

## Back of the House ...

### The Employee Selection Process

By Jim Plotkin



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Would you marry your spouse after a one-hour lunch date or even a few more? For most of us, a few lunch dates does not give us enough information to get married. Yet all of your line hires and most of your key hires are made

with very little contact or information to help you and your hiring managers really learn about a candidate. Companies and hiring managers who are unable to predict job fit are better off flipping a coin or rolling dice than using the methods they use today.

How many of your members are still using persimmon woods with steel shafts? Those of us who started playing golf in the 70s or earlier have seen the equipment surpass our wildest expectations. Who could have imagined then that a golfer could routinely reach 550-yard par fives in two shots? Any golfer can tell you that tools from 30 years ago do not win tournaments today, but many clubs and companies are still using the same outdated hiring processes. It is time for a change and paradigm shift within these clubs and businesses. The workforce is more transient and the workplace is more demanding and fast-paced than ever before. The old method of an interview and hand shake is in the past with persimmon woods, steel shafts and thin balata golf balls.

Your club is competing against other clubs and businesses in your area for quality candidates. Those businesses that can attract the quality candidates and pinpoint the best ones will be the most successful at hiring the right person for the job.

We've all heard that as the baby boom generation retires, our labor pool will keep shrinking. Organizations are already feeling increased pressure to attract quality candidates and fill positions. It is going to get far worse according to the statistics. This means improving your selection process; it is no longer a luxury – it's a necessity.

According to a study done by the Society for Human Resource Managers (SHRM), some hiring managers are unable to wait more than 4.3 minutes to make a hiring decision that will impact the company for

months to come. Too often, this critical decision is made based on gut feeling and appearance. During an interview, you learn as much about your candidate as you do when you see an iceberg, which is 90 percent below the surface.

Hiring is not easy. The first requirement is attracting quality candidates to your club and job opening. The next is developing a predictive selection process and implementing it properly. How can you gather enough accurate, measurable job-related information about future candidates to see which one is the right person for the job? One piece of this puzzle is employee assessments.

Would you rather have John Daly, Jack Nicklaus, David Duval or Arnold Palmer working in your pro shop as your head golf professional? All four of these individuals have their strengths and weaknesses.

It depends upon the situation and what type of head golf professional you need, but I would bet that an Arnold Palmer personality type would be a more popular choice. A David

Duval or Jack Nicklaus type might be a better operator, but your pro shop most likely needs a person that can sell and service your members. There are methods to help you uncover more about your prospective candidates.

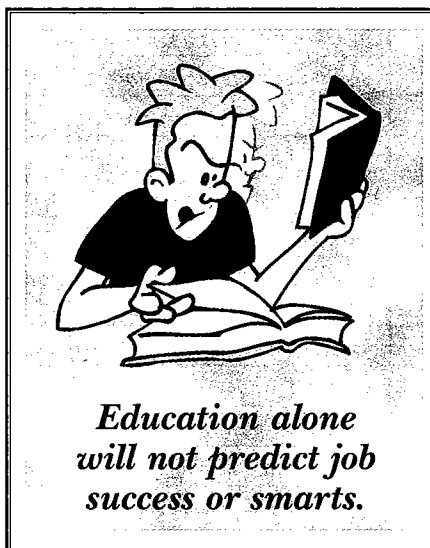
There are a number of assessments available to you today for different positions and purposes. They are valid (they measure what they purport to measure), reliable (they consistently measure what they purport to measure), legal and accurate to help you predict who fits the job and your club best.

What about the other pieces to the process? Just because Jane Applicant has been referred to you with a good track record at XYZ Club does not necessarily mean that she is the right candidate for you and your club. Each club, position

and manager considers a different set of personality traits as the hallmarks of a good employee.

Furthermore, education alone will not predict job success or smarts. Just because someone has a degree does not mean he or she is quicker to learn than someone who has a high school degree or less. We recently had the opportunity to employ a recent high school grad who scored a perfect 1600 on the SAT. She also achieved the highest cognitive score I've seen out of thousands of other scores, including those with masters degrees. If she did not pursue a college degree, many employers would not consider her as a qualified candidate.

Bill Gates never finished college because he was busy starting one of the most successful companies of all time. These types of examples confirm to me that life and college educate us to know more, but your brain is already quick or slow at learning and problem solving by your teenage years. Hiring a slow-learning candidate for a high-pressure, fast-paced job would be like trying to teach me how to run the 100-yard dash in less



than 10 seconds. My body has its limits.

I am not recommending that kids skip college, but it is useful to remember that a well-polished résumé does not always correspond to a well-suited candidate for your job opening. If you widen your search criteria, you will open the field to more qualified candidates whose strengths are less obvious when using traditional methods.

A background search is helpful, but it is not the only indicator of integrity or character. There are many employees who have never been caught or convicted of unlawful acts. While background searches can reveal who was caught, integrity surveys identify which candidates are a higher risk to counter-productive behavior in the workplace.

A common mistake for hiring the wrong person for the job that I've heard hiring

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managers give is, "He (or she) seems like such a nice person." That's great if the job requires nice, but not all jobs are performed well by nice people. Most positions in the club business call for pleasant, agreeable individuals, but some jobs require other traits that super nice people do not possess.

It would be nice to know that your club is being represented by the best candidates available. In the club business, one of your greatest assets are your employees, yet

most clubs spend much more time, money and effort on the kitchen, golf course and clubhouse than the personnel. All of these are important.

If you want to be better than your competitors, take a look at your recruiting, selection and coaching processes. Assessment tools are professionally designed to help you predict your future employees performance and how they fit the job and the culture of your club.

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*Jim Plotkin is President of The Plotkin Group, which offers a wide variety of employee assessments that provide you with more information to help you hire, promote, train and develop with confidence. For more information about how they can assist you, please call 800-877-5685, visit them at [www.plotkingroup.com](http://www.plotkingroup.com) or e-mail [infocmaa@plotkingroup.com](mailto:infocmaa@plotkingroup.com)*

