

## **Recruiting and Interviewing Practices to Build Your Team**

Finding the best people who will fit your business and culture is difficult and an opportunity. Challenges like; how to recruit, how to interview, who to hire are surmounting in the everyday business of an HME Provider.

There are proven strategies to better recruiting, interviewing, and hiring. With so many changes taking place in our industry we must remove the challenges and barriers to these areas once and for all.

Together we will explore **Big Pond Recruiting, Interviewing is a Learned Skill, the Recruiting and Interviewing Process, STAR Interviewing Technique, and Interview Rating System**

The talent pool is still good; you just need to know how to fish.

Often in our industry we do what I call Pulse Hiring, you read that right, Pulse not impulse. Pulse because if the candidate has a Pulse we typically hire them. We put an ad in the paper, cross your fingers and wait? Take a look at some web site every few days searching for online resumes? When you fish, you bait your hook, cast your line and wait. It's passive. You hope some good fish comes along and bites. Recruiting new employees shouldn't be like fishing. It takes more than a coffee can full of night crawlers to get the best team assembled.

### **Big Pond Recruiting**

Let's take a look into the Big Pond of Recruiting and review some techniques that prove to be very positive. Recruiting is not a passive event although we treat it like one. It seems like the only time we recruit is when we have an opening. Big Pond Recruiting happens even when you don't have an opening, it's perpetual. Big Pond Recruiting is not an event but a process.

Big Pond Recruiting encourages and provides incentives to existing team members to actively provide recommendations of friends and business acquaintances who they believe have the proven capability to join the team. A department head or leader in the business should continually provide information about openings and also the need for resumes and applications for specific job descriptions. Consider changing your recruiting search every other month. Look at the job descriptions that you have had the most turnover. These should be rotated through more frequently. Resumes and applications should be reviewed every quarter and collated by candidates and non candidates. This will keep your pond full and as the need arises you can go fishing with a better chance of landing the right person for your job.

Having a solid relationship with several organizations in your area is also a key recruiting technique. Working with **Employment and placement agencies** can prove to be very valuable. When recruiting technical, professional, or clinical staff consider broadening this relationship beyond your borders. Often you will find Big Pond Candidates outside of your immediate area that would be willing to relocate.

**Placement bureaus of high schools, business schools and colleges and also clinical schools** broaden your ability to land some terrific candidates. Your involvement in this area should not just be when you need someone. Often these organizations are looking for businesses and professionals to speak at meetings, sponsor events. I realize this does not increase your referral base, but it will increase your talent pool. Work with these organizations to identify areas of education and training that are required or highly recommended for specific job descriptions. They will value your input and possibly redirect efforts in their curriculum to achieve these goals. This benefits the student, the business that hires them and the industry.

Employment fairs are a great recruiting ground. You would be amazed at the candidates that you may come across. You will be able to review candidates for every conceivable level in your business. Consider being prepared at the Employee Fair to not just take applications, but also take time off of the floor to interview some of the more impressive candidates.

**Help-wanted ads in local and area newspapers** will never go completely away. Often times you will receive resumes from candidates that are currently employed by your competition, let alone those who really do not fit the job description. You will need to dedicate time to accurately and productively review each resume and again collate candidates from non candidates.

**Trade and industrial associations** are a great source of networking. There are tremendous opportunities to identify key candidates who currently work for your competition or are in a different arena within homecare. Always keep your eyes open for key candidates who can take your business to the next level. Take time to have coffee or a coke, build trust and rapport, understand their current role and responsibilities, and if you sense an opportunity to bring them on your team discuss it.

**Notices in professional journals and magazines** will attract high level team members who will add significantly to your team. When placing this notices, ask the publication for circulation size and a state breakdown to understand not just who but where this will be viewed. You may be a west coast company and the publication has a limited subscription base in that area, but has a large volume of subscribers on the east coast. Is this the right publication to place your notice? I would ask is position you have open one that someone would move across the country for. The use of professional association web sites is another great recruiting ground. You again will need to do your homework, but this is quickly becoming the Pond to Go Fishing in.

Continually fill your Pond with Candidates. Make Recruiting a Process and not an Event and you too can be a Big Pond Recruiter.

### **Interviewing is a Learned Skill**

There is nothing worse for the upfront reputation and impression of your business for employment candidates than a poorly executed interview. But that's what happens all the time. Why?

- The Person does not want to do the interview
- Does not have the time
- Has never been trained

Going through all of the Big Pond Recruiting techniques can get the right candidates to your door. You still need to interview them to match what is on the resume and application with their capabilities, experience, personality, and if there is a fit within your business.

A good interview always starts with two factors. A clear understanding of the position that is open and the requirements to fulfill that role and a complete review of the candidates' application and resume. Your role as the interviewer is to have completed all of this prior to the candidate interview. Too often we escort the candidate into our office and then ask them to give us a moment while we review their application and resume. WRONG. You immediately show this candidate the priority the job description and they are for you.

After you understand the job description and the candidate's application and resume, now you need to understand what your role as an interviewer is.

- Be on time
- Exhibit a relaxed and comfortable style
- Understands the selection criteria
- Greets the candidate with a firm handshake and uses the candidates first name
- Stay open minded
- Uses simple clear language
- Shows an interest in the candidates background
- Views the candidate as a valued customer
- Instruct the candidate as to next steps
- Thank the candidate for their interest in the position

As a Trained Interviewer you must be prepared with questions that will lead the candidate into a deeper understanding of the job and their possible role. Questions that will help you make a clear decision regarding the best candidate and fit for the position and your company.

The Interview Process should be broken down into three phases;

- Introduction Phase ( 2-5 minutes)
  - Interviewer tries to connect with the candidate, find something in common with the candidate
  - Try to make the candidate feel relaxed
  - Assess the candidate ability to engage in conversation
  - Make certain there are no distractions or interruptions
- Qualification Phase (35 – 40 minutes)

- Ask specific questions to see if there is a fit with the performance criteria for the job: Personal Characteristics, achievements, goals, abilities, aptitudes, skills, qualifications
- Ask for specific examples and go deeper with probing questions
- Assess candidate's enthusiasm level and desire to work for your organization.
  
- Position / Organization Information Phase (10-15 minutes)
  - Share relevant information about the organization (philosophy and goals)
  - Explain organizational expectations and specific requirements of the Job that is open
  - Consider providing a Job Description for the Candidate
  - Ask if there are any questions
  - Explain the next steps

Following this process will afford both the candidate and the Interviewer a clear path to identify if this is a fit. The interviewer may consider providing an outline of the interview so to further relax the candidate. This allows the candidate to know what is coming.

### **The Recruiting and Interviewing Process**

These are inseparable tasks as it relates to identifying and qualifying good candidates and employees for your business.

There is a process that is widely recommended for Hiring New Employees that allows for the process to work for you and not against you. The following is recommended as a proven hiring process. There may be steps that your business does not currently take or desire to take. That is your choice, however, if your current system is not working what do you have to lose in trying this process?

- Job Description (read and understood)
- Application and Resume
- Phone Screen
- Assessments
- Personal Interview
- Reference Check / Credentials Verified

- Position Offered (pending drug screen/ physical)
- New Team Member Orientation

Consider adding one more layer to this process. Whether you have a 2 or 3 step process to hiring, whenever the candidate makes it to the final stage before a decision will be made, have the candidate and others from the department they will join go to lunch together. This environment will prove to be a great investment and clarifier. The investment is in both the candidate and the department if they join your team. The clarification comes as the candidate opens up to their future fellow team mates.

### **STAR Interviewing Technique**

How do you go about discovering whether or not a candidate has the skills you need? You don't just ask, "Do you work well in teams?" Everyone can say yes. You need to ask them to tell you about when, how, where they worked in a team-what did that look like? What did the team accomplish? When were they most successful (or least successful)? What happened when goals weren't met? And so on. The candidate must be able to give you a "situation" where they were part of a team, then they need to tell you about the "task" they had to perform or the goal they needed to achieve, then the "actions" they took personally-what did they do as a part of the team to achieve the goal (or block the other's efforts...) and finally the "results" of their efforts (goals achieved, projects completed, conflicts resolved). This is called the "STAR" technique-situation, task, action, and results.

- S=Situation
- T=Task
- A=Actions taken
- R=Results of their actions

*"Tell me about a time when..."*

## **Interview Rating System**

Having an Interview Rating System allows you to differentiate between several qualified candidates to find the “best” candidate. Focus on recent events (how long ago did this take place?), impact (positive or negative), and similarity to the target job (transferability).

A suggested rating scale is as follows:

- 1 = Much less than acceptable
- 2 = Less than acceptable
- 3 = Acceptable
- 4 = More than acceptable
- 5 = Much more than acceptable

Any rating less than a 3 automatically disqualifies a candidate. This rating system will also help if there are multiple interviewers as you can easily “compare notes” in each area and be able to spot any discrepancies. And, if the candidate receives an objective overall rating based on their ability to demonstrate skill levels, there again is no reason to question the decision. A hiring decision is made on the candidate’s demonstrated ability/skill level. If they cannot provide examples that demonstrate that they have utilized a skill in the past, they are not qualified. If they provide multiple answers, this shows consistency (and deserves a higher rating); if they demonstrate transferability and positive impact-again this should yield a higher rating. If they give a poor example, the rating should be lower for that desired skill.

Remember Recruiting and Interviewing are learned skills. They both should be processes and not just events for your business and should fit your corporate culture. By using these guides your recruiting and interviewing will produce a team for the future of your business.