



5 Steps to Hiring a Candidate who Fits your Company's Culture

By Jennifer Potter

A good cultural fit will result in a happier, more productive person who will stay with the company longer which directly correlates to profitability and growth. There are several actions to take to help determine if a candidate would be a good cultural fit.

1) Determine your Company Culture.

Before knowing what your company needs, you need to know the type of culture so the best choice can be made when interviewing potential candidates. How do you know what your culture is?

Ask yourself questions about the company: What's the office design like - shared space or private offices? How are decisions made? Is leadership assigned or earned? How are employees recognized? What's the environment among colleagues - is it friendly with a little healthy competition or is it a cutthroat, "us vs. them" mentality? The answers should point you toward the culture of what works in your company. (...and what doesn't which is another topic altogether!)

If you bring a highly structured, Type-A personality into a relaxed, casual culture it will be like letting loose the proverbial bull in a china shop. People can't produce great results where they don't feel comfortable.

2) Know the Type of Candidate you need.

Most employers are skilled at assessing job fit. They know what they need to get the job done, and after interviewing candidates, there are likely several who will stand out because of past experience and qualifications. However, hiring a candidate who has a great skill set but a lack of motivation to mentor others won't be effective in the role of manager. Does the job require a more task oriented person, or a talented communicator? Additionally, if your company requires a great deal of creativity, then hiring a "in the box" thinker won't yield positive results. An introvert may not be the best choice for a Global Salesperson.

3) Avoid Personality Clashes

Don't mistake personal biases for how well a potential candidate would fit in culturally. You might not be willing to go on a 3-day fishing expedition with this person, but that doesn't mean they wouldn't be a valuable addition. That being said, we don't recommend a polar opposite either. There is something to be said about similar personalities working closely and cohesively together.

Personality tests help determine the qualities of a person. Does your company need a leader, a worker bee or someone in between? Using a quantitative evaluation such as the [Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator](#) will help determine if the candidate would be a good fit.

4) Ask Behavioral-based Questions

In prepping for an interview, a candidate will probably surf the internet to glean some information about the company, and study up on some routine interview questions. So, let's ask some questions which require a little individuality, and some off-the-cuff thinking. "How have you resolved some conflicts at work?" "Describe a work environment where you've had the most success?" or "Give me an example of how you build rapport with someone?" How they answer will give some idea of their values and workplace style, as will their ability to answer quickly and with confidence.

5) Let Candidate lead a little.

The interview should be structured and have a set of questions pertinent to the job, as well as data-driven analysis to prevent it from becoming too subjective. But it's also good, and very telling, to let the candidate have some lead in contributing to the conversation. Does he ask questions about the company, *and* wait for the answer? Is she confident to fill gaps with conversation or does she just sit and wait politely?

Every person is a unique combination of values, traits and personality. Assessing these is as complex and frustrating as those little puzzles that need to be solved in order to retrieve the money. Combining the above suggestions will help in determining the best candidate to help your company optimize team performance, improve productivity, and be an enjoyable place to work!