

Hiring The Person You Really Need

Whether you are looking for particular characteristics in a candidate or if you want to make sure you are coming off correctly, here are some tips to find the candidate you want or to get the jobs you want.

1. Want someone who is hands on – Ask the candidate to take you through a project they ran step-by-step. Probe as to who did what, who did the candidate direct to do what. Listen for “I asked the person to do....”, “I hired....”, “The team....”. This is not what you want to hear from a hands-on person!
2. Need a strategic thinker – Review business plans. Present the candidate with a scenario and ask them what they think. How do they see that scenario moving the company/division? Keep in mind the candidate might not be familiar with your company or industry but they should be able to provide you with a sound answer. Logic counts!
3. Need a writer – Reviewing samples is fine but what you really want to look at are the drafts. How much editing did the candidate need. A writing test will help you decide if the candidate knows the principals of grammar and writing and how long they take to write it. Drafts will show you how much help they get on a regular basis and how much is their own. Some editing is fine, watch for re-writes!
4. Need an entrepreneur – Ask about growth and accomplishments. Ask about staff size. An entrepreneur keeps moving/growing. Large staffs get in his/her way!
5. Need someone to communicate to outside publics – Describe a product or a scenario and ask the candidate who they think the audience(s) is and how they would reach them. Their ideas might sound wild but you are listening for variety. Imagination and energy are essential!
6. Need a good staff manager – Have the candidate interview with all of your staff at one time. Don't give any advance warning. Is the candidate taken aback? Or, ask for more information/time? Comfortable or Uncomfortable? You want comfort!
7. Need good budgeting skills – Review budgets the candidate has prepared. Ask questions about line items and how they arrived at that number. Do they have a sound answer or was that the number given to them? Speak about an event/budget you have, ask if the candidate has and ideas on trimming costs. A good budget is put together by someone who understands the business!
8. Need sales ability – Question a candidate on cold calling. If they don't like it or don't do it, watch out. Your company may not make cold calls but you want someone who is not afraid of making contacts by any means. Scardy cats don't sell!
9. Need someone who is going to stay with your company – Good Luck! Everyone's needs/wants change. Ask candidates where they want to be in 6 months, 1 year, 2 years etc. Review how their expectations meet with your culture. Remember to ask at regular intervals!
10. Need a change agent – Look at a candidate's volunteer background. While no guarantee, active people like and can handle a changing environment. They are active volunteers because they want to do

something different. Make sure you have an “active” volunteer and not a committee person!

Finding the perfect candidate is hard work but spending more time on the specifics that you need will help!