



# PRE-HIRE

## PREPARATION

*What Everyone Ought to Know: An In-Depth Guide to  
The First Stage of the Employee Lifecycle*

Profiles  International  
imagine great people®

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Pre-screen applicants  
to identify issues  
before they happen!  
Shrinkage costs businesses  
millions annually;  
loss prevention systems  
are critical.

— *Profiles International*

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# *introduction*

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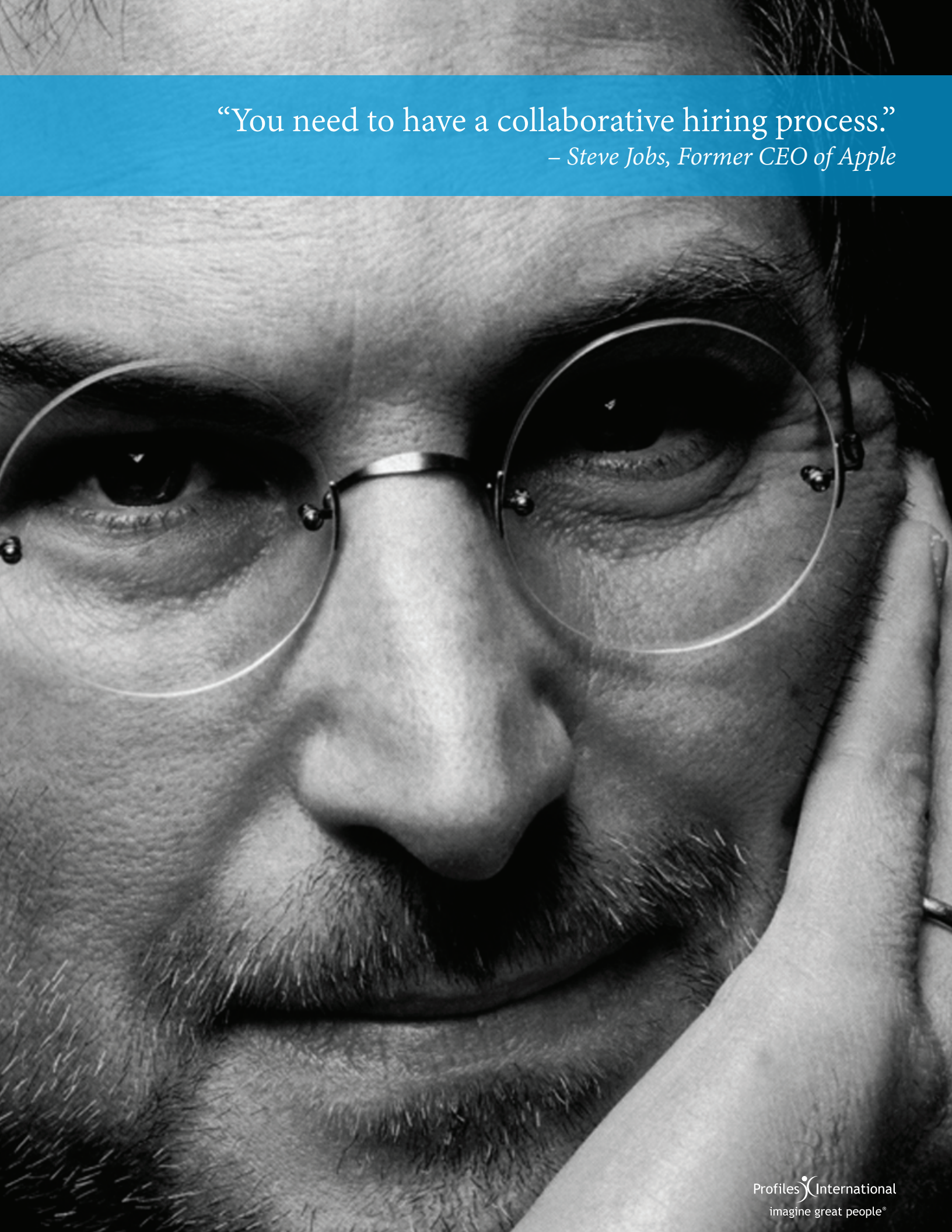
**Management consultant and** author Peter Drucker estimated that two-thirds of employee hiring decisions may actually be hiring mistakes. From your experience, you know you have hired some excellent employees and some who have failed. Now, take a moment and think back. Did you use the same employee pre-screening method to hire both? Typically, we find that employers do use the same methods for each position. This suggests that your existing employee selection process may produce inconsistent hiring results.

Your employee selection process is one of the most strategic and valuable places you can cut costs and maximize productivity. This is especially true if your process works correctly the first time. Utilizing a proven employee pre-screening system is crucial

to ensuring that your selection process works effectively. The interviewing process can be a legal and practical nightmare if not approached carefully. A seemingly innocuous interview question may actually be inappropriate or even illegal, and may culminate in a costly discrimination lawsuit. Such a situation can easily be avoided by using appropriate job interview questions. An employer must ensure that job interview questions are in alignment with the law. The variety of job interview questions an employer can ask is large, and contingent upon the specific needs of a particular position.

This eBook is designed to equip you with the necessary steps to ensure an effective pre-hire process and teach you the benefits of strategic hiring.





“You need to have a collaborative hiring process.”  
– Steve Jobs, *Former CEO of Apple*

# Top 5

**Although your business may be profitable, that doesn't mean you can ignore other underlying workplace issues that could be causing serious damage to your organization. Just how much does it really cost to replace, train, and onboard employees in your company?**

Many managers shy away from this calculation, or leave it to the last minute. However, it's not as difficult as it may seem. Simply take the annual salary of a job for which you have excessive turnover, add 30 percent for benefits, and calculate 25 percent of the total. That is the absolute minimum cost incurred to the company every time that single position is turned over. If you really want a shocking number, multiply it by the amount of times that position has turned over and do this for every job where there is turnover.

Shocked? Don't forget the other costs incurred with onboarding new employees and hiring (fees, travel, advertising, training).

If you are experiencing high staff turnover, or your new hires are not fitting well with your organization and its values, follow these five steps to ensure smart hiring processes and get the most out of your people.

# HIRING TIPS

## *You Should Always Follow*


**1. Identify hiring problems.** Discover what parts of your organization are having problems and why. You can do this by:

- Asking your HR and department heads for their opinions. 'Why are people quitting? Why have they become problematic? Why are they being fired?'
- Making sure each department and/or HR carries out exit interviews. Ask people who leave why they are leaving, and what you could have done to help them succeed. Do not be fooled by the typical "Pay me more money" answer. Many employees are motivated without money.
- Asking your top performers and higher-level positions what they like about their jobs, and what you could improve on. Then, focus on what they like and replicate it throughout the organization.
- Evaluating the managers responsible for hiring. Ask them first and then yourself: "Do they need training? Does their system work? Do they take their jobs seriously?"

**2. Recruit people who match specific positions.**

- First, you must be able to understand and outline a competency-based job description. How can you expect people to fit jobs if you don't know what you





want, and what is to be expected of them? Make sure to document all competencies required by all jobs in your company on the basis of technical, educational, experiential, and industrial know-how.

- This information is not accessible from traditional job interviews or background checks. Assessments provide the tools necessary to analyze these attributes.

### **3. Be innovative when you prospect for new candidates.**

- Offer employees bonus referrals for candidates hired.
- Look for companies that have announced cutbacks.
- Set up educational relationships. Find universities, colleges, or schools that support your industry and develop relationships with them.
- Use assessments with current employees to outline potential promotions for higher positions.

### **4. Prepare for a winning interview.**

- Review the job requirements in your mind before the interview. Develop leading questions based on the job description that will lead to follow-up questions.
- The introduction: Interviews can be a stressful situation for all parties involved. Make sure to explain the order of the interview, including how long it will

be, and what you will cover.

- The body: While asking questions, think to yourself (and take notes) "Can this person do this job, and will this person do this job?"
- The close: This stage is just as important as the previous two. Make sure to summarize with the candidate and outline the next steps. We recommend Lou Adler's book, "**Hire with Your Head**," where he outlines a very suitable closing: "Although we're seeing other great candidates, I personally think that you have a very fine background. We'll get back to you in a few days, but what are your thoughts about this new position?"

### **5. Continually refine your best hiring practices.**

- Ensure you are always working to conduct the best practices for hiring in your organization. Books like Adler's, plus workshops and seminars, prove extremely beneficial.
- People are your most important asset. Shouldn't you invest at least as much effort in attracting, recruiting, and retaining them as you invest in winning and retaining customers? Without great employees, there would be no loyal and satisfied customers!

# How to Make Sure You're *Happy* With That *Hire*

## **A bad hire can be expensive, and let's face it:**

Hiring **can** be disappointing when you discover that candidate you had so much faith in isn't performing like you thought, or isn't the right fit! **The U.S. Department of Labor** estimates that the average cost of a bad hiring decision can equal 30% of the first year's potential earnings. So, managers need to go through a process to determine if a person is a good match for the job and the company.

Here are five tips that managers and companies can use to hire great employees:

- **Identify Hiring Challenges.**  
Outline the specific hiring issues and challenges that are present in the current hiring strategy. Once you identify the challenges, it will help you come up with solutions.
- **Define the Job Requirements.**  
Focus on characteristics that a person needs to have in order to be successful in the position. The better the job fit, the more job satisfaction and higher job performance an employee will exhibit.

- **Manage Employment Interviews.**

A methodical and systematic interview process is more likely to produce the information needed to make a good decision regarding a job candidate.

- **Do a Background Check.**


Background checks help find honest, drug-free, reliable, and hard-working job applicants. Unfortunately, employers can no longer solely rely on applications for accurate information. According to [10 Shocking HR Statistics](#), 53% of all job applications contain inaccurate information.

- **Use Pre-Employment Assessments.**

Pre-employment assessments are a great tool to measure an applicant's ability, personality, and job-related skills. They can also help to formulate interview questions that will determine if an applicant will be a good fit for the job and company.

Hiring great employees is not as easy as picking a lottery winner. It can result in stress, anxiety, and fear of change. Having solid hiring strategies and a systematic process can ensure that the person you pick is a great fit!





“Great vision  
without  
great people  
is irrelevant.”

– *Jim Collins, Author*  
*“Good to Great”*



“If we weren’t still hiring people and pushing ahead at full speed, it would be easy to fall behind and become some mediocre company.”

– *Bill Gates, CEO  
Microsoft*



**The National Association of Colleges and Employers** (NACE) recently stated that 1.6 million students are set to graduate in 2014, and employers expect to hire 7.8% more graduates this year.

With the steadily increasing number of college graduates entering the workforce, [Reagan Consulting](#) conducted “The Young Producer Study” to investigate the recruitment and selection of younger men and women for sales positions. This study specifically deals with the insurance industry, but the findings can apply to various positions because the younger generation is crucial to future leadership and productivity of every organization. The “successful young producers” of the study

essential characteristics in the workplace! Successful young producers also have no trouble multitasking; in college, over half were involved in two or more campus organizations, worked, and still managed to maintain a 3.0 GPA, or above.

To gain an even more in-depth understanding of the successful young producers, they were further evaluated by the ProfileXT®, a total person assessment that measures thinking and reasoning styles, behavioral traits, and occupational interests. From their assessment reports, here are some general skills and traits of these young producers:

# WHAT TO LOOK FOR WHEN HIRING RECENT COLLEGE GRADUATES

are individuals under the age of 30 who were effectively recruited and selected by insurance firms. Understanding and analyzing these top young producers can give us a better understanding of how to successfully recruit, select, develop, and retain young and successful individuals.

Let's look at the successful young producers academics. It's no surprise that almost all of the 91 participating successful young producers are college graduates. Fourteen percent even have post-graduate degrees. Seventy five percent of these young producers were business majors, with business administration and management being the most popular area of study. On average, they maintained a strong B+ average during college, and were very involved on campus. Campus involvement is a great trait to look for when recruiting and selecting new talent, because it shows balance, task management, and leadership skills. These are

- They are relatively quick thinkers and easily grasp new concepts, which are great traits when it comes to coaching and development, because they're more flexible with they receiving instruction and training.
- They tend to have exceptional verbal skills. Most young producers are very effective communicators, even under high levels of stress.
- They are sociable and have moderately high energy. These behavior traits are beneficial in the workplace environment and demonstrate drive and ambition.
- They are independent. In addition to being good communicators and social, these young individuals enjoy working independently, and can make sound decisions and judgments on their own.

When recruiting and selecting new young hires, it's helpful to first identify the traits of your successful hires and then look for these in your new applicant.





**Many employers today are experiencing rapid, high employee turnover**– which not only creates the issues of filling vacant positions, overworked staff, and low morale in the workplace, but also costs organizations billions of dollars each year.

According to the **U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics**, 91 percent of Millennials expect to stay in the same job for less than three years, and the average employee tenure is about 4.4 years. The financial impact of excessive employee turnover alone can force an organization to close its doors, and has many employers wondering how they can improve retention through effective hiring processes. Here are five ways to hire loyal employees and reduce turnover:

### **1. Assess the cultural fit of the job candidate.**

Maintaining cultural consistency within your company is a crucial factor in the productivity and satisfaction of your employees. A recent **study** showed that 46 percent of small-business new hires failed within 18 months, and a whopping 89 percent of those failures were directly related to poor cultural fit within the company. How can employers assess candidates' ability to blend with their company culture?

Pre-hire employee assessments, such as the Step One Survey II®, are great tools for gaining the information needed to measure an individual's company culture compatibility. The SOSII assessment reveals information on employee background, employment history, integrity, personal reliability, and work ethic.

### **2. Consider a trial period.**

Trial periods allow the new hire and company to mutually assess their compatibility without an obligation. A trial or probationary period can greatly increase the loyalty of your new hires and reduce turnover, as demonstrated by the fundraising company **Engage Direct Mail**, who implement a trial period of 90 days in their hiring process. On average, Engage experiences 77 percent retention during the trial, which turns into about 95 percent retention after the three-month probationary period. Trials can be compared to dating – both sides share their expectations, values, and dreams. If they are in agreement, what's to stop them from succeeding in the long-term? The key to probation periods is that they reveal any unknown factors to both the candidate and the employer.

### **3. Offer flexibility.**

Flexibility within a company allows employees to feel valued, and shows them their needs are recognized and respected. How important is flexibility to job seekers? In a **recent study**, nearly 75 percent of American adults surveyed said flexibility is one of the most important factors in their job search, and 39 percent have already left a job, or have considered leaving due to issues with flexibility. Work-life balance within an organization is always a major consideration for job prospects, so offering flextime and other accommodations for workers' personal lives is an important factor in competitively attracting, hiring, and retaining top talent.

### **4. Use employee referrals.**

According to research from **Jobvite**, HR executives rated referrals as the number one source of quality candidates. They also generate **39.9 percent** of all hires. Employees hired on referral are also proven to be more loyal, as 46 percent of referred employees stay 3 years or more, compared to only 14 percent of hires from job boards. Referrals not only reduce turnover and recruiting efforts, but also empower employees by allowing them to have input in hiring processes.

### **5. Implement an onboarding program.**

Introducing an onboarding program into your hiring process can mean the difference between retaining a top employee for a lifetime, and watching them walk out the door after two months. Companies who implement an effective onboarding program during the first three months of new-hire employment experience 31 percent less turnover than those who don't, according to the **Aberdeen Group**. Onboarding is important because it introduces the employee to the company's culture and expectations, and gives the employee vital training and information needed to succeed in their new position. A new hire's company compatibility will likely be determined during the onboarding process, which saves the employer from prolonged investment in the wrong employee.

If your organization is experiencing high turnover rates, you may be telling yourself "the employees of today are not loyal like they were in the past," or thinking, "there's nothing I can do about it." However, a more likely answer is you've simply been hiring the wrong people, and through the implementation of these five strategies, you can identify and hire talented, loyal employees.



# INTERVIEW TIPS:

## *Look Beyond the Resume*

**We've all been there. After an extensive and thorough search for a line manager, one candidate stands out. This candidate has the right experience, solid qualifications, and a relevant work history, and she gave an impressive performance during the interview process. She said the right things, put forward some great ideas, and generally presented very well. You hired her.**

Three months later, you begin to question your decision.

After investigating further and speaking with a few key team members, you realize there's a disconnect—a mismatch. While she looked impressive on paper and presented well during one-on-one interviews, your new hire's style, approach, and behavior on the job are simply inconsistent with the values and expectations of your



organization. Her modus operandi is foreign to her colleagues. Your new hire is not a good fit and you're wondering what you did wrong. Here are 5 things to look for when hiring new candidates:

### **1. Adequate Capability**

Capability refers to the combination of skills, tools, and experience that a person needs in order to successfully perform her job. When any of these factors are missing, there is an increased chance that the employee will underperform. It isn't uncommon for hiring professionals to overlook these basic factors, especially if a candidate has solid academic credentials and comes across as intelligent and confident in a job interview. Furthermore, it's no secret that most candidates exaggerate their abilities on their resumes and job applications.

### **2. Skills**

Do you know what skills are needed to perform the job, and whether the employee possesses those skills? If she doesn't possess the necessary skills, how will you help her acquire them, and how long do you expect that process to take? Skills training takes time and money, and results are never guaranteed unless there is adequate commitment from both the manager and the employee. It's in everyone's best interests for the manager to set appropriate expectations for the employee from the beginning. This is especially true if the job requires special technical capabilities.

### **3. Tools**

Even if an individual has the skills and experience to do the job, does she have the tools to deliver peak performance? For example, a highly skilled and experienced web designer can't build a website without adequate computer hardware and software. The tools don't have to be the most up-to-date, but a system that crashes frequently can be incredibly frustrating and unproductive, even to the best performer.

### **4. Experience**

Just because an employee has the skills to do a job doesn't mean that she has the experience to apply those skills in her specific position. This is especially true for recent graduates, outside hires from different industries, and internal hires from different departments. While the required skills may be similar from one job to the next, differing applications and terminology may require that

the new hire take time to learn the nuances of her new position.

*\*Side note:* eSkill provides online skills assessments to help you appraise the skills and knowledge of job candidates and current employees. Their test content is created and refined by subject matter experts to provide a predictive evaluation of competency levels. eSkill goes beyond standard skills testing by providing the ability to assess training needs of current employees with skills gap analysis and benchmarking

### **5. Poor Job Fit**

"Fit" reflects the behaviors and interests needed to succeed in a job.

Many people fall into the trap of choosing a profession or job that is a bad fit. You probably know a medical doctor who trained at a prestigious school and worked for several years at a modern hospital. Despite adequate skills, tools, and experience, he is aloof, insensitive, and has a terrible bedside manner, and you only see him if no one else is available. In short, he really doesn't possess the innate compassion that would make him a great doctor. He is a poor fit for his job.

Skills can be taught, but behaviors are much more difficult to change. A doctor can improve his bedside manner through training and mentoring, but it takes tremendous effort and motivation to change natural behavior. If an individual isn't motivated to change, then he probably won't.

It is important to understand a person's innate behaviors and interests when trying to match him with the right job. Know the job, know what type of person is successful in that job, and then hire others who have the behavioral traits that fit that job. This is easier said than done, because it is difficult to gauge behaviors in an interview, but behavioral assessments can be extremely helpful.

The ProfileXT® assessment is used primarily as a "job-matching" tool to provide managers with interview tips and select people with the highest probability of success in the job. It measures the individual against the specific qualities needed to perform the job by providing objective insight into the individual's thinking and reasoning style, relevant behavioral traits, and occupational interests.



What do you *know*  
about *assessments*?

Click *here* to learn  
101 Things  
(Everyone Should Know)  
About Assessments!

# 101 Things

(everyone should know) about

# Assessments



Profiles' assessments  
give you the **full picture**  
of a candidate's **abilities**.

Profiles'  
assessments  
reveal that  
**not everyone**  
is a good "fit"  
for the job.

Profiles'  
assessments are  
**easy to use**.







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