# Enrichmentors Business Review

Defining Right Job Requirements
Learnings about how to define right job requirements

September 2013

What is in this Issue
From The Editor's Desk

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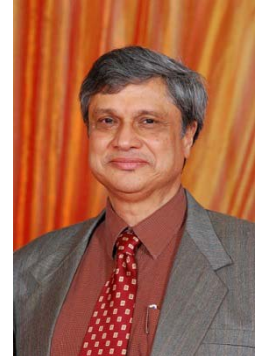
Dear Reader,

Hope you enjoyed the last issue where I had shared with you how could you get the right people for your business.

If you can recall, defining right job requirements is a very critical step in getting the right people for your business. If you get the job requirements right, you can be sure that you can get the right person for your business if you follow the rest of process of getting the right people. If you make a mistake in defining the job requirements, you can not get the right person even if you follow the rest of process in letter and spirit!

I also noticed that there was no process for the defining the job requirements that could assure you that you had the right job requirements. Most of the Line and HR managers in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) followed their own gut feel and common sense in defining the job requirements. There was no method followed to see if the job requirements defined were right!

Given the criticality and the current state of the methods used to define the job requirements, I felt the need to share my learnings about how to define the right job requirements for a job position.

So take a look at these in next few pages and see if that will help you define the right job requirements and ensure that you get the right people for business.

Defining Right Job Requirements
Learning about defining right job requirements

This process development paper attempts to answer following questions in learning how to define right job requirements.

➢ *What does a right job requirement look like?*
➢ *What process can you follow to define the right job requirements?*
➢ *How can you implement each step of the process?*
➢ *How can you ensure that the job requirements defined stay right?*

To recap, any job requirement should contain following elements in a one page document.

1. Position Description
This section of the Job Requirement should specify the name of the position for which the Job requirements are being defined, its location, position it will report to, positions that will report to it and overall responsibilities. These details serve as background of the Job Requirement being defined.

2. Job Requirements
This section of the Job Requirement should list following things that the person should have to be considered for the position in terms of "Essential" and "Desirables".

	Essential	Desirable
Education		
Knowledge		
Skills		
Experience		
Demographics •Age •Sex •Marital Status •Languages Known •Etc		
Total Cost to Company		

3. Prepared by   Date

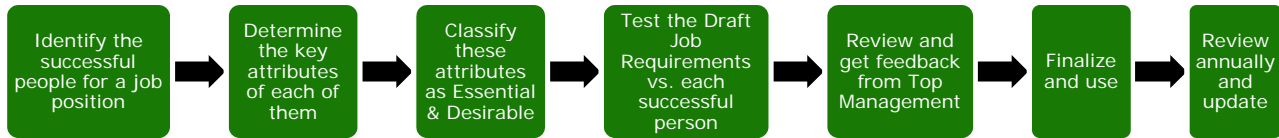### 4. Approved by   Date

A right job requirements will have these elements right to ensure that you get the right candidate for the business if the process of getting the right people is followed properly.

So, how do we find out the right elements and determine that they stay right? Let us look at that in next few pages.

What is the process you can follow to define the right job requirements?

You could use the following process to define the right job requirements.

| Identify the successful people for a job position | → | Determine the key attributes of each of them | → | Classify these attributes as Essential & Desirable | → | Test the Draft Job Requirements vs. each successful person | → | Review and get feedback from Top Management | → | Finalize and use | → | Review annually and update |

Identifying successful people for a job position
The first and most important step is for HR to identify the successful people for a job position under consideration. These people must be agreed with the top management of the company as successful people and company must be clear that they would like to get people like these as they are/were the right people for that position.

Determining the key attributes of each of these
The next step would be for the HR to get agreement with the top management on the key attributes in terms of the job requirement parameters. HR would need to identify the key attributes and get alignment from the top management.

Classify these attributes as Essential & Desirable
Along with the determination of the key attributes of each of these successful people for a position, HR needs to segregate the commonly occurring attributes as Essential and uniquely occurring attributes as Desirable. This step almost prepares your first draft of the Job Requirement for a job position under consideration.

Test the Draft Job Requirement vs. each successful person
Having made the first draft of the Job Requirement, HR now needs to test if these Job Requirement would have lead to the selection of each of these successful people and accordingly make the modification to ensure it fits for ALL the successful people.

Review and get feedback from Top Management
Once these Job Requirements for the positions under consideration are tested and ready, these need to be reviewed with the Top Management and agreement reached on them with or without modifications. Care needs to be taken to keep the Job Requirements facts based instead of basing on individual opinions only.

Finalize and use
With the review and approval from the Top Management, these Job Requirements need to be documented by HR as outlined in the previous page and get the Top management to formally sign it. This signing brings the commitment of the top management. The approved Job Requirement must then be communicated to the Line Functions for their use.

Review annually and Update
HR should ensure that the Job requirements are reviewed after a year of their approval to see what did work, what did not and what was missing. Accordingly the Job requirements should be updated for re approval for another year based on the learnings gained during the year.

In fact this whole work of Defining Job Requirements is a good summer project work for the Management Institutes Students as most likely company HR people may not have the time to take this up! These Management Institute Students can also provide new and unbiased perspective on the Job Requirement every year at much less cost! They sure need some good guidance!!

Let us now look at each of these in bit more detail as always the devil (and the success) is in the details!

Identifying successful people for a job position

As mentioned in the previous page, the first step is identify the successful people for the job position for which the Job requirements are being drafted. HR has to lead this process including this step.

So how do you, as the HR Manager, identify the successful people for a job position?

1. You need to begin by looking into the performance records of the people who have occupied these positions and were rated as having met the performance standards or plans consistently. The ratings could be used given based on how right were the ratings! You will need to resist the temptation to list only the top performers or people who have moved on to higher positions. You need to look at those people who performed as required consistently whether they remained in this position for years or moved on to higher ones. There may be a sales person who has performed as required year after year but remained a salesperson. For the salesperson position he is a success model while he may not be for a higher position!

2. In addition to the above, you need to ask the Line Management of the position under consideration, about all the successful people and reach an agreement with them on the list of successful people for the position under consideration. In case of any disagreement, the cases under disagreement needs to be taken to higher management to get a resolution

3. In case of a large number of people in this list, a random sample between 3 to 30 needs to be drawn up that will be representative for the list of successful position for the position

4. This sample of successful people for the position then needs to be aligned with the top management as that will ensure that all agree on who are the right people for the company for that position.

Having identified the successful people for a job position, let us look at how shall you identify the key attributes of these successful people.

Determining the Key Attributes of Successful People

Having identified the representative sample of the successful people for a position, you need to determine the key attributes of successful people. So how do you determine the key attributes of these successful people?

I would recommend using a 360 degree approach along with the existing facts on them.

You will need to use the past facts for the following parameters which are measurable

➢ Education
➢ Experience
➢ Demographics

For determining the Knowledge and Skills of these successful people you will need to use the 360 degree approach by interviewing the person's immediate manager, direct reports and colleagues. You will need to ask following open ended questions to them

➢ What knowledge did the person have that made him/her successful in his/her position?

➢ What Skills did he/she have that made him/her successful?

These will generate a profile for each of successful person in the same format as the Job Requirement defined earlier.

Once you have the data base for the person from each of the respondent, you need to analyze the data and determine the commonly identified skills and knowledge and that will enable you to generate a 360 degree profile of the person. This method of profiling ensures that you capture the profile of the person from all the three important views-manager, colleagues and sub ordinates.

Proceeding in the same manner you can generate a 360 degree profile of the other successful persons for the same position

These profiles then need to be presented and aligned with the top management.

You now have the data base for the next step of determining the essential and desirable elements of the Job Requirements!

Classification of Attributes
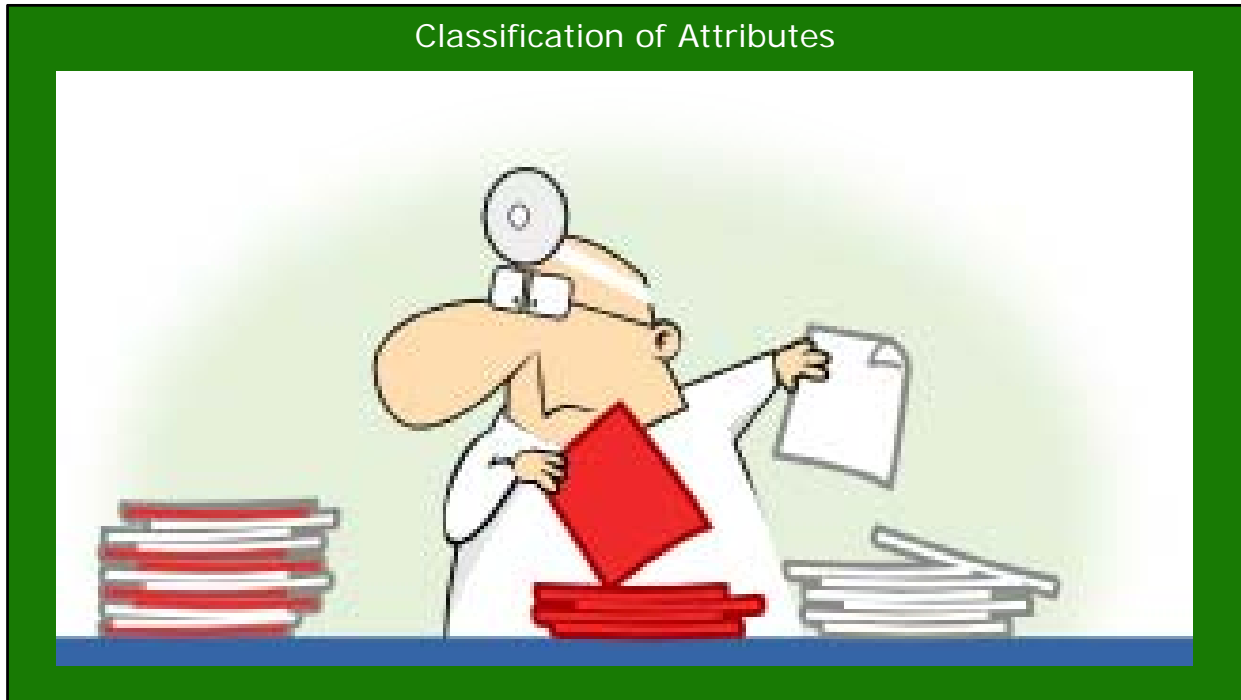
The data base of individual 360 degree profile of successful persons for a position now needs to be classified into the Essential and Desirable Attributes.

So, how do you go about it?

I recommend creating a simple table of occurrence of each value under Education, Experience, Demographics, Knowledge and Skills. You may have a table looking like the following

Parameter	Value	Occurrence
Education	Undergraduate	
	Graduate	
	Post Graduate	
Experience	Less than 5 years	
	5-10 years	
	More than 10 years	
Etc		

With this consolidated view of all the successful people for position, you can start deciding what is essential and what is desirable. I would suggest the following approach

➢ The essential attributes could be the values that are minimum common to all, If you remember your high school maths, it is like the LCM- Lowest common multiplier. Here it is at least the lowest common value. You may choose to keep a higher value if more appropriate

➢The desirables could then come from the remaining higher values.

With the Essential and Desirable Value on Education, Experience, Skills etc you now have a draft Job Requirement based on success models!

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Testing Job Requirements

QA Analyst / Performance Testing

Having crated a draft job requirement for a position, you now need to test and see if it is the Right Job Requirements for a job position.

How can you go about testing it?

Take each of the successful people for the position and check if they would have passed through the Job Requirement to be selected by the company. If the answer for all the people is a yes, you have the right Job Requirement defined for the Job position. If the answer is a no, you need to amend the Job Requirements to ensure passage of the all the successful people.

Review & Feedback

With the above testing of the Job requirements you are now ready to review them with the top management and get feedback. I suggest following approach

1. Prepare a presentation on the Job Requirements containing the purpose, agenda, summary, methodology, findings etc

2. Circulate a soft copy in advance and set up a meeting for discussion

3. Quickly take the top management through the presentation

4. Get Feedback from the Top Management on the Job Requirements

5. Provide clarification where required and get alignment on next step

Finalize & Use
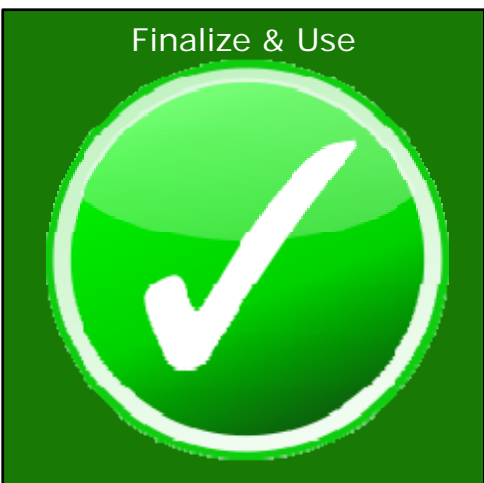
You now need to get the final version of the Job Requirements to be documented in one page format as described earlier and get is signed for approval and use

I suggest that the approved Job Requirements are circulated to all the Line Managers and HR Staff. This should be followed up by a small face to face meeting where they are taken through the details and method used. Clarification need to be provided and agreement reached on using the Job Requirement for finding the right people.

With the Right Job Requirements defined, you now need to keep them updated in future!

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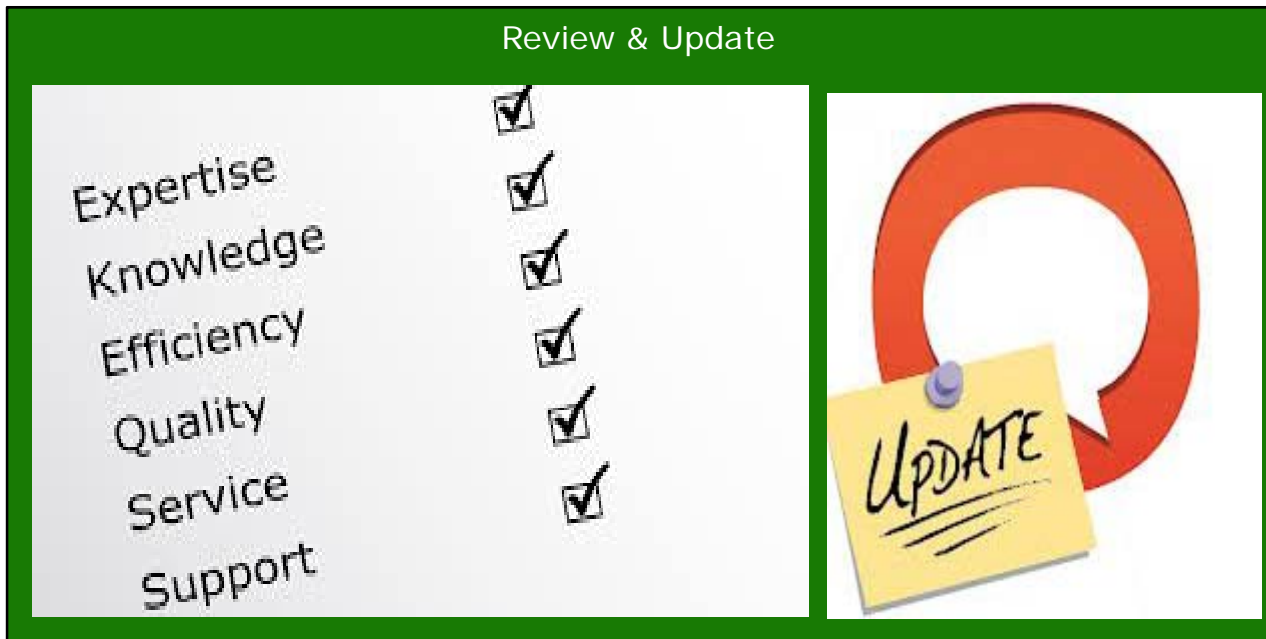
Review & Update

Having defined the right job requirements, you need to review them annually and ensure that it is kept updated in view of the new experience gained during the year.

So how do you review the Job Requirements defined and keep them updated?

Here are a few thing that will help

✓Identify the new successful people who have joined the company during the year and check if their attributes are included in the Job Requirements

✓See how successful have the people been who have been selected using these Job Requirements

✓Analyze the failure of the new people recruited during the year and see if there are any learning from their failure for the corresponding Job Requirements

✓Get feedback from the users of the Job Requirements in terms what have they found useful and what could be improved

✓Consolidate the above experiences of the year and make suitable modifications in the Job Requirements

✓Present to the Line Managers and Top Management for alignment and approval

As mentioned earlier, the creation and updation of Right Job Requirements is a bit technical work requiring a competency in Human Resource Management. Given this and the fact that day to day operations of the HR Managers will leave them not adequate time for this work, it is best to hire Management Institutes Students for Project Work and get this done. This way you get dedicated resources to do this project at a very reasonable cost. You also get to see potential candidates from these Management Institute Summer Interns! I greatly benefited from hiring summer trainees while working as VP Operations in J&J in terms of getting such projects done well and at low cost as well as getting a chance to see potential employees from close quarters.

So, use this approach to define the right job requirements and ensure that you get right people to run your company!

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