

Edited by John W. Howard, Ph.D.

While we believe wholeheartedly in the value of the information tools we provide, we are frequently asked for more data—hard evidence of what people are accomplishing with our information tools. Inside, you will see a sample of that kind of report, and more case studies like this will be included in our future issues. Whenever possible, we will provide cost/benefit calculations provided by the people who are on the front lines of the company, measuring their own results in the way that matters most! —Editor

Special Points of Interest

- **Better Hiring means a better business!**
- **Predicting sales success...**
- **Selection in eldercare—a cautionary tale!**
- **Learn about the Skill Builder to improve your managers' skills!**

THE ECONOMIC OUTLOOK— WHAT WILL YOUR STRATEGY BE?

BY JOHN W. HOWARD, PH.D.

As the second quarter wound down, most of the country's prominent economic strategists had weighed in with their own predictions for the months ahead. Here are what some of them said, and some thoughts on setting your own course.

According to **Mark Keller at AG Edwards**: "Our current outlook is generally bright, though with some caution."

Oregon State economist Tom Potiowsky "...sees Oregon's economy heading for slow growth...however,..."

Associated General Contractors of America's economist, Ken Simonson, has told us that "increased activity will be seen in homebuilding, health care and the public sector. Declines are predicted in private construction, particularly industrial, office



Blue skies on the road ahead?

buildings, retail and hotel projects."

Summarize the thoughts of all the experts: nearly impossible! Why? Because they are all so busy hedging their bets! The group as a whole sounds like a weatherman's idea of prediction: "57% chance of rain."

With predictions like that, how can you be wrong? More to the point, with predictions like that, how can you run your business?

Resolve to ignore wobbly predictions; take a firm grasp on your business, make the best decisions you can, and proceed!

- Cross-sell and up-sell your existing accounts!
- Wake up your herd of "hibernators."
- Seek referrals, referrals, referrals!
- Focus on value instead of costs.
- Take care of your customers—they will take care of your business!

BETTER HIRING MEANS A MORE PROFITABLE BUSINESS!

For the past year or more, many of us will admit that we did not pay much attention to our hiring process—because we were not doing much hiring! Looking ahead, whether we begin hiring in the next quarter or the next year, we have an

opportunity to make our businesses better for many years, just by improving the process of hiring. Here are some suggestions for improvement:

Take your time, make a good choice. We tend to respond to the pressures

of hiring needs by rushing the process, often leading to a poor decision.

Hire for fit, train for skill. 80% of hirings are for skill, and 80% of failures are for lack of job fit.

Focus on retention. People rarely leave a job, they usually leave a su-

pervisor. **Train your key people to manage properly**, and retention will improve.

Follow these principles, and your business will enjoy reduced turnover, improved productivity, and higher profits!

“While the young man did not exactly admit to a history of axe murders, he was not far off that mark...”

HIRING IN ELDERCARE-A CAUTIONARY TALE

The much discussed graying of our population has produced a high demand for workers in the eldercare field. Concurrently, stories have emerged nationwide, of abused elders, dangerous care practices, and other things that neither we nor our elders should have to worry about.

One of our new clients operates several upscale eldercare facilities, and has continuously worked toward building a quality, trustworthy group of care providers within their organization.

Imagine, then, their shock when they administered the Step One Survey in the routine pre-employment screening of a young man who had ac-

tually worked for them before—and discovered (in the report) that this particular individual admitted to a series of behaviors that were, even to the most battle hardened HR professional, simply shocking!

While the young man did not exactly admit to a history of axe murders, he was not far off that mark.

Further, his distortion score indicated that he was presenting himself in a very positive light, compared to reality! Only on the scale of attitudes toward work ethics did he even approach the midpoint. (The staff concluded that he was most likely to work hard at being a bad person.)

This experience certainly pointed out, once again,

that we need as much information as we can obtain, *before we hire*. This is a case where the Step One Survey provided a very valuable set of information before a probable mistake in hiring was made.

The client is to be congratulated for their commitment to excellence, which has led to their use of the Step One and other Profiles assessments.

In this case, it eliminated a potential problem before it occurred—if you read his report, you would not want this young man caring for your grandmother!

Fortunately, cases like this one are relatively rare. The question: Can we afford to miss even one?

Pro Tip of the Month—Learn About the Skill Builder Series!

Our clients have long enjoyed the benefits of our industry-leading management skills assessment, the Checkpoint 360.

Once a manager has absorbed the feedback, identified the areas in which improvement is most critical, he or she has then been faced with the admittedly difficult task of plowing through the skill im-

provement workbooks in the Leadership Series.

Things have changed! Profiles International has introduced the new, **online, Skill Builder Series**.

The new system for management skill improvement is fully integrated with the results of the Checkpoint 360, and seamlessly leads the manager through the process of converting

evaluation results into improved skills in those areas where he or she has most to gain! For each of the 18 skill areas, this new and interactive online learning experience includes 25 to 35 hours of practical and enjoyable training. **Ask your Profiles Representative to show you the Online Demonstration today!**

Magic Bullets are hard to come by...the slight edge principle.

Occasionally, we need to rein in our enthusiasm for the information tools we work with and remember that, effective as they can be, they are not perfect. The information provided in any one assessment can be less than perfectly predictive!

As an example, one client recently was forced to fire (for being caught red-

handed, stealing) an employee who had scored very positively on the Step One Survey. On the other hand, we consistently find that such behavior is dramatically reduced by consistent use of the Step One as a part of the hiring process. As Jim Rohn said, "Success is nothing more than a few simple disciplines,

practiced every day; while failure is simply a few errors in judgment, repeated every day. It is the accumulative weight of our judgments that leads us to either fortune or failure."

Systematic use of the information we provide will help give your business that all-important **"slight edge."**

CASE STUDY OF THE MONTH: PREDICTING SALES SUCCESS WITH THE SALES INDICATOR (PSI)

The Company had been in business for 20+ years, enjoying a mostly steady growth in supplying recreational vehicles to a national network of independent dealers. In 1999 and 2000, market share suffered a precipitous decline, and a new sales management team was installed, charged with effecting a turnaround in sales.

Frankly, the new team was skeptical of the notion that an assessment could offer them much help. They did agree, however, to assess their sales staff with the PSI. After reading the reports, they put them away in a file, and proceeded to man-

age as they always had—by “gut feel” and traditional sales management approaches. When a salesperson left the company, they did not use the PSI in the new selection process.

One year later, the company provided the data summarized below, with a later update on the departure of one of the original group (see the footnote on “Mark”). Two months after the departure of Mark, the sales management team received their own discharge notices, victims of a continued decline in sales.

Might things have been different, if they had used the information available from the assessments?

We can only speculate, but the data is very clear in two predictions:

- If a salesperson at this company has an energy scale score below 7, he or she is extremely unlikely to succeed.
- Even if a salesperson’s other scale scores (Persistence, Competitiveness, etc.) are well below the group’s average, a high energy score can allow success in this setting.

Consider the sales team in your company: Do you have the information you need to predict, select, and coach for success?

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THE DATA: NOTE THAT ALL REPS WITH AN ENERGY SCALE SCORE BELOW 7 LEFT THE COMPANY. A PATTERN MATCH OF LESS THAN 78% ALSO PREDICTED DEPARTURE, WITH ONE EXCEPTION—THAT EXCEPTION HAD A PATTERN MATCH OF 86%, BUT AN ENERGY SCALE SCORE OF 5.

Salesperson	Scale Scores						% Match to Top Performer	Group Match to Top Performer	Scale Scores				
	Competitiveness	Self-Reliance	Persistence	Energy	Sales Drive	Distortion			Competitiveness	Self-reliance	Persistence	Energy	Sales Drive
Bert	7	3	7	9	5	9	95%	83.4	Average Scores for Group 6.6 5.0 7.1 7.3 5.9				
Mark	4	3	10	2	3	9	41%						
Richard	10	4	10	9	7	9	86%						
Susan	7	7	7	7	9	9	95%						
Hal	6	7	3	8	6	9	79%						
Lisa	5	6	6	9	6	9	93%						
Gary	7	5	7	7	5	9	95%						
Michael	9	4	8	5	6	9	86%						
George	6	4	7	3	5	9	76%						
Mary	4	1	8	4	2	9	34%						
Buzz	9	10	5	6	10	9	62%	64.5	7.0	4.8	7.0	4.5	5.8

Salespeople were assessed against Top Performer Pattern in July of 2001

Those still employed in July 2002 are in the blue shaded area.

Those no longer employed by this company in July 2002 are in the yellow.

* Mark voluntarily left in September of 2002, failed to make quota 3 quarters.

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"There are some things where you don't
have to know how it works -
only that it works.

While some people are
studying the roots,
others are picking the fruit.

It just depends on which end of this
you want to get in on."

-- Jim Rohn