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Is Your Candidate the Right Cultural Fit?

How to hire for culture as well as skills

Company culture plays a key role in how your organization achieves its goals. But how do you know if a job candidate is the right fit for your company?

During the recruiting cycle, you typically assess candidates for their skills, experience, and education. However, onboarding a candidate who does not fit in with your company culture leads to reduced productivity, poor job satisfaction, and eventually, the cost of recruiting a replacement candidate.

Know your own company culture

Before you can recruit to suit your company culture, though, you must be able to identify and describe the basic behavior, attitudes, and mission of your company. It is important to take some time and define a few talking points about your company culture by answering the following questions:

- What is the organizational style of your company? Is it strongly hierarchical? Are you moving toward an Open organization? Is it a mix?
- Where does your company stand on work / life balance?
- Does your organization support community service and aspirational aims such as continuing education?
- Does your workforce engage more collaboratively, or work as individuals?
- How does the company handle organizational, team, and individual change and training?
- Is your company open to flex time and telecommuting?
- Do you have day care facilities on the premises or nearby?

These few questions say a great deal about the culture of your company, how you work, invest time, and handle change. By defining what your company is all about and sharing your perceptions with candidates, you can help them to better understand your culture – and help you understand if those candidates are a good match for your work environment.

How do you hire for skills and cultural fit?

Making the right hiring decision for skills and culture can improve morale, increase productivity and retention, and reduce hiring costs. Plus, if the original job for which a candidate was hired eventually is phased out, an employee who fits well in your organization is a good resource likely to move laterally, or upward, to a new position.

Here are some tips to increase your chances of a hire who is a good cultural fit:

- **Make your message clear:** Through message and image, be sure your company broadcasts its value proposition to potential candidates. Ensure that the description of your organization in job postings includes your company culture. If you inform potential applicants about your cultural expectations, everyone has less chance of disappointment later.
- **Wording of job descriptions:** Clarify the characteristics needed for your hire in your job postings. In addition to specific education, or experience, include language about system requirements, individual expectations, and other characteristics you consider a good fit for your company.
- **Interviews:** Use a combination of in-person, video conferencing (Skype) or telephone interviews to explain your company culture and ask applicants how they see themselves within that setting. Use the interview to explore their comfort level with the way your company gets work done. If you ask behavioral-based questions about goal setting, problem solving, and handling conflict, **be sure to ask all candidates the same questions so that you can fairly compare responses across your candidate pool.**

Enjoy the outcome of your efforts

Defining and communicating organizational culture does not end with a new hire. Be sure your workforce understands the mission and methods of your company to increase job satisfaction and productivity throughout the employee life cycle.

When you have [recruiting needs](#), or questions about best practices for the candidate journey, contact us at McCloskey Partners, LLC. We are here to help.

Contact McCloskey Partners, LLC today to discuss your Recruiting needs at 215-716-3035 x 2 or contact us at services@mccloskeypartners.com.

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