

LESSONS LEARNED FROM 60 YEARS OF EMPLOYEE SELECTION

1. **Managers need to spend more time thinking through the results that need to be achieved in the job** before they start reviewing candidates. Doing so allows you to look for the candidates whose strengths match what is most important for the job.
2. Managers need to have the courage and commitment to say "no" when a candidate does not show the qualities necessary for succeeding. When in doubt, keep looking. **Expedient hires seldom have a long shelf life.**
3. Making successful selection decisions requires patience, time, and hard work. **Managers too often want to fill openings too quickly** so they can get on with their "real job."
4. **It is important to have choices when you are making a hiring decision.** Having a minimum of three candidates allows you to contrast candidates' strengths and weaknesses. (There are no perfect candidates!) It also gives you viable options when your first choice decides not to take the job.
5. **You can learn a lot about candidates by observing how they handle the pressures of the selection and interview process.** If they are difficult and have unreasonable demands, or do not treat lower level staff with respect, there is a high likelihood of this negative behavior being more troublesome once they are on board.
6. For key hires, **it is important to meet with candidates multiple times** to observe the consistency of their behavior and allow them more than one setting to present themselves. Some candidates are slower to warm up but go on to do an excellent job, whereas other candidates have good role-playing skills for the first interview, but lack substance and the ability to sustain a positive interaction over multiple interviews.
7. **Critical thinking skills cannot be predicted or assumed as a result of an individual's experience or educational background, nor can they be easily measured in the interview.**
8. Sophisticated **job candidates with good social and communication skills are adept at hiding their negative qualities in the interview**, while the less socially skilled are often assumed to have fewer skills than they actually do.
9. **Very often, top level executives do not have a lot of experience or training in interviewing** and, as a result, are not very good at it. They should be involved in the interviewing whenever possible, but may not be the best source of accurate information, **and should be careful about overruling staff** that have a different perspective about a candidate.
10. **The best way to find employees who have the qualities that the company is seeking is to talk with individuals who you know already have these qualities.** Ask them who they might recommend.
11. **Accuracy is greatly increased by combining interviewing with psychometric testing, references, and background checks.** When all of these sources of information line up, there is a better chance of the candidate being successful.

