The Employer'sAdvantage

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Client Highlight
Blue Wave Ultrasonics Eliminates Hiring Errors with ProfileXT™

Roger Stoneking, general manager of Blue Wave Ultrasonics, Inc., of Davenport, Iowa, was mentally berating himself over a hiring mistake he had made when he noticed a schedule for a Profiles International seminar about assessments. He knew he had to attend. "After the session, I left my card, and the guy was in my office before he left town," Stoneking said. "We had 13 or 14 employees, and we all took the assessments. We used that as a benchmark for future hiring, and it's paid off very well." This was over a decade ago.

In 1995 Stoneking acquired the company with Jeff Hancock, who is director of sales and marketing. Blue Wave designs and manufactures part-and-tool-cleaning systems for customers worldwide. "We support a number of market niches, most of them global," Stoneking said. "We design the equipment to customer needs, then build it, ship it and support it."

Blue Wave's environmentally safe, water-based process removes soils from various materials without harmful chemicals, using high-frequency (ultrasonic) sound waves with a cleaning agent (soap or detergent) to safely remove dirt, oil, grease, etc., from metal, glass, ceramic, fiberglass or material.

Ultrasonic cleaning removes tough contaminants without harming the parts, making it a valuable means of cleaning delicate and intricate aircraft parts that could not be cleaned by any other method. "It's an extremely environmentally friendly process," Stoneking said. "The use of hazardous solvents is eliminated."

Many of Blue Wave's 19 employees are engineers; others have technical degrees in specialty areas; and some are high school graduates with special training. Stoneking uses Profiles' Step One Survey II™ for an initial assessment of candidates and the ProfileXT™ to narrow the pool.

Stoneking said he gets valuable insight from the assessments, which help prevent errors. "In 11 years, we have not made a real hiring mistake," he said. With the assessments he realized early on that those who are now key employees would achieve their status. He believes the customer, the product and the employees are most important to the company and are equal in value.

ON THE WEB
Blue Wave Ultrasonics, Inc.:
http://www.bluewaveinc.com

technical
CORNER

Using the 'Whole-Person' Approach with ProfileXT™

DOL Guidelines Checklist

✔ **Assessment tools must be used in a purposeful manner**
✔ **Use the "whole-person" approach to assessment.**

Last month Technical Corner looked at the first Department of Labor guideline on occupational assessments. This time we'll look at the second guideline, which advises that assessments use the "whole-person" approach. This means the assessments employers use should measure more than limited aspects about candidates. For example, they should examine behavioral traits, occupational interests and thinking style. Profiles offers the effectiveness and convenience of all three in the ProfileXT™. With this tool employers can see how candidates match qualities they have identified as being common to their top performers. They want to hire others who will also perform at top levels, so employers provide this ranking to Profiles to build a job match pattern.

Once the formula is set for identifying top performers, several aspects must be identified about the person by looking at 20 scales across the three sections.

Profiles also offers other "whole-person assessments, including the Step One Survey II™ and the Profiles Sales Indica-tor™. The SOSII tests job candidates for reliability, integrity, substance abuse and work ethic. Using this report empowers employers to objectively obtain better information, identify top candidates and conduct better interviews.

The PSI helps select, manage and retain salespeople, measuring five key qualities of successful salespeople: competitiveness, self-reliance, persistence, energy and sales drive. Profiles can customize the PSI in several areas.

Profiles' assessments meet or exceed DOL guidelines, and we work diligently with our clients to help them understand these tools and use them correctly and efficiently.

Update: Changes Coming to EEO-1 in 2007 *By SCOTT HANEY, Esq., Corporate*

Employers who must submit the EEO -1 report, also called the Employer Information Report, need to know about upcoming changes in the survey that will take place in September 2007. The survey is a government form that requires many employers to supply an employee count by job category, ethnicity, race and gender. The report goes to several government agencies.

This report must be filed by employers with federal government contracts of $50,000 or more and 50 or more employees, and by employers who have 100 or more workers, even if they do not have a federal government contract. The report is due Sept. 30 each year and must use employment numbers from any pay period in July through September of the year it is filed. The new report adds additional race categories and defines race and ethnicity categories this way:

Hispanic or Latino: A person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American descent or other Spanish culture or origin. **White**: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. **Black or African American**: A person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. **Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander**: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands. **Asian**: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand and Vietnam. **American Indian or Alaska Native**: A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliations or community attachment. **Two or more races**: All persons who identify with more than one of the above .

Self-identification (employee-provided) is the preferred method of obtaining this information. If employees refuse to provide it, employers can use employment records or observer identification. Applicants should be told that submitting the information is voluntary. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission suggests using the following language:

"The employer is subject to certain governmental record-keeping and reporting requirements for the administration of civil rights laws and regulations. To comply with these laws, the employer invites employees to voluntarily self-identify race and ethnicity. Submission of this information is voluntary, and refusal to provide it will not subject you to any adverse treatment. The information is kept confidential and is only used in accordance with the provisions of applicable laws, executive orders and regulations, including those that require the information to be summarized and reported to the federal government for civil rights enforcement. When reported, data will not identify any specific individual."

The new EEO-1 report has job categories divided into two levels based on an employee's responsibility and influence in the organization. These two levels will be:
Executive/Senior Level Officials and Managers: These employees plan, direct and formulate policy, set strategy and provide overall direction. In larger organizations, they are within two reporting levels of the CEO.
First/Mid-Level Officials and Managers: These employees direct implementation or operations within specific parameters set by Executive/Senior Level Officials and Managers and oversee day-to-day operations.

The revised report also moves business and financial occupations from the Officials and Managers category to the Professionals category to improve data for analyzing trends in the mobility of minorities and women within Officials and Managers. To provide consistency, uniformity and economy, the EEO-1 report was developed jointly by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the DOL's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs.

What is Performance Management?

A well-known company that opens its doors to the public every day recognizes its employees for good performance by prominently placing their photographs in the lobby display case. Each photograph is accompanied by a biography of the employee. The employee also receives an extra paid day off, a gift certificate to a favorite restaurant and a convenient reserved parking place for the month.

This reward system exemplifies one of the four crucial building blocks of performance management that is effective in combining recognition and reward, although it is too often overlooked. Other elements in the system of managing individual performance are just as essential. If any one block is omitted or neglected, it has the same effect as an architect leaving out a key step in the construction of a building: It will not be as sturdy.

The four key strategies important to managing performance are planning, monitoring and feedback, development and reward/recognition. Let's examine how you can set each of these building blocks in place.

Planning – Set clear goals for your organization and your employees. Everyone from the secretary to the CEO should know what is expected of him or her. In setting your goals, you can create a mission statement for the overall company, but you must also be sure your employees know their job duties and performance goals.

Monitoring and giving feedback to employees – Making plans and setting goals will do no good unless a supervisor monitors employee performance regularly, giving clear feedback when necessary. This feedback should include both praise and constructive criticism. The key is to "catch" your employees in the act of doing well and praise them immediately or correct a mistake right away and in the right way – constructively and privately.

Development – Leaders give workers the ability to do their jobs through skills training and other resources. Think of this as giving someone careful directions and a road map to arrive at the destination on time and without mishap. Development has a broad meaning, and your managers should think of creative ways to develop employees to grow into their jobs and climb the ladder.

Reward/recognition – Although rewards need not be given daily or even weekly, they are important to the process and cannot be overlooked. A reward can be expressed as a simple "Good work!" or as detailed as the recognition scenario presented earlier in this article. It can include increased compensation or a promotion. You should be creative and match the reward to the performance.

While you might consider performance management a baffling practice requiring training to do well, you can achieve it by ensuring the four key strategies are in place. Your efforts will result in high -performing workers who know what you expect and have the abilities and resources to accomplish it.

Ultimately, your organization will reap the rewards. In a study of 100,000 employees of 2,500 organizations, the Gallup Organization recorded the attitudes of employees at work in highly productive groups. These attitudes are directly related to the rate of employee turnover, customer satisfaction and productivity. Employees in such work groups reported high levels of agreement with the following statements:

- I know what is expected of me at work **(planning)**.

- In the last six months, someone at work has talked to me about my progress **(monitoring)**.

- I have the materials and equipment I need to do my work right **(developing)**.

- In the last seven days, I have received recognition or praise for doing good work **(rewarding)**.

Are these the kind of statements your employees would make? If not, you now have the building blocks to make it happen.

Source: U.S. Office of Personnel Management

Sales Tip of the Month: Listen More, Talk Less

Good salespeople know what their clients need. This is not because they have the power to read minds. They know because when they ask a question, they pause for the answer and listen when the answer comes. If they can then figure out how to service the client's needs, they have likely made a sale. Record your next sales call. Focus on keeping your client talking while you practice the refined art of listening. If the client stops talking, give him or her several seconds to continue.

If the pause continues, ask a follow -up question, such as "Can you elaborate on that?" to get the client talking again. Above all, don't interrupt. Once the call ends, check out the recording to see how many minutes you talked versus how many minutes you listened. Your own presentation need not be lengthy. You should listen more than you talk.

You Can't Fit Square Pegs into Round Holes

Have you ever hired a new sales team member who didn't work out as you expected? It's as if you tried to stick a square peg into a round hole. It just doesn't fit. In the same way, the new sales employee might not be a good match for that position.

Not everyone has what it takes to succeed in sales. Sometimes people who excel in other areas just do not fit well in sales. The reason is simple: To thrive in sales, certain key attributes are necessary. These include competitiveness, reliance on self,

persistence, energy level and sales drive. In addition, seven important behaviors affect sales performance: prospecting, closing, call reluctance, self-starting ability, teamwork, building and maintaining relationships and compensation preference.

The Profiles Sales Indicator™ measures all of these and produces easy-to-understand reports that show how closely the candidate matches the position. This assessment takes only minutes and can be customized by company, sales position, depart-

ment, manager, geography or any combination of these. You receive the percentage of job match so you can determine the candidate's potential to do well in the position.

The Sales Indicator™ also works well as a training guide for your current sales people.

Getting the right peg to fit in the right place the first time makes sense. Achieving a good job match means success for both the employee and your company.

Case Study:

ProfileXT™ Helps Healthcare Organization Improve Selection Practices

Leaders of a healthcare organization faced with low employee productivity wanted to find a way to hire more employees who excelled in their jobs. The current study was conducted to examine the relationship between employee productivity and job match to ProfileXT™.

Participants - The study consisted of 60 enrollment specialists. Each participant had taken the ProfileXT™ and had received a performance evaluation by a supervisor on a five-point rating scale. These company performance evaluations indicated 13 employees exceeding expectations (4 or 5 rating) and six employees failing to meet expectations (1 or 2 rating). The remaining 41 people met performance expectations (3 rating).

Job Match Pattern - In a concurrent study format, a job match pattern was developed for the enrollment specialist position using the ProfileXT™. A sample of 13 current top-performing enrollment specialists served as the basis to form the job match pattern. This pattern now serves as a benchmark to which other employees can be matched.

Performance Grouping - All 60 enrollment specialists were compared to the job match pattern. After a review of the sample's ProfileXT™ percent matches, an overall job match of 78 percent or better identified top-performing employees and

was selected as a break point to represent a good match to the pattern. The study demonstrated that the pattern efficiently identifies top performers.

Of the 60 employees in the study, 34 met or exceeded the benchmark. Nine of the 13 (69 percent) top performers were included in this group, while only two of the six (33 percent) bottom performers displayed the same match for the pattern. Thus, the pattern differentiates top and bottom performers as shown by the company's own performance evaluations.

Details - The company indicates that its hiring practices have become more consistent after using the ProfileXT™. Organizational leaders have become more confident in their hiring decisions knowing that the PXT is based on the firm ground of employee attributes.

Summary - Using the ProfileXT™ to benchmark employees, the organization has shown the ability to successfully screen enrollment specialist candidates. Of the 34 who met or exceeded the job match pattern, only 5.8 percent (2) were bottom performers. Additionally, about 70 percent of the top performers (9 of 13) were included in this group. Clearly, selection practices can be improved by using job match patterns created by the ProfileXT™.