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Last modified Thursday, June 8, 2006 10:16 PM PDT

Inexperience might not be bad thing

By: JIM PLOTKIN - For the North County Times

Are you having a tough time attracting qualified candidates to your company? If the answer is yes, you're not alone. If the answer is no, congratulations on being a well-sought-after company. Whether you are having challenges or not, now is an excellent time to widen your applicant pool by focusing more on soft skills and recruiting recent graduates.

In my view, soft skills entail behavior traits (personality), learning abilities, motivation, drive, passion for the job, work ethics, integrity, values, etc. With college, junior college and high school graduates coming onto the job market this is an excellent time to speak to these candidates. There is great talent out there for you to shape into future stars. It is also a great time to see how these candidates match up to your succession plan. Some of them may not be as well suited for moving up, but many of them will be.

A grade point average or 4.0 or 3.5 does not mean the candidate is a quick learner nor does a GPA of 2.0 mean that they are a slow learner. GPAs and reference checks may go hand in hand on how useful they are with predicting future performance. It may be best not to put too much weight into either of them.

The Society for Human Resource Management conducted a survey and found that 63 percent of all hiring decisions are made in the first 4.3 minutes of the interview. Flipping a coin may work better and, thank heavens, marriages are not decided that quickly. Please think a few minutes or days longer before getting emotionally involved in making a hiring decision.

Some companies might be afraid to hire inexperienced workers because of the positions available in their company or a bad experience hiring workers without experience in the past. Some jobs are not suited for inexperienced candidates. For those candidates you did hire in the past that met these qualities, what made them a poor hire and what made others a successful hire? Was it soft-skills related or was it something else? Do you know what soft skills are required in all positions at your company? Once you identify answers to these and other questions you will be able to better identify which of these inexperienced candidates has the best chance of succeeding and being a good fit in your company.

"Price is what you pay, Value is what you get," said Warren Buffet,

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