



MAKING LEMONADE OUT OF LEMONS: WHAT TO DO WHEN A NEW EMPLOYEE IS STRUGGLING

How often have you hired candidates with all the right credentials and experience, yet who do not quickly adapt to the position for which they were hired? Once they are onboard, what options do you have? You can quickly put them on a performance improvement plan. Or, you let them go and hope to do a better job of selecting their replacement. Neither option is good and both tend to be expensive in time and money.

There is a better way. If you have utilized employment testing in the hiring process, you can talk to your provider to try to learn what you both have missed in the hiring process. You can discuss what you both know about the employee and utilize the testing data and your knowledge of the new employee's actual performance to create a customized Individual Development Plan (IDP) to help them with their onboarding and development. This is a better option than the wishful thinking that maybe the employee will grow into the job.

If testing was not conducted at the time of hiring, it can be conducted when a new employee is struggling. Employment testing can ferret out underlying root causes of limitations that are compromising assimilation and work performance. By following employment testing with an IDP, specific weaknesses can be targeted in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

Development Plans offer specific ideas for skill development and behavioral change that includes coaching and specific activities that employees can engage in to more quickly improve performance on the job. Customized IDPs are critical for success in any employee development effort. Such training efforts need to focus on skills required, as well as on specific behavioral competencies that the employee needs to develop and utilize.



Employees will need their managers to coach them on the IDP. It is the manager's responsibility to discuss expectations, assess and coach performance, and give appropriate feedback while reinforcing desired actions and learning. It is the employee's responsibility to take necessary actions to improve performance and to achieve expected job results. With IDPs in place, there exists a means of establishing development expectations and monitoring progress in achieving those expectations.

In today's employment market, it can be difficult to find candidates who can handle essential parts of a given job even if they appear to have successfully handled a similar job in another company. Employment tests can identify a candidate's actual strengths and weaknesses, without having to assume success in previous positions. IDPs can "come to the rescue" when new employees are struggling. With dedicated execution of the IDP and good coaching from one's manager, an employer can make lemonade out of lemons.

To monitor progress in IDPs, consider using PSP's Leadership Dashboard software www.leadership-dashboard.com. For more information on this progress monitoring tool, contact your PSP Industrial Psychologist.