



ADVANCED RECRUITMENT, SELECTION & DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES using EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE BEHAVIOURAL TECHNIQUES

A complete personal development programme – starting at job selection

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Summary:

- o Increase the chances of employing the right people
- o Establish development needs of new recruits before employing them
- o Obtain a joint commitment with them to work on their development needs
- o Provide a Personal Development Plan programme for each individual to ensure development happens in parallel with achieving the objectives of the company
- o And finally, increase effectiveness and retention

Behavioural techniques concentrate on assessing actual recent past behaviours and experiences to predict future potential.

There is clear emerging evidence that these behavioural interviewing and assessment techniques are a more effective method of recruitment, selection and development than traditional ones, with research showing recruitment retention increasing by as much as 40%.

LeaderShape's experience suggests similar or better levels of improvement in retention levels.

However, LeaderShape further supplements these advanced techniques by using Emotional Intelligence (EI) criteria to create a unique approach to recruitment, selection and employee development.

It is as important to identify an individual's development needs during the recruitment process as it is their strengths. One can then assess whether the development process for the individual is feasible and a sound return on investment. All new employees have development needs so is it not better to identify them during the recruitment process than get a surprise 6 months down the road?

By identifying before recruitment the behavioural development needs and the training required, one can obtain a commitment from that individual to accept the development programme as a condition of employment. In this way gaps in ability are seen as potential for improvement rather than weaknesses and then everything is out on the table and transparent to all concerned.

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Identifying the EI Behavioural Criteria required by the Company:

First of all, the company (or division of a large corporation) must identify the desired competencies and behaviours that are required. Traditionally, “competencies” have been defined as the skills required “to perform a job” such as “report writing skills” for administrative staff or “negotiating skills” for sales people. However these types of technical competencies, although important to do a job, only provide a threshold of capability and can often be taught through traditional methods.

It is no use knowing excellent negotiating tactics, however, if you don’t have the correct behaviours (such as understanding the other person’s perspective) to make them effective. Hence the modern definition of “Competency” is to provide superior performance in a particular area.

This superior performance requires the use of appropriate behaviours in different circumstances and when performing different tasks. These behaviours are much more difficult to learn than the skills mentioned above but nevertheless can be learned using advanced work-based learning techniques including coaching and reflection. It requires a person to learn new behaviours and practice them (often in a safe environment) until they become a habit.

However, until recently behavioural criteria have been based on a random combination of behaviours and definitions varying greatly from one expert or methodology to another.

The recently developed science of Emotional Intelligence (EI), however, has enabled us to provide a much more rigorous structure to behavioural criteria and to incorporate them into a complete criteria list including IQ and motivational competencies.

The methodology used by LeaderShape is to first identify the core EI competencies expected by all employees (usually consistent with the core values of the company) – usually about 5; the extra competencies required for a particular role or function – usually about 8; and the further competencies required by leaders & managers in the organisation – usually a further 8 or so.

This rigorous structure enables the company to identify competencies of the individual at the selection and recruitment stage as well as identifying the development needs of that individual for their current role and future career.

In addition a company should identify competencies that need to be part of the core induction and training programme of every individual coming into the company.

For example, in our experience “emotional self-awareness” is an important behavioural criteria for individuals to perform at their peak. Yet the reality is that if this capability was a requirement of employment, not many people would be employed as it is a rare commodity. Therefore, the development of emotional self-awareness can be a core module in a company’s induction and training programme.

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The Interview Process:

Behavioural interviewing concentrates on assessing actual past behaviours and experiences and using these to predict future potential.

Once the key behavioural criteria are identified, a series of open questions are developed for each criteria. These provide a database of standard questions for the interviewers which are often customised and modified for specific roles. A rating system is used to compare between candidates.

The focus is on thoughts, feelings, emotions and actions in past situations (the more recent the better). This method is much better at getting to the truth. In traditional interviewing (where the concentration is on hypothetical questions or asking how a candidate would do something if they were in the job being applied for) it is much easier for a candidate to embellish an imaginary action than to exaggerate what actions s/he has actually taken. Behavioural interviewing helps us avoid the “fog” of personal impressions that often colour our opinions and allow us to focus upon actions and behaviours that actually happened.

However, there are hindrances to the effectiveness of these techniques. The main problem comes from inexperienced and poorly trained interviewers and where the desired competencies and behaviours have not been thought through sufficiently well, or where the questions have not been aligned correctly with the competencies and behaviours desired. The validity and implementation of organisational values also needs to be considered to ensure these really are being “acted out” and not just a corporate mantra.

It is also critical that the interviewer is him/herself emotionally intelligent in the areas of being aware of self and others, and especially in awareness of others’ behaviours. Finally, the interviewer must be able to evaluate the responses objectively to make the process of value. All the above requires both experience and attention to ongoing personal development.

The Recruitment Contract:

All candidates interviewed should be given feedback.

For the candidate the company wishes to appoint, the feedback should include all the strengths identified during the interview as well as the development areas identified. It is particularly important that the candidate acknowledges these development needs and commits to working on improving in these particular areas. At the same time the company must commit to providing the training and development support to enable the improvement to happen. This mutual commitment prior to actually agreeing and signing the employment contract means that both the employee and employer acknowledge the need for development in certain areas and forms part of the contract. This process significantly increases retention rates and hence reduces the recruitment

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and training costs of a replacement. New recruits should also be told in advance what general training they will receive in advance of signing a contract in order to reduce unknowns.

Candidates who are interviewed but not selected should also receive honest and objective feedback as to why they have not been chosen. It should be done in a way that explains that *on this day for this position* they were not the best candidate in terms of competencies. Feedback about the competencies (both skill and EI related where they would need to improve before being considered for a similar job) is a fair return for the time and effort the candidate has put into the process. Our experience is that using this approach, even candidates who do not get chosen suffer less of a confidence setback and hold the company in higher esteem.

The Development Process:

It is highly recommended that every company implement a Personal Development Plan (PDP) programme for all employees. The programme should include:

-  A full review of performance in the skills and behaviours required for the position
-  A review of all other issues affecting the individual
-  Setting of individual objectives and actions for the year
-  Agreement of the personal development goals and the resources required to achieve the above

It is recommended that the PDP is not directly related to salary and bonus review.

Note: The full details of the advanced LeaderShape PDP programme can be found in separate documentation.

The candidate selected should develop their first PDP with their manager within a few weeks of joining the company, although the first PDP may be for less than a year. This should be after any initial induction and training and possibly immediately after the completion of the probation period. An important part of the input will be the development needs identified during the interview process. The PDP should contain details of how these identified EI behaviours will be improved. A good programme reviews progress on a quarterly basis.

LeaderShape provides individual, peer group and team development programmes through coaching and facilitation. These programmes can be implemented in such a way that the knowledge can be transferred to in-house trainers in order to create a sustainable process to support the ongoing development of potential talent.

Note: Details of LeaderShape's EI and Leadership Development programmes are available on request

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