



Creative Strategies

Management Insights for Your Business

A CS! Technical Bulletin

HR in Action: Ask Right to Hire Right

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Business owners are always looking for ways to improve their interviewing and selection processes. The solution seems simple: define the qualities, talents and skills you would most like to have in a new employee. Then, design a series of questions that allow your candidates to demonstrate the desired qualities, talents and skills.

Organizations are now spending a great deal of time defining job or role specific *competencies*. You can as well if you have the time and resources to do so. However, if not done well, the process can become very resource intensive.

Creative Strategies has developed a set of guidelines that you can use to improve your selection process by identifying the competencies of your future leaders.

Step One: Identify Characteristics of Your Best
Competencies are the abilities needed to conduct a role in an organization. Before you can be sure you have the right candidate, you need to identify the characteristics required to be successful in the role.

Below are some basic suggestions for developing a list of competencies needed for a role.

1. When developing the list, try to think in terms of areas of knowledge and skills required of the job.
2. Review/prepare a draft job description to understand the various tasks in the job.

3. Observe a high performing as they perform the task or conduct the role. What areas of knowledge do you see the employees using? What skills do you see the employees performing?
4. Consider administering a questionnaire to the employee or employees. On the questionnaire, ask them to describe certain practices and procedures to carry out the task or perform the role in the best way possible, e.g., for a managerial role, ask about the best way to conduct performance appraisals, conduct hiring procedures, etc.
5. Consider interviewing a highly skilled employee or a group of employees. Ask them to describe the necessary areas of knowledge and skills for superior performance.

Step Two: Develop Interview Questions

After creating your competency map, you'll need to develop a set of structured questions that can be used to indicate whether the candidates have the desired characteristics.

Let's say our team identified the ability to "Resolve Conflict" as an interpersonal skill that was characteristic of a high performer. We would want to be sure to ask our candidates about their abilities to resolve conflict:

"Tell me about a situation where you needed to use your conflict resolution skills to create a win-win outcome"

Put it to Action!

This process is helping organization select better employees. Your hiring decisions will improve and you will have a better handle on the characteristics and abilities your applicants need to bring to the workplace.

Monitor the changes you see after implementing this approach - I think you will be pleasantly surprised!

Creative Strategies, Inc. is a human resources consulting company that assists business owners develop talented people, define related systems, and implement procedures and best practices to improve business results. It was founded to provide small and middle market businesses a reliable, high-quality alternative to in-house human resources staff.



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