

Progressions Inc.

Sales Training & Consulting



How to Recruit Top Talent

People...it's all about people. Who you hire to represent your company and support its growth is everything. Your employees ARE your company in the customer's eyes. That's why it is so important to choose representatives that reflect your values, principles and professionalism. I started my consulting business over ten years ago doing Mystery Shopping. The findings were so insightful that I designed my sales and service training programs based on the glaring employee actions that failed to keep the customer's interests and desires in mind. The following are just a few of the actions captured in the shops:

- Failing to focus on the customer
- Failing to listen
- Employees talking amongst themselves rather than focusing on the customer
- Non professional actions or dress
- Poor attitudes
- Interrupting the customer
- Indifferent or impersonal behavior

It is quite typical to "view the world from your own eyes" and fail to see it through another's'. Companies that look at their business through the customer's eyes will always surpass those that do not.

Recruiting top talent is essential to a company's growth. Salaries are often the highest cost item that most companies have. How you spend those dollars and who you select to help your business grow is vital to the future of any business. You may have heard the phrase "We are only as good as the people who represent us." Here are a few strategies to help you find the right person for the right job in your company.

Strategy 1: Define your ideal candidate. Study your best employees and determine the characteristics that differentiate them from the average ones. Find out what drives your best employees to be the best and to outperform the pack. Discover what talents such as the ability to quickly establish trust or dynamic relationship skills that are crucial to success in your unique environment. Then, when interviewing a candidate, ask



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questions that will reveal whether that candidate has what it takes to be successful in your organization.

Strategy 2: Always be interviewing. It's absurd to expect the perfect candidate to walk through the door, right when you happen to have a job opening. Consider "inventorying" top candidates to build your bench strength. This may seem like a huge expense. I'd rather think of it as an investment in your future. When you're caught short-handed, the last thing you want is to make a job offer to whomever happens to be available at the time. Rather than wait until your moment of greatest need, interview candidates all the time, even if you don't have any job openings. If you keep in touch with the best candidates, you'll have an entire network of potential top sales reps whenever you have an opening.

Strategy 3: Ask questions that delve into character. The standard interview questions always elicit the standard interview answers. Rather than have a dialog that sounds like it's lifted from a job-hunting book, focus on a couple of areas and dig deep. Rather than asking "what was your greatest achievement?" ask the candidate to write down two achievements from various stages of their life and ask questions that define their character rather than focusing on specific daily tasks and duties. Ask which achievement makes them the most proud. Find out what was satisfying about the experience. Delve into their core motivations. At the end of the interview, you'll know more about their character than if you spent hours going over the usual territory.

Strategy 4: **Hire for attitude and train for skills!** Attitude is something that comes from within and is nearly impossible to train. When your representative has a positive "Can do" attitude they are eager to learn and accept new concepts. Stay away from folks that are set in a certain pattern or reside in their own comfort zone. Our work environment is ever changing and you want to seek out employees that welcome change and are willing to embrace new concepts and activities.

Remember, you are only as good as the employees that represent you. Spend your salary dollars wisely. No owner or manager can be at the job sight all the time. You need to be able to feel totally confident that those "minding the store" when you are away are doing so with pride, respect and professionalism.

Here's wishing you success in recruiting top talent for your business!



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