jackets, ties, hats, footwear, hairnets, including prohibited clothing, jewelry and accessories, company provided clothing, employee allowances or reimbursements
- Behavior codes related to alcohol, tobacco, drugs, language, fraternization, personal relationships and weapons
- Physical appearance code related to hair, tattoos, piercings, jewelry and any printed or graphic displays
- Required equipment such as a vehicle, cell phone, computer, electronic or manual diagnostic or repair tools, instruments, and manuals, including any company provided equipment, allowances or reimbursements
- Required safety gear such as eye protection, hearing protection, breathing apparatus, aprons, gowns, gloves, hair covering, helmets and face shields, including any company provided equipment, allowances or reimbursements
- Employee facility access authentication such as badges, security cards, security codes, auto decals, parking permits, keys or passwords, including any company provided materials, allowances or reimbursements
- Interview guidelines including 2 – 5 pre-defined questions related to actual opportunities and challenges of the job
- Investigation and testing such as personal reference checks, prior employment verification, education verification, Social Security number verification, motor vehicle records search (license status, driving record, moving violations, DWI's), credit history, bankruptcies, background checks (local, county, state, national, international searches of civil and federal felony and misdemeanor criminal records ≤ 3 , ≤ 5 or ≤ 7 years, including all aliases), drug screening (5 or 10 panel or other), sexual offender registry search, skills assessment testing, job suitability testing, and government, industry or independent certifications, licenses, registrations and security clearances
- Career path options

Common Employee Benefits Including Eligibility Requirements, Company Allowances and Reimbursements

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Paid sick/personal/comp time | <input type="checkbox"/> Retention programs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dental insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement savings plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Company physicals |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Optical insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Training | <input type="checkbox"/> Company celebrations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing education | <input type="checkbox"/> Company auto |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Employee discounts | <input type="checkbox"/> Auto allowance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paid holidays | <input type="checkbox"/> Child/Elder care | <input type="checkbox"/> Expense allowance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Paid vacation | <input type="checkbox"/> Incentive/Recognition programs | <input type="checkbox"/> Leave of absence |

Ten Top Hiring Practices
Proven methodology for successful staffing at all organizational levels

1. (CONTINUED)

Common Documentation to be Maintained in Secure and Confidential Employee Files

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Background investigation results | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet access and use agreements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bailment agreements | <input type="checkbox"/> Interview notes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bonus and commission plans | <input type="checkbox"/> Job advertisements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Budgeted compensation and raise forms | <input type="checkbox"/> Job descriptions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Career path options | <input type="checkbox"/> Job suitability tests and results |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Certificates, licenses and registrations | <input type="checkbox"/> Liability releases |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Company policies and procedures | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-compete agreements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer hardware access and use agreements | <input type="checkbox"/> Non-disclosure agreements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer network access and use agreements | <input type="checkbox"/> On-boarding procedures and notes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Computer software access and use agreements | <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational charts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confidentiality agreement | <input type="checkbox"/> Performance review forms and notes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence, attorney/client privileged | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal reference checks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Correspondence, to and from employees | <input type="checkbox"/> Progressive discipline forms and notes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Counseling forms and notes | <input type="checkbox"/> Promotion forms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Credit history reports | <input type="checkbox"/> Recruiting sources and strategies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drug screening results | <input type="checkbox"/> Résumés and attachments |
| <input type="checkbox"/> E-mail access and use agreements | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement savings plan forms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment agreements | <input type="checkbox"/> Security clearances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employment applications | <input type="checkbox"/> Skills assessment tests and results |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ethical compliance training programs and forms | <input type="checkbox"/> Surety bonds |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Expense reports | <input type="checkbox"/> Technology access and use agreements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facility access authentication forms and agreements | <input type="checkbox"/> Telecommunications access and use agreements |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal and state court administered wage garnishments and calculation formulas | <input type="checkbox"/> Termination forms and notes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification forms | <input type="checkbox"/> Termination, exit interviews and questions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal W-4 tax withholding forms | <input type="checkbox"/> Termination, re-hire eligibility forms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance application and claim forms | <input type="checkbox"/> Turnover by title and retention strategies |

2. Interviews should be granted at the employer's discretion and convenience, solely to assess each applicant's ability and willingness to reliably and profitably perform in one or more specific positions/roles for the company, and to fit into the current company culture or to help effectuate change to a preferred culture.
3. Interviews should always begin with offering applicants something to drink and providing a relatively quiet and private environment that encourages open communication without raising confidentiality concerns. Pleasantries are customarily exchanged to help put applicants and interviewers at ease.
4. Interviewers should invest a few minutes reading résumés and job applications in person, to convey interest in applicants and their accomplishments. Only abbreviated courtesy interviews should be extended to applicants that submit incomplete applications or enter "see résumé" on one or more lines. Inability or unwillingness to complete employer job applications is a red flag that should not be tolerated or ignored.
5. Initial discussions should be opened with a brief question and answer session about the applicant's résumé and job application. Details about the job, including compensation, should be reserved until after the applicant's qualifications and suitability have been reasonably ascertained. Applicant attempts to control the interview, such as by asking what's in it for them prior to employer qualification, should be politely curtailed with questions deferred pending a satisfactory interview outcome.

Ten Top Hiring Practices
Proven methodology for successful staffing at all organizational levels

6. Interviewers should request applicants to verbally provide a detailed accounting of one or more events or experiences involving opportunities or challenges at a current or recent past position, which proved difficult to overcome. Specific details should be asked and answered such as, how applicants planned for and dealt with the situations highlighted in their stories, their opinion of the final outcome, and how they might have handled things differently if they could do it over again. After asking applicants to recount their stories it is important for interviewers to sit back and allow applicants to answer uninterrupted. Interviewer responses should be limited to points of clarification and taking hand written notes. Open discussion should ensue only after applicants have concluded their responses to the interviewer's satisfaction.
7. Interviewers should request applicants to verbally describe in detail how they would address one or more pre-defined, open ended questions related to actual opportunities or challenges of the open position. Sufficient detail should be included to promote applicant understanding and prevent misinterpretation, but not reveal any confidential or proprietary company information. Applicants should be asked to clarify what authority, staffing, support, infrastructure and budgets they believe would be necessary to achieve success. After asking each question it is important for interviewers to sit back and allow applicants to answer uninterrupted. Interviewer responses should be limited to points of clarification and taking hand written notes. Open discussion should ensue only after applicants have concluded their responses to the interviewer's satisfaction.
8. For critical, hard to fill or high turnover positions, or ones with a historic track record of poor performance; interviewers may furnish applicants with a hard copy of one or more actual opportunities and challenges related to the job. Such document should be verbally reviewed with the applicants and any questions answered to ensure complete understanding. Applicants should be provided a computer with word processing application, or writing materials, and a suitable area to complete this portion of the interview. Interviewers should review applicants' written responses in person, incorporating questions and comments into the verbal interview.

Note: Many adults possess innate ability to offer verbal responses to challenging questions in a manner that provides interviewers with answers they want to hear. Significantly fewer adults can duplicate such encouraging responses in writing. The difference between verbal and written responses can be as revealing as an X-ray or MRI. Qualified applicants present positive and consistent responses in both formats, and do not vent or express negativity, or reveal personal, proprietary and confidential information about current or prior companies, work environments, clients, employees, supervisors, products, services and plans. Interviews that include verbal and written descriptions of past performances can expose applicants' true capabilities as well as inadequacies for the job.

9. If warranted based on interviewer's assessment of applicant's suitability, details about the open position, the company and its history and culture should be disclosed to applicants, and applicant inquiries should be addressed to their reasonable satisfaction.
10. Interviewers should always conclude interviews by asking applicants if they have any additional questions or information to share. In the event applicants ask for the job during the interview, the appropriate interviewer response should be, "*Per company policy, no job offers may be extended to applicants until all pre-employment qualifications have been investigated and verified, and all necessary approvals and signoffs have been obtained.*" If warranted, based on a successful interview, it is customary and appropriate for interviewers to escort applicants on a tour of the facility. It is important to thank applicants for the interview and for their time, and personally walk them to the door.

Ten Top Hiring Practices
Proven methodology for successful staffing at all organizational levels

About the Author:

Bob Snelling is president and founder of Honor Capital Group, LLC a small business consultancy and finance intermediary, and the author of Tip Top Docs brand of professional business documents.



Bob's diverse business experience spans multiple industries dealing with products, services and people. Serving as an employee in various positions from warehouse to boardroom Bob has directly reported to no less than five extraordinarily different company presidents. As a business owner making decisions, setting budgets, and meeting payrolls for up to thousands of employees, Bob has known first hand what it is to maintain legal, operational and P & L responsibility. Performing in the roles of senior level executive, CEO, board director and major shareholder of Snelling and Snelling, Inc., a national, and for many years international company with hundreds of franchised and corporate units, Bob has by necessity perfected leadership skills that are tolerant and respectful of widely divergent perspectives.

A unique background with progressive levels of operational, managerial and financial responsibility has proved invaluable preparation for Bob's current role as business advisor and finance intermediary. Guided by ethical behavior, attention to detail, and a regimen of planning, collaboration and teamwork, Bob's innovative yet practical solutions consistently deliver return on investment and stand the test of time. Decades invested in the identification and implementation of sustainable best practices uniquely qualifies Bob to author relevant topics that today's franchised and independent business leaders can immediately benefit from and put into action.

Bob currently resides in Plano, Texas a suburb of Dallas with his wife and business partner Carol, their two children and a Border terrier. e-mail: bob@HonorCapitalGroup.com phone: (972) 735-0005