

MarketWise



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Identify Winning Qualities in Your Employees

Top employees are like athletes - motivated, well trained people who are willing to make personal sacrifices for the team.

Certainly a competitive nature is important, but it doesn't work well for your company unless it's accompanied by a deep sense of loyalty and responsibility. If you want to infuse your company with a winning spirit, look for these gold-medal winning qualities when you interview new hires or promote from within:

- 1. Gold medal employees go above and beyond expectations.** They don't stop when they meet the minimum goals for their jobs - they strive to set new records.
- 2. Gold medal employees offer solutions, not problems.** They don't just say to the boss, "You have a problem." Instead, you hear, "We have a problem - let's see if I can figure a way to solve it."
- 3. Gold medal employees bounce back.** When they fail, they don't let it get them down. They admit the mistake and find ways to fix it.
- 4. Gold medal employees don't make excuses.** They don't blame others for their own errors. They take responsibility.
- 5. Gold medal employees finish tasks on time.** They set interim deadlines for long-range tasks and they don't panic when the work is due.
- 6. Gold medal employees shoot for a good record, not perfection.** They know their capabilities. People who seek perfection tend to get frustrated and put

themselves under so much pressure that they rarely accomplish what they're capable of doing.

7. Gold medal employees think ahead. They try to plan for all possibilities so they're prepared for the unexpected. *Result:* Your company experiences fewer unpleasant surprises.

8. Gold medal employees don't dwell on their successes. They know there's another job to be done and quickly move on.

9. Gold medal employees don't assume too much. When they have doubts, they ask for clarification.

10. Gold medal employees negotiate deals and get going. They don't wait for numerous orders to be sure they're doing everything exactly the way you want.

Of course, no one individual is likely to possess all of these traits. But the more a person displays, the more likely your company will reach its goals. And one gold medal staff member can be worth three mediocre employees.

Screening applicants is tedious, tiring and a big pain in the posterior. Too many people rush through the process and struggle to find the best candidate to put on the winning team.

AMR recommends that you use a candidate screening process that will help thin the field, and pretty much guarantee hiring the right person to do the job.

Our associate, Art Boulay from Strategic Talent Management regularly "tests" the final candidates. His success record is above 90% and eliminates bad hires that could end up costing a company tens of thousands of dollars. ■

For more information: www.managing4results.com

The Exit Interview – Valuable Information You Need to Have If You’re Going to Get Better

If you want the truth about your company, ask people on the way out. Exit interviews can deliver important inside information. The way departing employees view your organization might be the way things really are.

On the right is an exit interview questionnaire you can print and give to staff members who are leaving. But first, a few points:

1. Get third-party interviews. Many departing employees don't want to burn bridges or sour an ex-employer against them. One way to get them to open up is to have a third party conduct exit interviews. You can contract with a human resources consultant if your company doesn't have the resources to handle the task in-house. Do not have his/her supervisor conduct the interview.

2. Dig to the heart of the matter. It isn't enough to just ask employees why they're leaving. You often have to probe, as illustrated by the questions on the right.

3. Scrutinize the comments collectively. Individual exit interviews can be interesting, but when viewed together, they take shape as a powerful management tool.

For example, you might discover that one department has turnover problems and decide to send that manager for additional training. Or you might find that long commutes are driving people away and decide to add telecommuting options or flexible schedules so employees can escape rush hour or the high cost of commuting.

Departing employees can be important agents for change. Use the opportunity to help your company improve. It is an opportunity that walks out the door when the employee leaves for the last time. ■

Employee Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Why are you leaving the company? Rank the reasons that apply (start with 1 as the most important).

- Pay
- Job Promotion
- More convenient hours
- Fellow employees
- Personal reasons
- Less responsibility
- More responsibility
- Type of work
- Supervisor
- Office environment
- Commuting distance
- Other (specify) _____

2. If you're going to work for another company, what are they offering you that we are not?

3. Please rate the following as Outstanding (1); Above Average (2); Average (3); or Fair (4):

- Quality of our products/services
- Competence of staff and management
- Opportunities for advancement
- Training
- Compensation and fringe benefits

4. Was your workload a problem (too much or too little)?

5. Did you have the support (people, equipment, technology) to be as effective as possible?

6. What did you like best about your job?

7. What was most frustrating?

8. In what areas could you have benefited from training?

9. Would you recommend our company to prospective employees?

10. Would you recommend our company to potential customers?

Please share any other comments that will help us be a model employer in the future.

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