

Good News! People Can't Walk and Lie During Interviews

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Ever feel like you're wasting time interviewing job applicants? They prepare answers for the questions they assume you're going to ask. You end up asking those questions and getting those answers. There are only so many variations on what you need to know. Even if you get creative with how you ask, most can still adapt and tell you what they know you want to hear.

A more effective strategy? Get them moving. Rather than screen applicants in an office or meeting room, take them on a tour. Why? Because you'll disrupt their expected rhythm. Imagine arriving for an interview expecting to sit across a table or desk, only to hear, "Let me show you around and I can ask you questions at the same time." How would you react? You're faced with a strange environment, a person you've just met, the stress of answering probing questions, and watching your step and navigating equipment. You get the idea. That's the point. All those prepared responses are flushed from your mind by completely new stimuli.

While it might be easier to do this in industrial settings, these "tours" can be conducted in any workplace. You can even prep a few colleagues in advance with a question they can ask when introduced to applicants as you pass through. The variations of this can be endless.

So what does this accomplish?

More candid answers. Strange surroundings will get applicants off their rhythm. They are much more likely to offer what they really think, without the posturing or embellishments.

A chance to gauge energy. Watch applicants walk. Their gait and posture will serve as insights into their confidence, determination, outlook and other attributes you may not pick up sitting across a desk.

A reality check on their claims. Some applicants choose to "spin" their experience. Walk an "experienced" tradesman through your shop and yard for instance. It will become readily apparent whether he is comfortable. How can you accomplish this same effect in your workplace?

An insight into people skills. For many, meeting new people can be a considerable effort. If this will be part of their job responsibilities, introducing them to a number of colleagues will give all of you a glimpse into their comfort level in doing so.

Why go to the trouble of doing this? Simple – You’re making a decision worth tens of thousands of dollars and one you may have to live with for a long time. How can you adapt this strategy to your environment? You may be surprised at the results it yields.

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