



# HIRING THE RIGHT PEOPLE

## **ABSTRACT**

The only difference between you and your competitor is your people. How you hire them determines your future, your success.

**Motivation Matters Limited**



## Introduction

Hiring people is easy. You will find that everything works out so simply and the less good you are at the hiring process, the more practice you will get!

I am defining the hiring process as comprising three parts: defining the job specification, finding the right candidate and keeping them in post.

Two numbers that are particularly relevant to staff retention are:

- $\frac{2}{3}$  of job changers are wanting to get away from their Boss
- $\frac{1}{3}$  of new employees begin the search for the next job within four weeks at their new employer

Hiring the right people is essential to the success and survival of the organisation

## Job specification

Nobody starts the hiring process without a job specification – do they? Often there will be a job spec on file that the previous incumbent fitted a few years ago.

The wise will update an existing job spec in line with the needs of both today and the future.

A classic way to update the job spec is to ask the work colleagues, interacting peers and the incumbent. The job spec is then averaged out to form a common denominator.

This is as successful as shoe shops stocking one size – the average size. You may be lucky, but the chances are the shoes will be an uncomfortable fit and will not fit the bill.

It is the same with average job specifications. Job specs need to be specific to fulfil a task, to achieve a result.

## Future proofing

You don't want to be recruiting the same position every few months so you need to ensure the job spec is a fit for the future.

Some would say you just hire the best person who comes along. I don't accept that.

Performance at work is down to two factors: capability and willingness.





## Their motivation

If you employ someone who can do the job with their eyes shut then you will find that is what they do! Presenteeism it is called, assuming you manage absenteeism.

On the other hand someone may want a job that is not too demanding for various reasons: other life commitments or health for example. You need to fit the person to the job in more ways than just the skill set. You need to consider their opportunities to develop in the job and whether it is important to them.

Taking a risk on someone with the right attitude but insufficient skill can be a winner. They are challenged, work hard and succeed in the long term.

Both these scenarios have implications on the management style of the employer.

Also the precise nature of the job is a major consideration. It would be inconvenient to have a badly made repair to my car but disastrous to have a bad repair to my heart.

As you will have understood now I recommend hiring for attitude. But be careful of the misconceptions around motivation.

You may have been told that people's intrinsic motivation varies and they were born that way. So all you have to do is to find the highly motivated and hire them. It isn't true.

An individual's motivation is due to the sum of the experiences he or she has had since birth.

If you interview someone who is highly motivated, is it a good idea to hire them? What if their previous employer had a very motivating culture? If you are just average then after four weeks with you they will be looking to move on.

Alternatively you could employ someone with low motivation and have them flourish within your culture.

You need to understand why they are as they are and how you compare in motivation management capability with their previous experience.

## The selection process

The job spec will have some "must have" requirements – some qualifications, some experiential.

The first sieve of the applicants leaves you with a group who all meet the "must haves".





The next filter is to pick candidates for face to face interview. Depending on circumstances the applications can be sorted for secondary characteristics, don't forget the law on discrimination, and/or telephone interviews conducted to expand on points in the application.

The face to face interview is the opportunity to understand the match between the skills of the individual and the job. Prepare specific questions to give the candidate the chance to expand on their experiences and capability.

I recommend a weighted scoring system for each of the skills required by the job specification. More than that, you should explain to the candidate the scoring system and their score on each item. You can give them a chance to explain further and they can understand why you give that score on that skill.

You sometimes find that your intuitive ranking of candidates does not match with your numeric scoring.

Often the weighting factors turn out to be different from your intuition. Whatever the reason, you should be sure you understand and make whatever adjustments are needed to make intuition and scores compatible.

This does not mean cutting the score of someone in isolation but has to be a review of the entire skill weighting and scoring standard to ensure non-discriminatory treatment.

## Induction

No time to congratulate yourself on your new employee! The induction process is critical. This is how you get across the culture, myths and mores of the organisation.

There may be specific task training too and please be sure the person knows what they are supposed to achieve!

Too many start their job with little idea of what success looks like.

## Motivation

Motivation is what we each carry around inside us. Nobody can give us motivation, or manage it or buy it.

Our motivation is what makes us do things, makes us work, and makes us willing to support the organisation in the pursuit of its goals.

What the organisation can do though is create an environment that allows motivation to flourish.

The culture of the organisation has to be right and enthusing.





## Performance management

The relationship with the manager is a fundamental thing to get right. Work is a social act and there needs to be a social, an emotional, relationship.

It is difficult to manage with emotion instead of being emotional.

Ultimately these factors make us feel personally valued. Know that if you don't create this feeling you have failed.

You have to manage people's performance, not just leave them in a corner. This means some one-to-one time from their manager who will have spent some hours considering the person's performance.

The facts for the performance review need to be, well, they need to be facts.

It is easy in a review to talk of specifics that are not representative. Make sure your talk, your feedback is based on reality.

This is the manager's chance to develop the individual. Explore what they enjoy, want to do and how to grow their contribution to the organisation.

## Conclusion

The steps in this article are necessary to retain your newly recruited people. There is no point in having a revolving door culture with high staff turnover. It shows there is something amiss with the organisation which is not going to attract new applicants!

Paying people well is not enough but paying people badly is wrong. You can't make someone feel valued if their pay is out of line.

Finally, this is the most important activity in the organisation.

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## MOTIVATION MATTERS LIMITED

### VISION

Inspiring good management, and thus achievement, within organizations will improve employee attitudes, engagement and job satisfaction to create stronger companies with more productive people.

More productive companies build competitive advantage creating a sustainable business with safe growth, healthy profits, secure well paid jobs and contribute to the well-being of the UK.

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