



THE HOLY GRAIL FOR MANAGERS

ALI GILL on creating well motivated and enthusiastic workforce

IT'S A scenario familiar to every manager in the country, the candidate looked perfect on paper, interviewed brilliantly, passed the competency assessment with flying colours, yet six months into the job it's obvious they're not performing. What went wrong?

Unless they were adversely affected by something going on outside of work, the answer nearly always comes down to one thing – they weren't suited for the job. "But they had the exact skills set needed," cries the manager. Unfortunately, just because someone has the ability to do a certain sort of work doesn't mean they are actually suited, or will be motivated, to do it.

"There's a vast difference between what people 'can do' and what they happily 'will do'," says Dr Roland Tarleton of business psychologist's Getfeedback.

Roland is one of the countries leading researchers in intrinsic motivation. He's developed an online psychometric profiling tool, equally relevant to an SME or large company, which can predict actual performance in a job by matching motivational

profiles against job descriptions (see case study).

New generation psychometrics – how measuring the 'will do' can accurately predict performance in the job

During interview individuals demonstrate that they 'can do' any number of things and have successfully done so in the past. However selecting candidate on this basis is a one way street – it only shows what the individual can bring to the job (the 'can do' factor) but has no bearing on whether the job is going to suit the individual.

Assessing intrinsic motivation makes the selection process a two way exchange by taking into account the extent to which the individual will thrive in the role (the 'will do') factor. It starts by defining the individual's ideal role from a motivational point of view – will they 'get a buzz' from the work they'll be asked to perform? It's essential to know, for example, how comfortable they are in dealing with change, risk, and new challenges.

Most managers will recognise the cycle of a new employee performing well in all areas for 4 – 6 months before reverting to

type. The new employee has proved they are capable of performing to a high standard across all areas of the position, so now they'll tend to perform well in the parts of the job they enjoy doing, whilst other tasks will be delegated to the back burner.

Assessment and development based on previous ability and personality alone can therefore be misguided. Taking into account the extent to which the individual will thrive in the role often proves to be a more powerful indicator of overall success.

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT FOR COMPANIES?

A well motivated and enthusiastic workforce is the holy grail for most managers. Production levels soar individuals feel successful which in turn leads to a successful business.

Companies can benefit from measuring employee's intrinsic motivation at two crucial stages, in selection- a costly exercise especially for SMEs and doubly so if the decision later turns out to be incorrect – and identifying talent internally for promotion.

Very few individuals are natural all round managers. Companies spend a great deal of money developing employee's competencies across the board to place them in positions which may be a step up the ladder but in which they will not necessarily thrive. By considering an employee's motivation in conjunction with their

CASE STUDY:

Andrew Reid-Jones is a founder Director of Quantum Advisory Ltd. An actuary start up in 2000, Andrew now employs 20 people based in Cardiff and London. He's used Intrinsic as part of the interview process for each of his employees and believes this is one of the main reasons Quantum has only lost two employees in its six years of operation. "There are two errors you can make in the recruitment process, employing the wrong person and not employing the right person," says Andrew.

"Initially we looked at the competencies that we felt we needed in our future employees. One of the key competencies was motivation, we needed people who had 'get up and go', had good team working skills and liked variety. Intrinsic seemed to be the only tool on the market that dealt with motivation as a core competency."

Ali Gill is the managing director of Getfeedback.

competencies employers can ensure expensive training is targeted to develop individuals in areas in which they will excel.