

You are who you hire ...

The expression “We are what we eat” is an appropriate metaphor when it comes to how we staff our companies. Applied to commerce, it translates to “you are who you hire” and that reality underscores the need to seek out the best candidates when seeking to fill positions, regardless of what level.

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) reminds us that hiring the right person is only part of the equation. While it is essential to bring on someone who can successfully accomplish designated tasks, while taking initiative to contribute beyond their defined company role, it is equally as important for such individuals to fit within the company culture.

How many times have we seen a skilled person amount to a bad fit? Such scenarios seldom play out as desired.

It’s no secret that finding good people to fit the above criteria has become a daunting task, especially given the quantity of applicants for every single job opening.

Here in Cowlitz County,

where unemployment hovers in the 13 percent range, employers are often faced with evaluating more applications reflecting a wider range of professional experience and capabilities than ever before. Sheer bulk response to any local job opening has made the hiring process more challenging than ever.



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For InBusiness

Stacey Freeman, vice president/human resource director for Cowlitz Bank, says “While finding good candidates has gotten harder, it is not impossible. It requires networking through professional and personal sources in conjunction with postings internally and through appropriate media resources. Don’t shy away from asking for names from those in your industry that you respect. And for sure, establish an employee referral program”

From these sources (and others you are comfortable using), cull through resumes received to yield a short-list of candidates who constitute a potential fit.

The next step has as much to do with selling as vetting. After you’ve assessed technical qualifications and feel comfortable with a candidate’s

verified skill-set, you then need to be sure they will be a positive addition to the company, a good member of your business family.

To that end, it then becomes important to learn what matters most to these candidates including their view of fitting into your business, their perspective on family (both personal and professional), their view on the relationship of earnings to job satisfaction, and their desire to achieve success while having a good time doing so. Remember, for a new employee to excel, paying attention to personal issues is an essential hiring function.

One other perspective managers need to keep in focus is that with every new hire, they are building a team. And to keep that team in place, there needs to be a company culture that recognizes team success. The goodwill generated through ongoing acknowledgement of individual and group accomplishments will fortify team spirit and help retain those who have been hired to be who you are.

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