



FEARFUL HIRING - PART II

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We last discussed fearful hiring. We cited our experience as to why people do it. They become too careful in their interviewing, operating more out of fear than vision of gain. They forget that all hiring is a risk. We cited two of the indicators of fearful hiring, one being the practice of setting too narrow parameters, requirements and restrictions on the position in search of the perfect candidate who doesn't exist. The second one discussed was hiring by committee and the third was the knee jerk reactions we see employers display toward single issues or aspects of the last employee who didn't work out. In this issue we will share with you other indications of fearful hiring.

ELONGATED PROCESS

One reaction to an employee who doesn't work out is to elongate the next interviewing process by involving more people. A little of this might be fine. But once a candidate gets beyond three people in a firm who actually interview him, the effectiveness of the interviewing process becomes diluted. The fact is that there is a tendency for the process to go from being an interviewing process to a popularity contest. Logistics of numerous interviews usually results in marathon interviewing that goes not only into weeks but even months. It ends up involving so many people and so much time the process can fizzle out. On top of that, any good candidate is just going to go so far in his effort to interview and secure a position. Due diligence is one thing but most solid candidates will interpret marathon interviewing as a distinct inability to make business decisions. He will rightfully question the firm's decision making process about hiring and assume they make other decisions



just as lethargically. Bad sign. As one candidate asked, “Does it take this long to get paid?”

“NO” IS SAFE

Another result of gauntlet, marathon interviewing with too many people involved is that people who are not responsible for the position and don’t have anything to do with the job end up with some authority in who gets hired. Most people have a tendency to be negative about hiring people, especially if the position doesn’t directly benefit them. It’s just too easy to say “no.” It’s safe, too. You see, if someone tells you not to hire someone or communicates the same message by saying they wouldn’t hire the person and you go along, they will be right in their opinion. Really, there’s no way of knowing. Now if they recommend hiring or give a neutral imprimatur and the person doesn’t work out, they might be accused of encouraging a poor decision. The psychological fear that they will be blamed will cause them to lean toward being negative about everyone.

CONSENSUS MISTAKE

Marathon interviewing where too many people are involved in the process doesn’t keep us from making hiring mistakes. In fact it often eliminates good candidates because, like the committee process, consensus becomes the goal. The rule is to only involve people in the interviewing process who have a direct benefit in the performance of the candidate. The authority to hire should be directly with the immediate supervisor. Input may be given by others but it should only come from those who have some responsibility for the function of



the job. Only involve people who are directly affected by the function and performance of the job and who performs it. If they can directly benefit, their opinion will mean something. Involving others just muddies the water.

TIME IS THE ENEMY

Another indication of fearful hiring is to set up a procedure that is so fool-proof or elaborate that it takes a ridiculously long time to get someone interviewed and hired. Trips to the home office sometimes fall into this category. This is a nice thing to do and most candidates appreciate it. Companies institute such practices to keep from making mistakes. The practice is sincere but unnecessary. So often, by the time schedules for the candidate and all of the people necessary to make the decision can be coordinated, a good candidate is going to take another job.

The worst result of fearful hiring is that people just get tired of a ridiculously elongated process. What starts out as a sincere, meaningful, careful interviewing process takes so much of everyone's time and effort, people just get tired of it and end up "picking" somebody . . . anybody. We see less-qualified candidates get hired simply because the people involved in the interview process just got tired of the whole thing and picked someone else. Whoever was left standing usually gets the nod. Guess who thinks they made a mistake a few months later? Acknowledging the risk in hiring keeps fearful hiring from taking place. Recognizing that there is no perfect candidate and that one might indeed make a mistake in hiring is just part of business and puts the whole thing in perspective. Be reasonable and logical and hire out of vision rather than fear.