

## 6 Steps To A Top Producer

### By Wayne Outlaw

Today, more than ever, human capital-the talent your organization has- is critical. Without human capital a business cannot thrive or survive...yet, when was the last time you examined your hiring process? Today is a great time to be sure you have an ample supply of talented, motivated employees, associates, or co-workers. The available talent pool may be better today than ever before. Act now to get the talent needed to power out this difficult time to a position of strength and success. To do this, you must have a defined and effective process. To learn more:

The objective of the hiring process is to ensure the quality and quantity of employees hired meet the mission of the organization. The quality and quantity of those hired determines the success, regardless of the industry ( or type) or organization.

**Hiring:** The first, and most critical step in staffing, is hiring. How well the hiring is done affects all other elements of staffing. It determines the degree of difficulty of training, managing, and retaining employees, hiring a person who does not fit the position or doesn't have the drive for success, may be difficult to develop, perform poorly, or leave quickly, resulting in the need to repeat the process.

**Quality Staffing:** The level of unemployment and market conditions should not dictate the quality or quantity of staffing. These factors determine the effort and resources required to reach your objective, not whether or not the objective is reached. Only when hiring is approached as a specific process with definable steps, predictable success rates, and measureable results can it be managed to ensure the pre-defined staffing objectives are consistently attained.

**Honest Audit:** An audit of your current practices can identify each of the specific steps to your hiring process, which involves more than running ads, screening, interviewing and checking references. It begins with a long-range hiring plan that projects needs by position and location based on previous turnover, projected growth, and other known factors.

**Informed Decisions:** Knowing the number to be hired by location and position and steps to be taken is not enough to make the process effective. Evaluate current practices. Replace those that produce poor results with "best practices". Be sure each step identified ensures that only quality applicants make it through the process. This will not only increase the quality of hire, but also maximize the utilization of precious resources.

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**Application Flow:** Once the process and practices are established, the required candidate flow can be determined. I've found in my experience as an executive recruiter and as a management consultant in designing hiring systems for clients that most organizations vastly underestimate the applicant flow needed to ensure quality candidates. Special focus is usually required to develop additional sources of applicants. By monitoring current applicant flow and measuring the quality (these meeting your pre-determined hiring criteria) you can focus resources on the most effective sources.

Once the process is up and running it is necessary to monitor the flow of applicants through the process. Identify the points at which applicants are lost to determine the cause and eliminate any problems. Remember, there will be a predictable fall-out at each step or level of progression. Examination of the fall-out can tell you if some of the loss is unnecessary or avoidable.

You cannot afford to lose high-quality applicants and candidates who are close to accepting a position. Periodic measurement of the ratio of applicants from one step to the next can keep the process precise and moving quickly.

**Learn From Your Losses:** Identify, in exit interviews, any weaknesses in the hiring process and strengthen the process to ensure that ineffective hiring is not a turnover reason. By focusing effort on strategies and sources that produce greater results, the quality and quantity of those hired will increase.

Even when all positions are filled, the hiring process should continue. You may reduce the effort somewhat, but not very much, because there is usually a need for ample candidates so first level managers feel comfortable addressing performance issues. When first level managers feel they have little, if any, way to replace an employee, they feel reluctant to address a performance problem that might result in a termination. When employees perceive they are not indispensable, they are more willing to address performance deficiencies, learn new skills, and change behavior.

The hiring process is the first and most critical element in staffing the organization. Ensure you have an effective process that produces the quality and quantity of the results you require. Staff the organization for success.

For a complimentary Hiring Checklist, email [Tamara@outlawgroup.com](mailto:Tamara@outlawgroup.com) with Hiring Checklist in the subject line.

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