



EXECUTIVE NEWSLETTER

October 2007

Page 1 of 1

RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES

Adage Five: Decision Time

With job definition, interviews and reference checks done it is time to make the decision. It is not easy, but our prior work is aimed at providing the best possible foundation for the decision.

In most senior executive searches, making the final selection decision is a challenge. It is the rare search where the decision to hire a candidate is absolutely clear. And, the more critical the position, the greater the impact of a wrong decision. So, after all the interviews and mating dances are done, how do you go about making the right decision?

There are a number of factors, when considered together, that can lead to effective candidate selection. Here are the things to do:

Review the job specification

Go back to the job specification and the objectives set out for the position. Does the final candidate's experience truly match up with the specific function of the role? Will the individual's background allow accomplishment of the objectives you have established for the next twelve months?

Go back also to the critical success factors defined early in the search process. To what degree does the candidate meet, exceed or fall short of those factors defined as being essential for the job? How much time are you honestly willing to devote to this person in helping them be a success? What tasks must be accomplished and how soon? How much risk are you willing to live with? (Note: As a general rule, for executive level positions we rank functional knowledge, managerial skill and leadership ability as being of greater importance than specific industry or product experience.)

Consider environmental factors

Does the candidate's personal style fit the situation? A candidate who has spent his/her career in situations where their role has been to continually say "no" to requests for resources is not likely to work out in a high growth situation where the thinking needs to be saying "yes" to spending required to build an organisation. How do these "environmental" factors in your company compare with the environments the candidate has been in previously? Does the candidate have a mental framework compatible with your situation? What really got done under the candidate's direction in the past?

Gather the opinions of others

Get feedback from others in your team who have interviewed the candidate. How do they see the pros and cons? Will the "new kid on the block" be accepted and supported by the rest of the team?

Who are the naysayers and why? Are objections logical and reasonable?

Does the candidate really want to do the job offered?

What are the candidate's motivations for taking the job? Does he/she really want to do what you need done now? Does this job and your company fit the candidate's career path and interests? Are there influences in the candidate's personal life which are likely to impact on-the-job performance?

Gather the opinions of outsiders

Does the reference data confirm your judgement about the candidate? What are the

inconsistencies? What is the opinion of your executive search consultant? If used, (and we wholeheartedly recommend using them) what does the psychometric profiling say about the fit between your team, the job, your company's environment and the candidate?

Listen to your stomach

What is your judgement? Are the concerns raised about the candidate substantive when related to the situation in your organisation? Have you developed a level of trust in this person? Are you a believer? Will your company truly be better off if this person comes on board? Do you sense that a deal can be struck that is generally in line with the compensation levels of the rest of the team? Where will your company be in one year, two years? Will the candidate's abilities stay ahead of your company's growth curve? (Be careful in considering this last factor. We believe in solving today's problems today. Projecting a candidate's fit with the company three years ahead is not reality.)

Inevitably you will need to compromise; there is no such thing as a perfect fit. The key question is what compromise is acceptable and how to manage it, and what additional skill will accompany the person.

As with any decision, not every base can be covered. The key is understanding in detail the job and environment in relation to the skills, background and personal qualities of the final candidate. Doing so will put the odds of success in your favour.

For more information contact Barry Dreyer or Barry Fitzgerald at Fleet & Partners Limited on (09) 309 3691.

FLEET & PARTNERS LIMITED
New Zealand owned & independent

9th Floor, 290 Queen Street, P.O. Box 5265, Auckland, 1141, New Zealand
Telephone (+64 9) 309 3691 > Facsimile (+64 9) 307 5696
Email: recruit@fleetpartners.co.nz
Website: www.fleetpartners.co.nz

See our 'Featured Articles' page at www.fleetpartners.co.nz for more Fleet & Partners newsletters and articles