

Guide to Hiring Success

Three Steps That Help Managers Find and Hire the Right People
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Affintus

Contents

Overview	4
Good Reasons for Bad Hires	5
The High Cost of Hiring Mistakes	6
The Myth of Job Experience: It Just Doesn't Matter	8
Lies, Damned Résumé Lies	8
The Brain Has a Mind of Its Own	9
How to Make Good Hires	11
Use Pre-Hire Assessments First	11
Use Knowledge Tests and Job Simulations	13
Structure the Interview	14
Hire the Best Person for Each Position.	16
About the Author and Affintus	17
References	18

Overview

Managers are unhappy about hiring. Their goal is hiring the right people, but using the typical applicant evaluation methods – résumés and interviews - they can't be sure that the people they hire are actually the best choices. The result? Most managers report they have made a bad hire and fixing the mistake took a lot of time and money.

Actually managers already understand what blocks their hiring success: they say they rely too much on the candidate's own description of their skills; they don't use objective data in a consistent hiring process; and they don't do a good job of letting applicants know what the job is really like so the new hire quits as soon as she finds a job she thinks she will like better (Nowicki, 2002; Recruiting Roundtable, 2013). Managers can improve their hiring success record by making a few adjustments to their hiring decision process. They just need to know what those adjustments are.

This white paper will help executives, managers and human resource professionals avoid poor hires by identifying the specific recruiting and selection steps that deliver the best hiring results. It breaks down the barriers to hiring the right people, shows how to overcome them and concludes with a list of sources for more information on good hiring.¹

¹While this paper contains guidelines and useful references, it should not be considered advice on the legal aspects of selection and hiring.

Good Reasons for Bad Hires

The High Cost of Hiring Mistakes

The main effect of a hiring mistake is a financial one.

WHAT IS A BAD HIRE?

While every manager has her own, unique bad hire story, there are certain characteristics that bad hires share. A bad hire is an employee who does not meet job performance expectations after onboarding, training and appropriate management. Signs of a bad hire include:

- *Complaints from customers*
- *Frequently missed deadlines*
- *“Rookie” mistakes that continue*
- *Poor quality of work*
- *Decline in team morale*

Knowing more about bad hiring decisions helps managers identify the strategies that result in better hiring decisions and lower hiring costs.

Making a bad hire always costs more than making a good one. Always. And while very few organizations calculate the costs of hiring mistakes, even the most conservative estimates are astonishing:

- About 69 percent of employers report that their companies have been adversely affected by a bad hire and 41 percent of those businesses estimated the cost of the bad hire was over \$25,000; 24 percent said the bad hire cost them more than \$50,000 (CareerBuilder, 2014)
- The U. S. Department of Labor estimates that a bad hire adds about 30 percent to the annual salary of that employee
- It costs \$7,000 to replace a salaried employee, \$10,000 to replace a mid-level employee and \$40,000 to replace a senior executive (Gorey, HR.com, 2012)
- The cost of hiring appears to increase as the organization grows (Blatter, 2012)

Any way you do the math, hiring costs a lot of money. But since hiring costs do not appear on any financial report, managers may not realize how much money they are spending (or wasting) on hiring mistakes.

The financial consequences of not hiring the right people go beyond total hiring cost. Employers report other expensive effects of hiring mistakes (West, 2012):

- 37 percent of employers reported that morale was negatively affected by a bad hire
- 18 percent of employers reported damaged client relationships
- 10 percent of employers reported sales decreases

On the flip side, effective hiring delivers a return on investment that continues long after the hiring decision is made – candidates who are strong matches learn the job faster, fit more easily into the company culture, produce more and stay longer.

Most Managers Make Hiring Mistakes

Hiring mistakes are not unusual – it seems that just about everyone has made one. In one survey of 2,500 managers, 69 percent reported they had made a bad hire in the previous 12 months (CareerBuilder, 2012). Another study of 8,500 managers found that after hiring a new employee, 50 percent of the time the manager regretted the decision (Recruiting Roundtable, 2013). In a third study, 66 percent of managers said they regretted the hiring decisions they had made based on the candidate’s interview performance (Development Dimensions International, 2013).

And managers are not alone in their dissatisfaction. New hires report feeling “acceptance remorse” and about 25 percent of the time they regret their decision after they start their new jobs (Gardner, 2007).

Managers Need the Right Data

With 94 percent of companies reporting that talent acquisition is critical to their success, it is important for managers to find and hire the right employees (Lahay, 2015). The problem is that the information most managers use to make hiring decisions creates more opportunity for a hiring mistake than hiring success.

Most managers make hiring decisions by reading résumés, conducting interviews and using their gut intuition. Managers report they tend to rely “. . . on subjective personal preferences or on . . . organizational traditions...” (Fernández-Arãoz, 2009; Affintus, 2010). This kind of information does not help managers make better hiring decisions - in hiring, research shows that practice does not improve results. To make better hiring decisions managers need accurate information and better tools.

The good news? A good hire will always cost less than a bad hire. The process for making a good hire is well understood: managers just need to use objective, relevant and accurate information to identify which applicants are most likely to be successful in the job. By using three specific strategies to collect good candidate data, managers double their chances of making a good hiring decision while reducing both time and cost to hire.

Hiring Mistakes are Understandable

Have you ever asked, “Now remind me again . . . why did we hire that guy?” If you have, you know what it’s like to make a hiring mistake. It usually goes something like this: A hiring manager stares at 75 résumés, knowing the job should have been filled yesterday. The manager reads them carefully, trying to evaluate experience, skills and credentials. She interviews four people and one is outstanding — personable, outgoing, and has impressive achievements. Plus he has four years of experience in a similar position. Hired!

Six months later he is gone.

The manager wonders (again) where she went wrong. This mistake cost the company about \$45,000 and, worse, the loss of a customer. The candidate claimed great success in his last, almost identical job. His résumé was excellent. The interview was great. How could a candidate who seemed so right turn out to be so wrong? She thinks, “This just doesn’t make sense.”

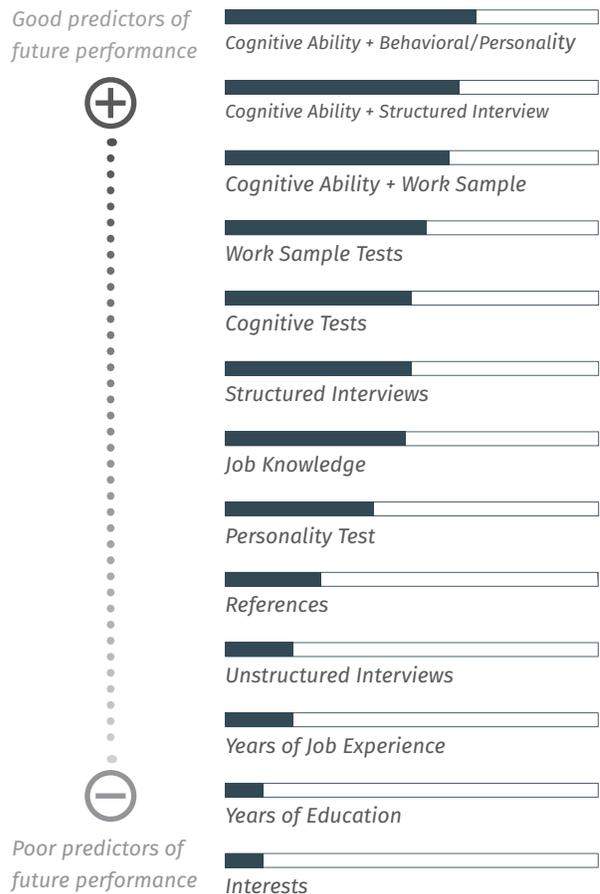
Actually it makes a lot of sense - it takes more than a good resume and interview to figure out which candidate is likely to succeed.

Managers assume that past work experience suggests a certain level of skill development and they believe an

interview can reveal the “real” person. But the simple act of holding a job for four years doesn’t mean a candidate has good skills. (Ever know someone who performed just well enough to keep a job for four years?) As for interviews, candidates can learn what they should do and say to ace an interview by using an interview coach or simply searching online.

It’s no surprise that hiring mistakes happen in virtually every organization. Twenty-first century jobs are complicated, so managers need more effective tools and data to make good hiring decisions. The usual indicators of candidate qualification — experience, years of education, interview performance — are simply not reliable indicators of a candidate’s future performance. Understanding the factors that do not help predict future performance is key to better hiring decisions: experience, résumé data, and the way the brain works all make it harder to identify the best candidate.

Figure 1: Predictive Data sources



» The most commonly used data sources (education, experience, interview) are NOT good performance predictors. A valid pre-hire assessment that delivers data about cognitive ability, personality and skill are more useful predictors of future performance.

The Myth of Job Experience

It Just Doesn't Matter

Companies often use résumés to make the first cut in the applicant pool. Managers or recruiters review résumés and, based on what the candidates have written, decide which ones to eliminate from consideration. But by relying on résumés managers can easily overlook the top candidates for a job! Here's why.

Research over the last 80 years has proven that experience does not predict future job performance. Work experience, as reflected in job titles and task descriptions on a résumé, has virtually no value in predicting future job success (Greenberg, 1980; Highhouse, 2008; Haid, 2010). For those interested in the stats, the correlation coefficient between prior work experience and job success is only around 0.18 (Schmidt, Hunter and Outerbridge, 1986).

Evidence of the experience myth is found when the success of new hires with experience is compared to employees hired at the same time with no experience – surprisingly there is little difference in their subsequent performance. One research project studied the performance of 38,000 new employees in high-turnover jobs. At the end of the first year of work, 57 percent of experienced new hires were gone (quit or fired) while only 28 percent of the employees with no experience had left the job. After training and effective supervision, the research finds that a candidate with no experience is as likely to be a successful employee as a person who has two or more years of experience (Kleiman, 2002).

Other research supports this finding – it has been long understood that cognitive ability and personality match are far better predictors of success than experience (Schmidt and Hunter 2004; Goeke and Antonucci 2013).

So job experience as a predictor of future performance is a myth. To make things worse, people lie on their résumés.

Lies, Damned Résumés Lies

Dishonesty on résumés seems to be virtually universal. Here are just four examples of candidate lies that led to high-profile firings:



George O'Leary

Notre Dame's football coach
(for five days) lied not only about his degrees, but also his experience in football



Marilee Jones

Dean of admissions at MIT
Did not have any of the degrees she claimed on her résumé (her lie wasn't discovered for 28 years – that's embarrassing)



Scott Thompson

Yahoo! CEO
Lied about his degree and was fired after four months on the job



David Tovar

Wal-Mart VP of Communications
Left his position about a week after it was discovered that he lied about his BA; his university confirmed he never completed his degree, even though he told Wal-Mart he did

46%

Résumés reviewed containing inaccurate information

Apparently there is just a whole lot of lying going on. One 2009 study reported that 46 percent of résumés reviewed contained inaccurate information about employment and educational history — five percent higher than reported two years earlier, in 2007 (ADP, 2009).

In a survey of college students, 95 percent reported they were prepared to lie to get a job and 41 percent reported they had already done so (Bliss, 2000). In a study of executives, researchers found that 40 percent had lied about their education, 35 percent lied about their accomplishments and 25 percent lied about their responsibilities and skills (Prater, 2002).

A 2014 poll of over 2,000 managers found that 58 percent of them had caught lies on résumés and 33 percent said they have seen an increase in résumé lies post-recession (CareerBuilder, 2014). The Society for Human Resource Management estimates that up to 80 percent of résumés could contain erroneous data like inaccurate job titles, enhanced skill descriptions, adjusted work tenure dates and fake degrees and licenses.

Some managers believe that social media information is more trustworthy because friends can “call out” errors. But at least one study found that using LinkedIn as a source of information may not be reliable either. In a recent survey of LinkedIn users (Chamberlain, 2012), when asked about their profiles:

- 10 percent of LinkedIn users reported they had “enhanced” their career data
- 46 percent reported that their current profile information was out of date
- 30 percent reported they did not actually know many of the people listed in their networks

To be fair, some responsibility for a hiring mistake rests with organizations that fail to verify information submitted by a candidate. One research study found that while 46 percent of résumés include erroneous information about candidates’ previous employment and educational records, only about 68 percent of employers routinely confirm job histories and only 42 percent check educational claims (Bible, 2012).

In addition to the pressure on a manager to ascertain whether or not a candidate’s application materials are falsified, the way the human brain works also impedes a manager’s ability to make good decisions about new hires.

The Brain Has a Mind of Its Own

Another obstacle to successful hiring decisions is the way the brain works. The human brain is designed to make decisions quickly and automatically, with little or no conscious effort and no voluntary control, so the mind can trick managers into making hiring decisions based on irrelevant cues rather than on data.

This automatic thinking is not entirely bad. Human survival literally depends on the ability to react automatically, before a person is aware of danger, like not stepping into the crosswalk because the brain “unconsciously” sees a car speeding down the street. At work survival may depend on automatically processing the cues on an angry boss’s face.

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The way the brain works can trick managers into making hiring decisions based on irrelevant cues rather than on valid data.

This automatic, instinctive thinking is called “System 1” (or fast thinking) and it is actively at work whenever people are awake. It leads to instant, and often quite useful, predictions about the future (Kahneman, 2012).

Examples of System 1 thinking include:

- Ducking when someone throws a shoe at your head
- Turning toward a sudden, loud noise
- Reacting to a job candidate as soon as you see him
- Adding $2 + 2$

System 1 thinking often delivers answers that “feel right” — even when they are not. System 1 thinking may automatically conclude that a female candidate for an engineering position is less qualified than a male candidate — and the hiring manager won’t even be aware of the conclusion. Or a manager might decide that a candidate who is younger than the average employee doesn’t have enough experience and so eliminates an individual who might have been her best worker.

Managers may even react to the name on a résumé — applicants with white-sounding names are 50 percent more likely to get called for an initial interview than applicants with African-American-sounding names (Bertrand, 2003). A candidate’s gender and physical appearance also affect whether or not a candidate is considered or hired (Paustian-Underdahl, 2015; Ruffle, 2015). With System 1 thinking, even though a reaction might feel right, it may not deliver good data for making a good hiring decision.

System 2 thinking (called slow thinking) is more deliberate. It involves focusing attention on activities that demand a lot of effort such as figuring out complex problems or making a hiring decision. Problems that require System 2 thinking have one important feature in common — they require focus and when attention wanders, the solution process is disrupted.

System 2 thinking includes:

- Focusing on the voice of an obnoxious person in a noisy room
- Searching memory to identify an unexpected sound
- Multiplying 17×24
- Evaluating and comparing job candidates

Not only does System 2 thinking actively engage the brain, it engages the body too. Muscles tense up, blood pressure rises, pupils dilate and the heart rate increases. When the problem is solved (either by finding the answer or making a decision to give up) tense muscles relax and blood pressure, pupils and heart rate return to normal (Kahneman, 2012a; Kahneman, 2012b).

But using System 1 and 2 together reduces the effort needed to maximize performance and results. System 1 uses the past experience of familiar situations to address simple problems fast and (usually) effectively. But it doesn’t work well in situations that require complex thinking such as making hiring decisions. Adding System 2 thinking to a decision process

helps System 1 by delivering more detailed and specific information about a particular problem (like figuring out which candidate to hire).

Some decision makers have identified techniques that reduce the effect of System 1 thinking. Orchestras, for example, often use a “blind audition” when hiring musicians. That means the musician plays the audition seated behind a curtain so she cannot be seen. This gives the orchestra leaders a better chance of selecting the best musician and avoid being influenced by the irrelevant reaction (System 1) to seeing the musician or watching her play.

These three hiring barriers — the myth of experience, candidate lies on résumés and the way the human brain makes decisions — increase the likelihood of making hiring mistakes, and they drive up the cost of hiring, too.

The next section, How to Make Good Hires, describes how to remove the barriers while reducing the time to hire and avoiding expensive hiring mistakes.

How to Make Good Hires

Hiring decisions are complicated, but fortunately managers already know what causes them to make bad hires. In a survey of 166 managers, 81 percent said that their own hiring processes were not structured enough, they did not follow their own processes (using short-cuts because time was tight), and they often rushed the final hiring decision. Only 19 percent of the managers said they could legitimately blame a hiring mistake on the applicant (Nowicki, 2002).

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There is no perfect screening method or killer interview question to identify the perfect candidate. But there are specific approaches that effectively weed out unsuitable candidates early, letting managers focus their limited time on more comprehensive screening of the most qualified candidates.

These three steps help managers avoid hiring mistakes and hire the right people:

- Use pre-hire assessments to identify the most qualified candidates — those most likely to be high performers
- Use knowledge tests, job simulations or skills tests to find out what the qualified candidates already know and can do
- Conduct structured, consistent interviews to evaluate final candidates

Use Pre-Hire Assessments First

Pre-employment assessments should be the first screening step so managers can quickly and accurately find the most qualified applicants. Using assessments early in the selection process dramatically reduces the noise of flashy résumés and online profiles while reducing screening time, too. Assessment results are difficult to fake and are more accurate than results of human judgment (which is hampered by System 1 thinking) (Lahey, 2015). Plus assessing every candidate early in the selection process lets managers spend their scarce time on the very best candidates.

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Pre-employment assessments should replace the typical first step, the résumé review. Résumés can lead managers to overlook the best candidates based on their gut reaction. For example some managers toss out every résumé that contains a typo, but using this method means that the best sales person would likely end up in the reject pile: the most successful sales professionals do not pay attention to details they think are irrelevant to their selling success, like typing with 100 percent accuracy.

Even the act of reading the résumé introduces problems. In a recent study, résumé reviewers estimated they spent four or five minutes reviewing each résumé. When they were timed over a 10-week period, they learned they spent an average of six seconds per résumé (Evans, 2012), and when reading the résumé, they ignored most of the explanatory information of work history as they made the fit/no fit decision! Reviewers tend to look for job titles similar to the one they are trying to fill - when they find a similar title listed, they keep the candidate in the pool for further review later despite the fact that experience is not predictive of future success on the job.

Pre-hire assessments help identify candidate strengths and then match them to the requirements of the job. Predictions of future performance based on pre-hire assessment are about three times more accurate than those based on job experience and are four times as predictive as years of education (Schmidt, 1999).

When selecting a pre-hire assessment, look for one that measures three key success criteria:

- **Thinking skills:** How does the candidate prefer to approach problem solving? What about cognitive reasoning and the ability to learn and use new information? Do the candidate's preferences and strengths match the job requirements?
- **Personality:** Does the candidate prefer to work with others or to work alone? Does he prefer new challenges all the time or working on more routine tasks? Does the candidate make decisions based on data analysis, instinct or something in between? What does the job require?
- **Culture fit:** How will the candidate fit in with the team? Is company decision-making structured or informal? Is the work culture one that expects employees to challenge other's ideas and argue a lot? Or do employees usually work to get along and argue only about the important ideas?

It takes more than skills to be successful in a job. Using a pre-hire assessment as the first step for all candidates identifies which applicants are most likely to succeed in the job and using the assessment can cut time to hire by as much as 40 percent or more.

Assessment data are critical to good hiring decisions, but after a pre-hire assessment, managers should further screen high-potential candidates to find out which ones already have the knowledge and skills needed for the job.

Use Knowledge Tests and Job Simulations

By using knowledge and job simulation tests, managers can learn about the applicant's current knowledge and expertise in specific areas.² That means managers know which candidates already know the information critical to future success in the job.

Knowledge Tests

Knowledge tests evaluate a candidate's technical or professional knowledge. These pre-employment tests usually contain multiple choice questions, essay questions or sample problems to solve. Knowledge tests are useful when new employees must know certain information on day one or when the organization won't provide any training.

Knowledge tests are also helpful when the job requires specialized or highly technical knowledge that can only be acquired over a long period of time, like accounting knowledge, the knowledge and ability to pilot a plane or drive a city bus or how to write a computer program in a specific language. Certain kinds of knowledge are represented by a license or certification (a pilot's license or a CPA). Other knowledge (like the ability to program in a specific language or knowledge of Microsoft Office) can be tested using off the shelf, web-based resources.

Job Simulations

Job simulations (sometimes called work samples or portfolios) are another way to evaluate a candidate's current capabilities. Job simulations require a candidate to complete tasks that mirror those they would perform if they were in the job. Simulations evaluate the candidate's level of skill and can also assess more general skills, such as organizational, analytical and interpersonal skills.

Simulations are especially useful when new employees are expected to possess certain competences before they start the job. They are useful for candidates, too — simulations provide a realistic preview of the job and the organization, so candidates can make their own informed decisions about whether to accept a job offer.

Knowledge tests and job simulations help reduce hiring costs by accurately identifying the candidates who already have technical and professional expertise. Those candidates can then move on to the third kind of test: the interview.

²When using tests like these, the employer is responsible for assuring their validity and keeping them updated so they reflect current job requirements. Knowledge tests identify which applicants already possess necessary information, they do not measure whether an applicant will apply the knowledge on the job or will acquire new knowledge over time.

Structure the Interview

An interview is not a conversation, but another way for the manager to collect relevant information about the candidate. It is also a chance for the candidate to collect additional information so she can decide whether she should accept a job offer. The quality of the information acquired during the interview depends on its structure.

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*Most interviews provide
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Virtually all companies use interviews - some even view them as the most important selection tool. But most managers approach the interview in the least valid way, hoping that using the right trick question, the candidate will be conned into revealing some surprising information that will tip the decision scales in the manager's mind. Even Google figured out that doesn't work!

Research indicates that most interviews provide little useful data. Managers seem to intuitively know this - they describe their own interviews as "incomplete" or "not thorough" and they often blame a hiring mistake on themselves - they report they were not rigorous in their thinking or they did not take enough time to figure out what they needed to learn during the interview (Nowicki, 2002).

Over the last 25 years, studies have proven conclusively that structured or behavioral interviews are more valid than traditional, unstructured interviews, yet fewer than half of companies use them (Nowicki, 2002). Managers might not use structured interviews because they don't know how to conduct a behavioral interview, they are not aware of the value of structure, or they might feel that their autonomy and power are being reduced by the structure (van der Zee et al., 2002).

But in reality, adding structure to the interview can increase the reliability and validity of the manager's evaluation of a candidate (Macan, 2009). Being completely objective during an interview is impossible (remember System 1 thinking?), but interviews can be structured so managers interview candidates in a way that consistently delivers information that supports accurate hiring decisions.

These four interview steps promote interview accuracy for a better hiring process.

- Ask behavioral questions that relate to the most critical aspects of the work
- Use written measures to evaluate candidate responses consistently
- Train interviewers on good interviewing strategies
- Ensure legible, usable notes are taken during interviews

Step One: Ask Questions Relevant to the Actual Work

Managers begin planning for the interview by making a list of the critical results they expect from employees in the job. Think about results, not tasks. The job description is a useful source of information about the job.

Take five minutes to list four or five major job results. For example in a customer service role, it might be important that the employee manages conflict effectively and that the customer's issue is resolved during one call.

Now, describe a situation that has actually occurred related to the job results. A typical interview question would be:

How would you handle a conflict at work?

A behavioral question changes the focus from potential ("would") to reporting on an actual work experience ("did"). The behavioral version of the question is:

As in most organizations, sometimes conflicts come up with a customer. Please tell us about a time when you encountered a conflict with a customer and helped resolve it. What was the conflict, how did you address it, and what was the outcome?

Asking candidates what they did versus what they would do leads to significantly higher response validity (Taylor, 2002). The idea is to find out what they have actually done and what happened rather than to learn their ideas about the best performance they think they could achieve.

Step Two: Create Standard Measures to Evaluate Candidates

Use rating scales to measure and evaluate responses consistently across all candidates (this incorporates System 2 thinking).

Once there are questions for each critical result of the job, the next step is to create a simple rating scale for each question. Interviewers use the scale to "grade" each candidate's answers. The goal of the scale is to assure that each candidate's answers are evaluated against the same expectations.

Here is an example of a scale for conflict question:

1	2	3	4	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Does not appear to have considered all positions equally » made little attempt at unbiased mediation of the differences in opinion; and/or » Allowed differing parties to "work it out for themselves" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Listened to all parties and impartially re-stated and acknowledged all positions » Clearly identified areas of agreement and disagreement, and focused on those issues in need of resolution » Identified and collected all necessary info relevant to differences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Listened to all parties and impartially re-stated and acknowledged all positions » Clearly identified areas of agreement and disagreement, and focused on those issues in need of resolution » Identified and collected all necessary info relevant to differences » Identified circumstances necessary for a successful resolution and implemented the solution. 		

Step Three: Train Interviewers

Train interviewers to use structured interview strategies. Whether relying on one individual interviewer or a panel, teach everyone about effective behavioral interview techniques. Collecting job-relevant information during the interview helps the manager identify the best candidate to hire. Teach interviewers the importance of using the questions and scales created in steps one and two.

Step Four: Document the Interview

Identify which interviewer will take notes during interviews. Interview notes should be detailed enough to clearly reflect the selection criteria established for the job. While interviewers may balk, these notes will be used later during selection discussions and they serve as evidence if questions are raised about how the hiring decision was made.

Hire the Best Person for Each Position

The costs of recruiting, screening, interviewing, reference checking and onboarding applicants are high. Managers can reduce the costs and time to hire by using objective data to make hiring decisions. When used consistently, the technologies, science and strategies described here have a major impact on manager satisfaction with new hires and result in faster employee ramp-up to productivity and retention of top performers.

Employee selection is most effective (and efficient) when the process begins with a valid pre-hire assessment completed by every candidate; the assessment scientifically evaluates the match between job requirements and each applicant's strengths. Next, use knowledge tests or job simulation problems to expand the manager's understanding of a candidate's likely success. Behavioral interviews not only generate information about candidates, but can add additional meaning to the information already collected about the candidate.

Top performing companies know that this disciplined approach leads to more informed and accurate hiring decisions (Lahey, 2015). Moving away from "gut instinct" hiring — the most expensive process — and toward an objective, scientific hiring approach yields better hiring results at a lower cost.

Average Cost to Hire Skilled Employees

Number of Company Employees	1-9	10-49	50-99	100+
Average Hiring Cost	\$11847	\$15633	\$19727	\$23065
Number of Companies Studied	1481	1054	720	588

Source: Blatter, 2012

About Affintus

Affintus provides pre-hire assessments and job matching services to help managers hire top performers, while reducing time to hire and turnover to half of industry norm.

For more information: **www.affintus.com**

About Deborah

Deborah L. Kerr, Ph.D. is a Co-founder and President at Affintus in Austin, Texas.

For 20 years before founding Affintus, Deborah was an executive in private, nonprofit, and public organizations. Deborah's work as an executive has been written about in Financial World magazine, AustinWoman Magazine, and the Austin American-Statesman. Her approach to measurement was featured in Paul Niven's book *Balanced Scorecard Step by Step* and Mohan Nair's book *Essentials of the Balanced Scorecard*. Her measurement work has been called "best practice" by the Society for Human Resource Management. She blogs about evidence-based management at www.affintus.com.

For the last 16 years she has also served on the graduate faculty of Texas A&M University where she teaches management, organizational performance measurement, and public policy theory. Her teaching has been recognized with the University's Distinguished Achievement Award for Teaching (based on nomination and support from current and former graduate students) and with three Silver Star Awards for outstanding service and dedication given by the classes of 2009, 2014, and 2015. She holds degrees from St. Mary's (Notre Dame), Columbia University (New York) and The University of Texas at Austin.

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