

Why hiring for culture matters the most

Most businesses think it's all about skills when it comes to making a great hire. The hiring manager or recruiter thinks that just because an applicant checks all the right boxes, that the candidate is going to be perfect.

But that couldn't be more wrong.

For any business, the number one factor is cultural fit. When employees are a bad fit with a company's culture, they "rock the boat" and cause too much of a disruption at work. It usually gets to the point where the employer or direct manager of that individual is left with no other option but to put him or her on a performance plan.

And removing toxic employees is not just a drain because of the costs involved in on boarding but on morale as well. No one likes to see a colleague get let go, and a string of miss-fit hires will have a demoralizing effect on the employees who remain at a company.

So how does a company avoid this? It must make sure to hire based on cultural fit.

A team must fit together like the pieces of a puzzle. When it's done right, the company will function as a cohesive team and be highly productive. Cultural fit is the glue that holds a team together and keeps everyone on the same page during disruptive or stressful situations.

So, when Pacific Crest Group is putting together a team, it looks for candidates who fit the company's core beliefs, values and attitude. This approach is backed by data that reveals that employees who fit with the company's culture have higher job satisfaction and superior job performance.

Nailing down employees who fit a company's culture is even more important if it's a small and/or rapidly growing company.

Here are a few questions to ask when evaluating a candidate for fit with a company's culture:

- What type of culture does the company thrive in?
- What are the most important values in the ideal workplace?
- Why does the candidate want to work here?
- Ask the candidate to describe the company's culture based on what the person has seen. Is this something that would create a high-performing company?

- Ask the candidate to describe what he or she doesn't like about the current work culture.
- What best practices and lessons from the candidate's current or past position does he or she think would help the organization?
- Ask the candidate to describe a time when he or she wasn't the right fit for an organization. Why was it a bad fit? What could have changed?

Skill are important, but culture is more critical in the success of a business. That doesn't mean a company should hire a marketing person to manage the accounting department just because he or she is a better fit culturally. But, out of a group of applicants, the hiring manager will find several who match the skills needed and fewer who match the cultural requirements.

That has been the experience of numerous companies that Pacific Crest Group has worked with over the years. When a company hires for culture, it sets itself up for a better performing team.