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## Certified Texas Hub Zone

### ARTICLE: IMPROVISING VIA VOCATIONAL ASSESSMENTS

Small businesses that earn less than three million can be the hardest hit in a recession and/or inflation, but if you've been paying close attention, they always seem to manage and eventually pull themselves back into the race, it just may take them a little longer. What makes them thrive so often in adverse times is because they have learned every intricate part of who their staffers are and what they can or cannot do. Remember those mom and pop stores which lasted 25+ and then passed it onto their children and grandchildren. What did they do right?

More often than not, the ones at the top of the food chain in big infostructures/corporations don't know much about their workers. Their hiring practice may be through advertising with online job sites or having an HR Department do most of the hiring and you know how that goes: resumes are received and reviewed, they do a quick 30 minute interview and then a decision is made. You might even administer a couple of short tests just to make sure the applicant is familiar with certain applications/programs. Unfortunately, this method never completely provide an employer with everything they should know about their new applicant including all of their unrevealed skills assets or liabilities. . I call this "assembly-line hiring".

Sorry to be the bearer of bad news but anyone can exaggerate their capabilities or hide inadequacies. If they're really good at selling, watch out -----because they can easily sell a tree to someone who lives in a forest, if you get my drift. The question is, do you have a complete picture of who you've hired, skills, talents, attributes, and all they have to offer? If not, it's like **having money in a vault, but you don't know the combination**.

When a company hits a downturn guess who's the first ones to be let go? How do you know you're not getting rid of a valuable commodity? If you don't find out, it's like "throwing out the baby with the bathwater".

### **Here's what Lack of knowledge can do to a Business**

- Pay out more than necessary in wage/salary.
- Become dependent on certain employee(s) and fail to see other staffer's skills that can produce faster and better for far less.
- Hire more than what's need to get the work done, basically paying out double or triple.
- Job responsibilities overlap and/or one employee is compensating for another's inadequacies.
- Cutting back too soon and eliminating position that you will have to rehire for, and this is costly.
- In an attempt to save money, you do cut-backs or one or more employees become overworked and the quality of goods and services suffers.
- Unaware you have underutilized and qualified people with better skills serving in misplaced positions.

### STORY A

I was contracted by a well-known hotel chain to conduct assessment training with their staff. This particular hotel was known for having strong profitability each year, but for three years their sales and customer patronize had taken a nose dive. Apart from doing revisions, and upgrades of interiors it still did not give much of a boost to their annual sales. One of the first things I proposed prior to doing the joint training session was to assess each professional category of employees. They were administered a series of instruments, so I could get a much closer look at who they were individually and as an employee. I had few questions of some people as I wondered “how in the world were you hired? And why are you still here?” One in particular was a manager who had been there for, yes, you guessed it- three years. Although he was great with administrative duties, he should never have been in a management position, and I mean N-E-V-E-R. He had poor social skills, lacked good decision-making, which affected his ability to place some workers in the right positions at the right time. Moreover, his personality profile indicated he should not engage in regular interaction with customers.

### STORY - B

At this same hotel, there was one young man that caught my attention. He had been working for about a year as a janitor. There was something about his personality and disposition that prompted me to delve a little deeper. So, I administer assessments that's usually not given to workers in his position. During this time, he voluntarily disclosed he that he had autism. Of course, the manager didn't see this as an issues since his job was basically cleaning. He told me there were times he needed a little extra help with learning when he given new assignments, and this is not unusual for someone with autism. Nevertheless, when I placed him on the computer, he mastered every assignment with precision. This young man finished everything correctly and efficiently within minutes. It took the other two employees twice as long to do the same assignment they were actually hired for. He should have been working at the very least in a clerical support position. His skills and work potential was underestimated. Moreover, if they had properly vetted him, the company would have saved money by not having to employ at least one of those staffers that was a poor producer.

◆How did this young man's skills get overlook?

◆How did the other two employee's shortcomings go unnoticed?

**An ounce of prevention is always worth a pound of cure**

Know your staff inside and out. You just may have a **“diamond in the rough”** and don't know it.

## EXAMPLE OF IMPROVISING Vs. EXPENDING OR DOWNSIZING

Christine is quite personable, has strong people skills and is a high producer when it comes to making sales and building relationships with customers. Customers love her and she's great at knowing how to get new commitments and repeat business. However, Christine had a lot of problems with record keeping, and reporting. Her spreadsheet had ripples of inconsistencies which always throws off the entire reporting system. Her supervisors were constantly having to pull away from what they're doing to try and fix her problems. Yet she continued to make the same mistakes which was getting to be very costly. Management was at a crossroads as they anticipated terminating her employment, but she was a high producer and the best customer service representative on board. Letting her go could be disastrous and could mean losing primary accounts.

**Assessment Review:** I was hired to conduct individual and group assessment in Christine's CS department and a couple others. After meeting with Christine and conducting a few assessments, it was determined she has certain deficits which affect her performance capabilities. Christine gets easily confused with numbers and with written communication. The assessments also revealed a learning disability, possibly dyslexia. Basically, it wouldn't have mattered how many times her supervisors met with her to train and correct her mistakes. Christine will always experience problems with written communication and math composition because of her learning disability.

**Recommended Solution:** Since Christine is a high CS producer, she definitely needs to remain with the company and in that role, but be allowed to work closely with a clerical support person who will assist in recording and reporting her documentation. I recommended a clerical support person will devote about 10 hours per week with Christine to upload data, edit and correct any reporting before it goes out, which is about the same amount of time it should normally take for a CS employee to do their reporting. The clerical support person I suggested had strong utilizing skills with spreadsheets and knows how to get reporting done timely. The trade-off was that Christine be allowed to (improvise) substitute these 10 hours toward making sell calls for new and repeat customers. The extra time Christine devotes to customer service will allow her to bring in more business; thus, maximizing her skills where the company benefits the most.

**Follow -up Results:** The company ended up with a much stronger customer base than before; increasing their monthly revenue by another 5% in less than two months by simply having Christine focus solely on her highest and best skills.

**COMMENTARY:** Before you start spending more money or terminate to prevent losses, make an internal audit of your assets (staff).

## ASSESSMENT & TESTING/TRAINING INSTRUMENTS

### ► Critical Thinking Assessment

An assessment of one's ability to think critically in a known and important roles for various professional occupations, particularly those where careful, analytical thinking is required for the job.

### ► Problem Solving Appraisal

Evaluation of problem solving and decision making potential in and around executive/management roles and professional areas which these traits and skills are in demand.

### ► Logistical Processing Profile

Assessing the employee's Interrelationships within the company and Customer/Client Relationships

### ► Motivation and Skill Assessment and Inventory

A collective assessment measuring competency levels as it relates to motivation and skills to meet crucial requirements in a wide range of occupational categories

### ► Personality Profile

Identifies dimensions of personalities to determine one's personal career choice fits within the scope of their career choice, lifestyle, and relationship factors.

We help to build and maximize your staff for optimum growth. For more information about contracting services reach out to Amy Campbell on [LinkedIn](#) or email [Globalassesst@gmail.com](mailto:Globalassesst@gmail.com)

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