

Hiring Talent 101



*Ron
Hequet*



**The 8
Easy Steps
To Hiring
Winners!**

2 Audio CD's with Action Guide

RON HEQUET

AMERICA'S LEADING PROFIT AND CASH STRATEGIST

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PUBLISHED BY:

**Texas Trail, Inc.
P.O. Box 2785
Weatherford, Texas 76086
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PRODUCED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



About the Author...

Ron Hequet is one of those rare individuals of who it is said to be a small business *Entrepreneur* and have the history to match. Ron has founded / owned and / or operated eight different businesses in six different industries.

Ron has improved clients and client companies across the United States in as many as 20 different industries, and is considered...
America's Leading Profit and Cash Strategist.

Ron's new book '**Build Your Career 180, 5 Street Smart Strategies To Never Be Unemployed or Underemployed In Any Economy**' is very popular for any anyone wanting employment security and to achieve career goals.

Invest in this book from the website or Amazon.com. Ron is also a contributing author to the American Management Association, 'Leading & Learning E-Magazine', 'Affluent Magazine', 'The Advisor', and has written many business and career articles for over a dozen resource websites.

Ron has presented over 100 Seminars within his client companies and industry associations. Ron's availability to the business community at large, is a fresh new voice to audiences, where Ron is not only entertaining, but *inspires* attendees to take action, presenting *Strategies and Tactics for Achievement...*

- √ Define what you truly want and where going
- √ Understand the imperative of personal marketing
- √ Develop key connections and relationships
- √ Learn the right new skills
- √ Get inspired to always move toward your goal

Hiring Talent 101 ©

8 Steps to Hiring Winners

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Over the years, at the request of some of my clients, I have been involved in their hiring process. Too many times their process involved too many people and almost always the wrong people. A business owner's need for consensus with team leaders, supervisors or managers is a stumbling block to really finding and selecting the right talent.

Have you ever interviewed a prospective candidate whose resume passed muster by the office manager or whatever HR that's in place, and had the candidate interviewed by others in the company and then had the conversation in the room go something like; "I liked him, did you like him? Yeah, I liked him too".

The candidate was hired, only to find out that this new hire requires basic training for skills and abilities you thought existed based upon the resume. Or, worse yet, this candidate had hidden character issues or a personal agenda that impeded job performance and created internal discord. It is well known that the majority of applicants falsify their resume.

Welcome: This is Ron Hequet, America's Leading Profit and Cash Strategist.

First, I am so proud of you for 'investing' in yourself and in your business. Again, note I did not say that you spent money, no you 'invested' in your achievement and your 'profit and cash' success.

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I am very excited and honored that you have made a decision that allows me to share my experience and knowledge with you. This Audio CD program is titled 'Hiring Talent 101'.

Today, I am going to provide you with the essential basics of how to hire talent for your organization. Please note this disclaimer; although my firm does legal work for our client's, this program is not legal advice. I will cover everything that should take place from the moment you decide to hire a new employee. There may be details that I either unintentionally overlook or don't cover some issue that apply to your specific situation. In that case, call me, send me an email Ron@RonHequet.com. If I chose your question to share with others in my Achievement Journal Ezine, you will win a prize, which is usually a business book by a well-known author.

Let's begin; I believe that one of the most important responsibilities of a business owner is to personally hire all of the talent for their organization.

You may believe that the number of your employees is too large and that it would take up a tremendous amount of time. Well, depending on the number, that may have some truth to it, but still, I believe that if you outline and implement the process that I will offer in this program, you will still be able to be the primary hiring manager.

I have discovered that business owners or any organizational leaders do not want to invest the time to hire *correctly*.

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Somehow that responsibility has been viewed as a low level task, to be delegated. Of course, ask any H.R. staffer and they will tell you that I am wrong.

But I never met an H.R. person, including those that call themselves an H.R. professional that ever founded or owned and operated a company. In fact, people in that profession are for the most part pro-employee and do not always have the employer's best interest at heart. If your organization is large enough to afford such a person or department, I will later talk about what their role should be in the hiring process. And if not, I repeat this responsibility belongs to the owner.

1. Determine the Need:

Really, making the right decision to hire can't be done unless you have developed an organization and a workflow chart. This also includes the time when an existing team member no longer works at your company. This is a great time to reassess as to whether that position is necessary, or whether the workflow can be rearranged to maximize efficiency.

Back to the organization and workflow charts. I don't care if you have 2 employees, 200 or 2000. The proper org chart is a graphic representation of responsibilities and accountabilities.

Case Study No. 1: I once developed an organization chart for a new company in Florida that had only 4 employees but had 20 different job functions. Job function and workflow responsibilities have nothing to do with body count.

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This company did a lot of business in Florida and other southeastern states as well as customers in South America. Their sales in year one was about 400K. My work with this client helped them grow the business to doing 4MM – and still had the same 4 employees. Revenue levels do not necessarily have anything to do with employee count.

Case Study No. 2: Another client, which was a medical billing company in New Hampshire, had an office of about 30 employees. When a processing clerk did not complete the day's workload, it eventually backed up several others within the office. The manager responsible made the assumption that more help was needed. After all, that's what the team said, 'we've got too much work, and we need more help'. Since productivity standards did not exist there, the decision to add staff had to be the answer, right? What's worse is when the business can actually afford *financially* to add staff.

Naturally, my assessment of that company demonstrated that not only did they not need to add staff, but actually could have reduced staff to accomplish the same workload.

This is another of the many examples of why it is the owner who predetermines hiring and actually conducts the selection process.

Employees *like* to see who is responsible for 'what' and 'who' is accountable to 'whom' on the chart. This graphic representation will be helpful to you as well, having made the decision of assigning responsibility and accountability.

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The workflow chart is another graphic representation of every activity inside and outside the organization. For example, can you graphically track the process within your company from the moment a customer contacts your business until a purchase is fulfilled? Or, what is the document flow for placing orders to vendors and through receiving and stocking the product? There is a plethora of examples that I could mention, but I believe you get the idea.

So, even if you've been in business for years, once you have created your organization and workflow chart, you can now determine the personnel need based on your workload standards as to the number of employees it requires to do the work. You might be surprised at the answer.

2. Position Profile and Description

If you had a blank slate and were starting your organization from scratch, would you hire the same people? Most of us would say no! Why, because we hired the person based on the historical resume and not to fit a job profile.

What is a job profile? It is simply an outline or design, like a blueprint, of the ideal person for a specific position.

This profile includes such listings as character traits, personality, transferable skill assessment and so forth. If you have this document in advance, finding the person with the right fit to your company and to a specific role is now made easy.

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The job profiles for all positions in your organization must have the minimum candidate qualifications for the position. This is important so that you can easily screen out applicants who do not possess the qualifications for the position. Otherwise you will be wasting your time interviewing people who are not qualified for the position and possibly end up hiring someone 'you like'! Only to find out later that you shouldn't have hired them in the first place. And now you're stuck, because firing someone unqualified is a real problem.

For example; if a position requires certain licensing, certifications, education level, experience or more importantly specific skills, having predetermined that profile makes the screening process much easier.

When I ask clients if they have a *Position Description* for certain jobs, they give me a funny look. Then I say 'job description' and they say, oh yes, right here.

Almost 100% of the time, it is not even a job description; it is a list of tasks and duties, not a job description, let alone a *Position Description*.

Positions that must have a Position Description aren't given tasks and duties, they are given a list of responsibilities and describing expected performance results. For example; would you give a customer service manager a list of things to do or would you describe the responsibilities and outcomes from providing a certain level of customer care?

The positions or job functions that have responsibilities are usually exempt employment status and typically a salaried position. You may want to review my audio CD titled 'Controlling Payroll Costs', to ensure you understand who is even entitled to be exempt, which isn't many.

Task and duty lists are assigned to non-exempt employees who are typically paid hourly. This document actually lists activities that are assigned to that position, which ones are daily tasks, which are weekly, etc. Using customer service again as an example; a daily task might be to complete a contact report or make a certain number of outbound calls and so forth.

With both the Position Description and Task and Duties acknowledge agreements, the criteria for performance evaluations are also listed. Note I said acknowledgement. **Without** these documents on file with the employee's signature, acknowledging agreement and acceptance of the job, you open yourself to debate if there is ever a problem with performance. Have you ever heard from an employee, "I didn't know that was part of my job?" Or, "I don't want to 'fill-in-the-blank'." Dismissing a person under those conditions exposes you to a 'wrongful termination lawsuit'.

Samples of the documents that I am referring to are provided in the 'Build Your Company 180, CASH system. These samples *include* the 'Acknowledgement and Acceptance Agreements' and clearly protects you from not establishing an employment contract, which you want to avoid under all but the most imperative necessities.

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Now you have developed and documented your organization structure and workflow, and you've created all your Position Descriptions and Task and Duty agreements, what's next?

3. Personnel Policy Manual

My first advice here is, do not create your organization's personnel policy manual by downloading one from the internet. You must create yours specific to your organization and customized to your wishes. The Personnel Policy Manuals that my firm creates for our clients is developed in concert with the client with all the legal compliance and language composed by myself and the associate attorney in my office, both for your protection as well as your employees.

Next, don't call it an Employee Handbook or other out-of-date titles. Handbook or guidebook does not imply policy, which could muddy the waters for employee compliance and make disciplinary action including termination difficult, again exposing your organization to legal issues.

Now I would like to mention two inherent problems with having or not having a Personnel Policy Manual. There was time when possibly not having a manual could have been an advantage. This allowed the employer to handle personnel issues on a discretionary or case by case basis. Today, that will get you in to legal hot-water.

However, in my experience, one of the biggest problems with having a Personnel Policy Manual is the owner.

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Owner's and key managers don't know their own policies and therefore violate their own policies with certain employees. For example; let's say you have a policy regarding tardiness, absenteeism or leaving work early. How easy is it to overlook or forgive this violation for one of your favorite employees, but then write up this same violation on another employee? Or, let's say you actually terminate for a policy violation. If you've made any exceptions for others, that will be the first thing a lawyer will use for a wrongful termination lawsuit.

So, it's simple. You must not only know your own policies but manage everyone strictly to those policies with no exceptions. Any employee, who expects special treatment, may not be the quality or loyal employee you thought they were. Additionally, your entire staff will respect the fact that you are fair and treat everyone equally.

Although owners are exempt from compliance to any Personnel Policy, with certain obvious exceptions, it is best if you are also in compliance to your own policies.

4. Seek and Find Talent

When you have a position opening, finding the right talent is not all that easy, even when the unemployment rate is high. The typical choices are newspaper help-wanted ads, internet postings, head-hunters, referrals and temp-to-hire.

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You're probably aware of the problems with newspaper ads; you'll probably receive a hundred inquiries, phone calls and resumes, almost all of which are not qualified for the position. So, unless you can specifically list the position requirements in the ad, don't do it. To avoid people showing up at your doorstep, place what is called a 'blind ad', i.e. mail resume to a P.O. Box or other ways to disguise the name of your company name.

Internet postings offer the same problems as newspaper ads, so you would post the job opening in the same manner – blind.

Many have had some success using head-hunters, but here too there are some issues that I want to make you aware of. My firm used to do a lot of talent screening and testing for clients, including those found by head-hunters.

Case Study No. 3: One particular client sent me a candidate found by a head-hunter. After jumping through all the hoops in our screening process, this candidate made it to the initial face to face interview, which I personally conducted. I typically don't pay any attention to the resume.

I can't describe it here, but I have an innate ability to have a conversation with a candidate and I have uncommon off-script questions that I ask, which gets the candidate to open up and reveal things they might not normally share.

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In this particular interview I found out that this was the third job that this candidate was offered by the same head-hunter within the last 3 years. Each time, it was for a little more money for the employee, but my point here is that this head-hunter received a commission off of moving this same candidate 3 times. And, these commissions can be thousands of dollars. Not all head-hunters are like this, but I just want to caution you on this method of finding talent. If you choose to use a head-hunter, it is still *your* responsibility to vet any and all candidates as through any source of seeking and finding talent. Do not assume that a head-hunter has done this for you or that they would do all that's necessary to ensure the right fit.

Another option is the referral, whether it is from an existing employee, a friend or wherever.

It used to be thought that a referral from an existing employee could be a reliable source. After all, they wouldn't want to jeopardize their own standing with you by referring someone they know would be a lousy employee. However, I found that they may not know the deepest darkest secrets of someone they think they know well. So, same advice, do the necessary due diligence despite what your trusted employee may say.

The method that I have had the most success with is a temp agency, such as Robert Half, Account Temps, Express Personnel, etc. Yes, the temp-to-hire system can bring otherwise undiscovered talent.

The first step with this method is for you to personally interview temp-to-hire agencies.

And make certain the actual people who will be doing the search are being interviewed by you. If the agency does not have a clear understanding of exactly the type of person you are looking for, they will waste your time sending you a line-up of candidates, just hoping someone sticks. The agency also will, at your request, do the drug testing, criminal background checks and even credit checks.

I have gone so far as to request only candidates that have good English diction, or that they are a non-smoker. For one of my companies, I needed a female person who had a sense of fashion, because she would be seen at trade shows. I don't mean a model, but this person was going to be one of the faces of this company and their fitting personal appearance was a requirement. Yes, you can request gender if you can substantiate the need. You just can't discriminate after that. You're probably aware of all the legal issues, so I won't go in to those here. My point is that your criteria need to be as specific as possible.

Provide the agency with a copy of the Position Description, where all of the qualifications are listed. Take your time, just because a prospective employee meets all the criteria doesn't mean they are a good fit. For positions where there is no Position Description, provide the agency with a list of required job skills and abilities, along with a copy of the Task and Duties agreement. The clearer you are with the agency as to the exact person you need the faster and more effective the search will be.

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Speaking of taking your time, you know my philosophy, 'Hire Slow and Fire Fast', and if you haven't read my article by that same title, I *strongly* recommend you do so – available as a free download from my website, www.RonHequet.com

Be prepared to tell the agency exactly how much the salary or hourly wage will be for this position and they will add their commission on to that wage. That way the temporary employee is already used to the pay for the job in the event they accept your employment offer after the temporary period is over.

When you find a candidate that you are willing to accept, the advantage here is that they are not really employed by you. That's right; they are employed by the temp agency, so there are no payroll taxes or benefits that you are paying for. Of course the agency bills you for the temporary employee's hours along with the agency's commission, but that's okay, that's how the agency earns their money.

The agency's commission charged to you *is* negotiable, including the temporary term; meaning that if you only want to do the temporary arrangement for 30 days, you can expect to pay a higher commission than if you went to 90 or 180 days.

30 days may not be enough to really see how a person will perform long term. I liked the 90 day period, because the commission was reasonable and it gave me plenty of time for the newness to wear off and to really see how this person will perform over time.

One thing that can happen is that if this person is offered a higher paying job or offered a permanent position by another company, their gone.

After all, why would they want to stay with you and maybe not get brought on permanently, when they have a sure thing being offered? I believe it's still worth the gamble, as this has only happened to me once that I recall. Although the temporary employee wanted to stay, the wage offer couldn't be matched. And don't get caught in that trap. You know what the wage is in your 'Profit Plan' for this position, *so stick to it.*

Another benefit of using a temp-agency is that you can terminate the use of that temporary employee by simply calling the agency. You don't have to deal with terminating that person yourself. I have sent temporary employees home within an hour after their arrival for work, and not just on the first day.

The problem could be tardiness, showing up looking like something the cat drug in, their attitude, taking too long for lunch, wanting to leave work early, incomplete work or work full of errors, whatever. If a person does not meet your expectations or you find they cannot perform the skills necessary, call the agency and tell them not to send that person the next day. The agency will send the next qualified candidate. However, if that agency keeps sending you people that don't work out, you've got the wrong agency.

One last point regarding seeking and finding new talent; don't wait until you've got an empty chair.

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When you fire fast, as you are supposed to, or if someone resigns, there will be pressure on you from every employee who has to pick up the slack. The so-called two week notice is not only not a law, but it's not enough time to find the right replacement. Be on the look-out at all times.

Case Study No. 4: A couple of months ago I was in an Office Max store to have a client's analysis report bound for mailing. While I waited I started looking for a special adapter for my cell phone. A young man asked if he could help. In order to help me he had to do some research on my phone and actually work to find me the \$6 adapter.

After that, I told him I had no intention of buying a new laptop that day, but I asked what system requirements he might recommend for me based on how I used it. Long story short, if I had or knew of a local position opening, I would have hired him myself or recommended he be interviewed, I was so impressed. What was I impressed with? His knowledge, nope; it was his **approach**.

'**Approach**' is also the title of the first chapter in my book, "**Build Your Career 180**", available on my website or from Amazon. He wasn't just going through the motions because he gets paid to, in fact, 99.9% of people in that same job after hearing that I was not going to buy that day would have given me the quick summary. But he asked questions and took the time to make sure I understood.

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There were a dozen other little things about this person that demonstrated to me that he had the right 'approach' to work. Someone is going to have a great employee someday.

So, can you actually have a small pipe-line of potential candidates? Absolutely; is it easy, no! It takes effort, but well worth it. Once you have anyone on your potential employee list, check in with them every once in a while, whether it's by phone or email.

If you find that they moved out of the area or now have a job that pays more than you can for that position, just scratch them off the list. That way, when a position opens up you won't waste your time trying to find them.

After hearing this recommendation, someone asked about the ethics of such a list. Wasn't I giving false hope or leading someone on? No, you should never do that. You can always be clear to that person that you don't have a spot open now but you simply want to be prepared in case the need arises.

Do you think every baseball player that's scouted gets a job offer? The realities of needing to fill a vacancy or for expansion are so just that, real. This is one of the reasons most organizations have some weak links in the chain of talent. They were compelled to hire too fast.

5. Screening

Hear me now! I believe this is the most important part of the entire process!

Because it is typically not performed sufficiently, it is one of, if not the main reason any organization can have unqualified talent. And in today's employment environment, it is really easy to hire and very difficult to fire.

You say, terminating an employee is easy, my organization is in an 'Employment at Will' state. Well, if you don't mind your state unemployment insurance rates going through the roof or frequently exposing yourself to a discriminatory or wrongful termination lawsuit, then by all means, fire away.

Can I or anyone guarantee that will never happen, even if you do everything right?

No, but after having had over 1000 employees within my various organizations, I have never had it happen to me and the number of times it has happened to a client I can count on one hand and have the majority of fingers left over. And in those cases, I can say that the process recommended in this program was not adhered to.

Continuing on, I am making the assumption that you have fully completed the first 4 phases of 'Hiring Talent 101'. Now I am going to give you a list of vetting talent steps, which in some cases may not be complete based on your industry or other criteria, legal or otherwise. But I have found this to be successful in most all cases, so go slow and stick to the process.

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1. Delegation: Only if you have a full or part-time designated H.R. person, a personal assistant or a secure, specified individual should any of these steps be delegated, and I don't mean to a gofer, customer service rep or data entry clerk. You will hear later about the phone and in-person interviews, but that is not something you can delegate. *You* must do that. But to expedite the process and keep you from getting in the weeds of the initial screening process, your assistant can do the following;
 - a. Screen out resumes that do not meet the qualifications listed in the Position Description, including wages that are higher than the position they are applying for with your organization.

Caveat: Don't get fooled into thinking that a person who has a history of making 75K a year is willing to accept a 50K a year position, or if they're used to making \$20 p/hr. and now willing to start with you for \$12 p/hr.?? It has proven not to work out.

I have been burned on that myself early in my business ownership career and have seen my clients get burned as well.

That person will *constantly* be on the lookout for a position that pays what they are accustomed to and will be gone the moment it happens, which is typically within 6 months to a year. They're lifestyle and living expenses is based on that higher number, and they are not going to sell-out in order to adjust to the lower salary.

An exception might be someone 65 or older, retired but looking for a job to keep busy, and if you have a job like that available, that might be a good choice.

- b. Check Social Media for inappropriate postings or tweets and don't forget to Google their name to see what comes up.
- c. Criminal Background check: I can't imagine not doing this for every applicant regardless of the position they are applying for. If you choose not to do this as part of step one, you had better do it before you get too far in the process, only to find out this person has had 2 DWI's within the last two years, has a dishonorable discharge or was convicted of grand-theft-auto.

Case Study No. 5: During a candidate interview for a client I was thinking all the time that I was sitting across the conference table from the likes of Cindy Crawford; well spoken, knowledgeable, well read – an absolute beauty, perfect hair, nails, make-up, jewelry, and in a classic business suit.

My admiration was not what you may be thinking, it was a respectful regard because of her classic appearance, quality and professionalism. I remember after the interview was over, making a comment to my assistant Linda, "If the client doesn't hire her, I will".

Yes I was that impressed. She had passed everything we threw at her. And then the criminal background check showed up. She had been arrested twice for prostitution and served time for armed robbery. Right or wrong, neither the client nor I was willing to consider this person any further.

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- d. Credit Background Checks: You may not want to get this report for all positions, but you need to decide which positions require it and make it policy, to avoid exposure to discrimination. As a suggestion, I would require it of any position where the handling or control of money is involved.

We usually think of bookkeeping as the most logical place for theft, but don't make the mistake of thinking that product or inventory is not money. I don't know what you use to pay for inventory but I always had to use money. Therefore, a warehouse, storeroom, a retail location, a restaurant cooler and so on are nothing but vaults. And what do vaults contain...money. Why would you want to give a trusted position like this to a person who is 6 months behind on their car payment?

I have been taken to task for being firm on this. I am not perfect and I'm empathetic to the trials of life, as I have had some and you may have as well. There can be special circumstances for which you and I might make exceptions. But without doing the due diligence you are making blind emotional exceptions.

Case Study No. 6: Out of the 8 businesses I have owned, 2 of them pre-existed and I acquired them. One had an accountant that had been there many years.

She was a wife and mother and since she appeared to know the business and was capable, I kept her on but without doing any due diligence on her or anyone else. Within a year, I discovered missing funds. She broke down during the police interview and confessed.

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Her husband had a gambling addiction and they hadn't been able to be current with their personal debt for a couple of years. A simple credit check would have revealed a problem that you and I can't afford when it comes to money. She got me for a little over 100K, because I made an exception.

- e. Are they a smoker? Yes, if you have a no-smoking workplace, you can still ask that question. In fact if you want to have a no-smoking policy, you can initiate that any time you want. But, if you have current employees that smoke, they must be grandfathered in. There are many questions you cannot ask a candidate, but that is still one you get to ask.
- f. Skills testing can be delegated. And I advise you very strongly to bring them in for testing. The overwhelming majority of resumes are shall we say, enhanced.

I can't tell you the number of times a resume indicated that they had what was needed with Microsoft Excel or spreadsheet skills in general, but when they were tested, they couldn't even create a formula. If the job you have open requires typing or the use of 'mail merge' in Microsoft Word, then test them to see if they really can do what they say they can do.

Case Study No. 7: A particular client of mine had an accounting position open. There were two who made it to the face to face interview with me. One was a recent graduate with a degree in accounting.

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When I asked her what accounting software she was familiar with or that she had used in school, she said, "None". I said, "Pardon me. You have a degree in accounting and you have no experience and are not able to use any accounting software, i.e. QuickBooks, Peachtree or any others." She said, "No". Now I personally learned manual accounting before the invention of accounting software, but I don't know of any organization that keeps their books that way today. What this client would have to do is actually spend the money to send her to continuing education classes to learn how to use accounting software.

The applicable testing I am referring to is available on-line or possibly at a local trade-school or junior college, at the beginner, intermediate or advanced levels. Another option and one that I prefer, is to have them do some actual work at your place of business. This applies to any job, whether it is loading a truck, pulling orders, data entry or making a sales presentation.

You are legally allowed to test them with real work. Of course someone will have to oversee this testing, not leaving them alone and you're not allowed to have them do a full day's work, but just enough to see if they really have the skills they say they have and the skills you need for them to start work.

- g. Personality Testing: I'm sure you have heard of the C. Jung, the Meyer's-Brigg or the one I prefer by David Keirsey.

Why do I recommend personality tests...because they're accurate and effective, and it's another step in the process of matching people to a job, putting further distance between you and an emotional decision!

The experts in this discipline know that employers make three basic mistakes in hiring; first, employees are typically hired for what they know and then fired for who they are. Next, the hiring process is too fast and termination too slow, and the gravest error, a hiring decision based on the resume, or previous experience (what you can see). Previous experience is a weak value to predict future performance or contribution. So, what are the preeminent factors for hiring decisions? Behavioral Characteristics, i.e. who they are as a person, what is their passion, how do they choose, how do they interrelate with others (what you can't see)? There is not right or wrong 'Behavioral Characteristics', just partiality, like preferring coffee or tea. Each type of work has its own 5 to 7 key characteristics crucial to a successful performance profile, and personality testing reveals the ideal fit for all jobs. With this evidence, why would you not conduct a personality test?

- h. Work schedule availability: Your screener must specifically find out if the candidate is able to work the schedule you need.

For instance, if you need someone to work nights and weekends, or even occasional late nights, find out. And if the candidate says, I can sometimes...red flag. That means that when you need them, they may not be able to do so. I realize that life happens and that there are certain things that get in the way of work, but be specific about the work schedule expectations so you won't have a problem later.

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- i. Jump through hoops: It may sound as though I have created a process where candidates have to jump through some hoops just to get a job, and *you would be correct*. If you are overly accommodating to employment candidates, you have set them up for other expectations from you down the line.

Case Study No. 8: My assistant used to set up phone and face to face interview appointments at odd times, i.e. 6:40pm on Thursday or 8:15am on Saturday. If the candidate called the day of or day before to reschedule because 'something came up', they were not offered another time...red flag.

One particular local candidate for our client was given the street address and suite number to my office, along with instructions for private parking in the building. She was told the building was at the corner of 7th and Throckmorton in downtown Fort Worth; a skyscraper that you would have to be blind to miss, plus this was after the development of GPS and Google Maps. The appointment was for 11:10am Friday. She called at 11:20 and said she couldn't find the building. We cut her some slack and helped her find the building. We got another call telling us that she couldn't find the parking entrance. We again helped her with that and waited. Several minutes later, we received yet another call. This time she was in the lobby entrance and instead of asking at the security and reception desk, she called to say that she couldn't remember the floor and the suite number.

She was applying for a 45K contract administration position with a risk management firm. What do you think I said to our client in the assessment of this candidate?

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Case Study No. 9: I spoke with a consultant who works with Chick-Fil-A. You would think that getting a fast food job would be easy, you know, filling out the application and the manager asks, 'when can you start'? No, he said that Chick-Fil-A 'hires hard'.

I had never heard that term before and even though I was pretty sure I knew what that meant, I asked him to elaborate.

He shared with me a few details about their hiring process. He said that applicants had to pass not only an on-site drug test, but underwent a criminal background check and character references, along with some on-site testing and a 3 phase interview process.

He shared with me other aspects of how those stores are managed but one part surprised even me. He said that when each employee arrives for work, they must enter the building having picked up at least one piece of trash from the property, i.e. a cigarette butt, a piece of paper, etc. If the employee failed to do so, the store manager would take them outside and the two together would pick up some trash from around the restaurant. Chick-Fil-A is more profitable than McDonald's and they're not even open on Sunday's. What does that tell you about how Chick-Fil-A is managed?

There is a chain of gas and convenience stores called Quick Trip. They have hundreds of locations in about 11 states. You may be familiar with them. There is one that I frequent for gas and usually go inside for a cup of coffee or bottle of water.

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I have always been impressed with their lack of turnover, their total cleanliness, the way the behind the counter operates and the employee's approach, including mopping the floor or taking out the trash. One day I asked one of their managers about their hiring process. Guess what, it was virtually identical to Chick-Fil-A.

When you have an organization that is managed like that, quality people have a tendency to be drawn to it. I am reminded of one of my quotes in a certain talk I give...which goes like this. **"Others follow people who know where they are going."**

j. Application: The actual job application is important and in some states it may even be legally required. Even if it is not, make sure you get one. However, only applicants who have passed the resume and testing phase are asked to complete a written application. If you have the capability, an on-line application is probably more efficient. And, if it is still possible to keep yourself unknown at this point do so. If not, I understand, but don't be surprise if applicants show up at your doorstep.

And if they do, politely turn them away – *stick to the process!* The application should also include the federal I9 form and all other applicable job application forms.

k. References: Getting the references is your assistant's job. Calling the references is your job, but only on those that pass muster to this point. I would suggest today that you request and get more than the usual number of references.

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Except in very unique circumstances, you should make a practice of requiring that all references are past employers.

If your potential hire has never before been employed, chat with someone who has worked with them in a volunteer or extracurricular capacity.

Talking to friends or family members isn't even worth the time it takes to dial the phone; there's almost no chance that you will be able to get objective feedback. What you want is work related references. Now, if they are currently employed, I understand the probability that they will not want you to contact their current employer, but don't let up on getting references of people who can speak to this person's character and work history.

I like to have 10 references, and which ones do I call? Number 10, 9 and 8. Why, because everyone will list their best at the top of the list, assuming you will not call more than one or two. And often it is the bottom of the list that may reveal what you really want to know.

Be prepared with specific open-ended questions, but be ready to go to where the reference is willing to go and make sure you take good notes. You don't want to have to try and recall this conversation several days later.

Many organizations now put you off to their H.R. or legal department to respond to references. Don't bother; you need to speak to the person they worked for.

When you make a connection with a reference that is willing to talk with you, make the most of your good fortune by asking open-ended questions that call for in-depth answers.

Within reason, give the reference ample opportunity to answer as comprehensively as they are willing.

You'll not only get the benefit of more information, but you'll also have more time to interpret their comments.

It's unrealistic to attempt to provide you with every potential response or follow-up question on this CD based on what the reference may say, but your script may go something like this;

Mr. Jones, my name is John Doe, the owner of XYZ Company. Melinda Smith is applying for a position with my company and she has listed you as a reference. May I have a couple of minutes of your time in order to ask you confidentially about Melinda?

If the reference says that they can't talk at this time...red flag. They may not want to be on record for what they might say, but even if it's legit, don't reschedule, give thanks, say goodbye, and go on the number 9, 8 and 7 on the list.

Here are some suggested questions to the reference you should consider;

Question 1: What is your work related experience with Melinda?

Did Melinda actually do work *with* this person or was he / she an observer?

Question 2: What was Melinda's reason for leaving your company?

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The answer to this question is obvious, if she was 'let-go', find out why? Legally, they don't have to tell you, but you'll probably want take her off the list.

Question 3: What do you think Melinda's career goal might be?

This reference may truly not know, but a follow-up question might be – what do you think of Melinda's future?

Question 4: What do you recall as the most negative characteristic about Melinda?

Of course it depends on what the negative is, but if it is serious enough, you may want to move on.

Question 5: Is there anything else I should take into consideration before I hire Melinda?

A positive comment may just be this person's way of not wanting anything negative to get back to Melinda, but nonetheless there may be valuable input here.

To this point the resumes have been screened, social media and google have been examined, skills testing has been passed, the work-schedule availability has been verified, job personality tests have been given, the application forms are in hand and you have spoken to the references. Now you're down to the chosen few who have been approved for interview.

6. Phone Interview

The phone interview cannot be delegated and is conducted by you. The purpose of the phone interview is to simply have a conversation.

After all they have passed everything else.

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Depending on the position they are applying for, this candidate's ability to have a conversation and how they conduct themselves over the phone varies in its importance. For me, it was always very important regardless of the position.

Let me ask, are you willing to accept a person with really bad communication skills, has no sense of propriety, cracks off color comments, or, well, you fill in the bank for you.

Here are some suggested phone interview questions you might consider;

Question 1: What have you been doing since your last job?

I have been surprised at the answer to this question, i.e. went to Cozumel and hung out on the beach or I'm playing more golf and so on. What you want to hear is something about career development.

Question 2: Why are you not at your last job?

If this candidate points to their own shortcomings, you may have a winner. If they blame everyone and everything for their situation, take note.

Question 3: What was the worst problem you encountered at work?

It's sort of the same thing here, look for who's to blame. If the response indicates that there was no major problem or contains some humor, that's good.

Question 4: Describe your ideal boss.

If through research, they describe you, I'm sure you'll be flattered but surely you can see through that.

In their description of someone else, did they mention any character traits...if so, that's a good sign?

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Question 5: How many jobs have you applied for since you have been out of work?

If the number is large, that can be both good and bad. It may indicate that this person has a stick-to-it-ive-ness and willing to work at getting a job, or is always being turned down for a reason. Same with if the number is too small, it may indicate a lack of determination or, although it's doubtful, the positions they are qualified for are few and far between.

Listen carefully; in your opinion are they being open and honest? Do they blame others for their situation? Does why they are not working make sense? Do they seem to be able to fit into your organization's culture and will they be able to be considered to have long term potential?

7. In-Person Interview

Again, this interview is conducted by you and you alone. When ownership involves others as part of the interview process or hiring by committee, you expose yourself to not getting the right talent.

You're looking for a 10, a real winner for your organization, regardless of whether it is an entry level or management position.

Whether it is acknowledged or not, others are at least subconsciously assessing this person for other reasons, often based on likeability, or will this person be a threat to my position, etc. Even if your hiring committee is made up of 10's; 10's hire 9's, 9's hire 8's, 8's hire 7's and so on, and I want a 10, no matter what.

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If I ever had a manager come to me and say, 'I can't work with that person you hired', typically the problem would not be the new hire but the manager. And, after the manager and I had a conversation, problem solved.

Case Study No. 10: When I perform a 'Business Analysis' for a client, that process includes my interviewing all key personnel within the organization. During one such analysis, I was interviewing the 'Office Manager' of a company in the aerospace industry. I discovered she was in the process of interviewing for a staff 'order processing administrator'. I casually asked the manager, "What type of person are you looking for?" Her response, "Someone who will do what I tell them to do". Now I don't know about you, but that sounded more like a 'drill-sergeant', than a manager.

As a side-note, about two weeks later I brought the evidence to the client that she had been embezzling from the company. Naturally, she was terminated that day.

For those reasons and a host of others, I never let anyone in my businesses do the hiring, including entry level positions, which included companies with over 100 employees.

Some say that an interview shouldn't take longer than an hour. I know your time is valuable, but this is important and shouldn't be restricted by an arbitrary time limit. As part of the in-person interview, I have even taken candidates to lunch, out for coffee or an ice-cream. This often gave me additional insight. How they handled table manners, the wait staff or just letting their guard down and being more relaxed, they may reveal something useful, both positive or negative.

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I recommend that you meet this person first at your place of business and not in a restaurant or coffee shop. First, at those places you're not in control of the environment, so there are constant distractions and the background noise or music is always too loud, making it difficult to communicate confidentially and to really focus on their response to your questions.

If you do not have a semi-closed off area at your company you may consider renting an executive office or hotel meeting room. The problem here is that you have added an extra step, because you still need to have them come to your place of business. Wouldn't you want to see where you are going to work and meet some co-workers? Of course, we all would expect that.

Regarding meeting co-workers, millennials want to meet everyone on the team, where others just feel the need to meet who they will be reporting to.

Next, the video taping of the interview is becoming very common today. Applicants are accustomed to the use of Skype or any video feed and it's almost expected for screening efficiency if nothing else. But even if you are having the interview on site, I would video tape the interview, especially for any sales, customer service or any position where this job required customer interface.

This is really handy when you are considering more than just a couple of people for the position. If you have a business partner who was not able to attend the interview, this is truly needed, or if you must, this enables you to show the interviews to a team leader.

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Why depend totally on your memory when you can replay the interview as many times as needed. It's kind of like a coach reviewing game film.

No matter where you are meeting, if it is a person of the opposite sex, meet in a place with open glass where others can peer in or at least make sure the door is open.

Also, I always scheduled the interview appointment allowing for about 30 minutes prior to when I would actually meet with the candidate. Since this person has jumped through the hoops and has passed all qualifications and testing to date, the in-person interview is the time where you show them the Position Description or Task and Duties agreement for the position they are applying for. I did this while they were sitting in the reception area, hence the extra 30 minutes. This gave them ample opportunity to become fully aware of the job functions and to read the acknowledgement and acceptance agreements which they will have to sign. I also gave them a copy of the Personnel Policy Manual to review at the same time.

Caveat: Never, under any circumstances, give them a copy of any document to take with them. Not that there is anything wrong in the content, but this delays decisions. And anyone who says, 'I'd like to think about it, or I'd like some time to further review the material'...red flag, and more than likely this person is not for you.

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When we actually met and the interview began, I would first ask them to discuss and ask any questions they may have about what they have read in both the Position Description and the Personnel Policy Manual. The salary or wage for this position is also revealed at this time, although that may have been part of the original job posting.

Take the time to make certain that they fully understand the job expectations, how much and how they will be paid, how they will be reviewed and any particular personnel policies that you want especially draw their attention to.

When I felt comfortable that they truly had a good grasp of all that, I drew their attention to the two forms they would have to sign if the position was offered to them and they accepted; the Position Description Acknowledgement and Acceptance or the Task and Duties Agreement depending on their position *and* the Receipt and Acknowledgement of the Personnel Policy Manual.

Reasonable questions about these documents is understandable, but anyone who has issues as to whether they will sign the acknowledgement statements or not...red flag. Let them know right then and there that it is a requirement to work at your company and no signature, no job.

Don't *even* consider making an exception, no matter how bad you want this candidate. Not only do you have a discrimination issue on your hands, *non-compliance* will always be an issue with this person.

And now for a few other suggested interview questions. The importance of their answer will vary depending on the position. The higher the position in the company, the more importance you may want to put on their preparation and quality of answers. Again, this list is not all inclusive, but here are some suggested in-person interview questions you might consider;

Question 1: Forget the resume; ask them about their career goals.

One of the responses to this inquiry I was always disappointed to hear was, "I just need a job". Hopefully what you get here is some idea that this person has goals or some idea of a plan for their future.

Question 2: Tell me about your family, what was it like growing up?

Most of us came from dysfunctional families at some level and some have had it really rough. But pay attention to disrespectful talk. This person may have difficulty with authority, responsibility or being accountable, and will be bringing those struggles to your organization. On the other hand, people who talk fondly of growing up and their family despite some difficult time are for the most part solid folks.

Question 3: What are you currently reading?

What they are reading is not as important as whether or not they are reading anything. People who are actively engaged in reading have a tendency to be better thinkers as well as other positive traits.

Question 4: Tell me about your hobbies.

If their response is 'gaming'; not that there is anything wrong with 'gaming', but if that's they're only hobby, possibly unless they're in I.T., may indicate you've got a couch potato on your hands.

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Again not being judgmental as to what their hobby might be, but people with no outside interests tend to be non-movers.

Question 5: What interests you about this position?

A deer in the headlights look or a response that says, I just need a job, indicates a lack of thought or preparedness for the interview.

Question 6: Why should I hire you?

Hopefully you'll get something a little creative here, other than, 'I'd do a good job or I'm a good worker'. A statement like, 'I want to make a contribution and grow with your company' would be good. Even a response with a little humor or self-confidence could be good too, like 'you can't afford not to hire me'. You get the idea.

Question 7: Tell me about a time you had to deal with a difficult person, including not at work. How did you handle the situation?

If you hear about blaming others and any rough handling of the problem, be careful.

Question 8: If I were to call [name no. 10 on their list of references], what would he / she say your strengths and weaknesses are?

What you don't want to hear here is, 'I don't know'. What you want to hear is, 'I believe they would say...', it doesn't make much difference whether it's positive or negative, but a confidence in having an opinion of what might be said about them is important.

Question 9: What tools or habits do you use to stay organized?

Like question 5 & 7, what you don't want to hear is that they have none. Even if it's just one thing, there should be a confident answer to this question.

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In addition to assessing their answers to your questions, allow me to offer some other things to observe and evaluate about a candidate.

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A. While waiting in your reception area, were they surfing the net, checking email or texting?

We have to assume that this interview is important to them, right? If they do email and text at the job interview, do you think that will stop them when they should be working? If their mind is somewhere else when it counts, look for your company not to be a priority.

B. Did their cell phone vibrate during your time together?

Similar to A above, if this interview is important, wouldn't they eliminate all potential distractions before-hand.

C. Did they dress appropriate to the job? In fact, you may require that they come to the interview dressed as though they were coming to work.

We all like to make a great first impression, but a person showing up in a suit and tie for a warehouse order processor job is a little out of skew. On the other hand, a person applying for an account manager or outside sales position that shows up for the interview in jeans and a t-shirt is out of skew as well.

D. Did they offer their hand when meeting you or anyone else?

Regardless of gender or industry, this is common business etiquette. The newbie should try to be the first to offer their hand. Was the handshake welcoming and with confidence or did you feel like you just grabbed a limp wet rag?

NOTES

E. Were they able to make consistent eye contact?

Anyone who can't look you in the eye...red flag; even the shyest among us should make consistent eye contact.

F. Did they ask for coffee or water *before* you had a chance to offer?

Again, this is a common courtesy to wait to be offered. Asking first may indicate a certain uncomfortable boldness, or simply a person who wants to be served rather than serve.

G. Did they demonstrate common courtesies and manners, i.e. please, thank you, etc.?

Not using the correct fork at dinner, not opening the door for others or saying please, thank you, etc. is common because they weren't taught...but it's still ill-mannered, no matter where you come from.

H. We are all a little on edge in a new environment, but were they overly nervous and make excuses for certain things?

People who are not able to control their nervousness may not be the best team member overall. I'm a little shy myself, but never without the ability to fit in.

I. In general, what did your gut tell you?

This is a tough one. Here I am telling you to take your emotions out of this process and now I'm suggesting you listen to your instincts. Although what your gut is telling you should not be the final arbiter, it is nonetheless a component of your decision. Let me say it this way...even if all else is good to great, but you just can't get passed your gut feeling...go with your gut.

Caveat: As I have stated from the beginning of this program, the problem is that employers make the mistake of having no system *other* than their gut or the gut of others.

8. Job Acknowledgement and Acceptance

This must be done in person and not over the phone, and this is not something that can be delegated.

1. Wages and benefits are usually first of mind to all new hires, but the candidate should have already been aware of that information before this *formal* job signing. Nonetheless, once a candidate is aware that they have been *selected* for a job offer, they may feel that they have some leverage to negotiate the salary or hourly wage. If this happens, do not cave in, stick to the original 'Profit Plan' job wage assignment. If you cave, stay tuned for other negotiation and *possibly* with other employees. If you think employee pay is confidential, I've got some lake front property in Southwest Texas I want to sell you.
2. Get all documents signed *before* they are on the payroll or perform any work. If you run out of forms, don't let them begin work assuming that you'll get that done tomorrow. I can't tell you how many empty personnel jackets I've seen, where everyone assumed that someone else had gotten the necessary signatures. Anyone performing work *before* they are enrolled and accepted by your Worker's Compensation Insurance or any other enrollment process exposes you and your organization to legally binding responsibilities.

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3. Greetings all around; take the new employee through the entire facilities again, meeting everyone possible, but especially where there will be future interaction.
4. Time with Team Leader: If the day is not over, let them spend time with their team leader, manager or supervisor. This may be valuable to help 'jump start' their fitting in with everyone and the work place, as well as not having to do all that on their first day.

I recommend that you re-listen to this audio program and stop the CD until you have completed whatever it takes to implement the step that was just described. Then, continue the CD, stopping it again until you've completed and executed the next step and so on. If you want to hire winner's and have them waiting in the wings, establish and execute this system today. Once you have completed and implemented all the steps listed in the program, you will now have a permanent system for 'Hiring Talent'.

Finally and in closing, I'd like to leave you with this thought. Employers hire a candidate based on what they can do or have done historically, and later they fire them for *who* they are.

So, I encourage you to take hiring very serious. I know the basics provided here in this program 'Hiring Talent 101' will help you in your efforts to hire 10's, real winners.

This is Ron Hequet wishing you 'Profit and Cash' success.

Ron Hequet