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# Employer's Advantage

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As the economy moves sluggishly toward recovery, a few stories in the economic news foretell a future in which many of our concerns may return to the focus of the mid-90's: How do we find enough of the right people? Once we find them, how do we keep them? How do we insure they are fully productive? In this issue, we look at three critical areas in business, and how assessments may help us address those rising concerns.

—Editor

### Special Points of Interest

- Insider threats cost IT departments \$\$\$
- Customer service is still the top issue
- Profile results in a hospital setting
- Why leaders need coaching
- Ethics and teens

## CUSTOMER SERVICE— HOW HARD DOES IT NEED TO BE?

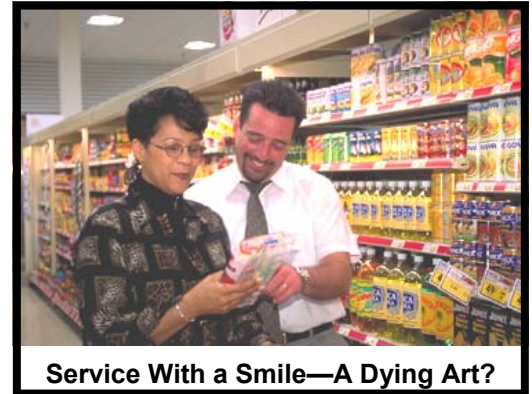
A recent move across 750 miles of the western US allowed this writer a first-hand look at customer service in the real world. Unfortunately, the results were erratic.

**The telephone company:** A company, with a multi-million dollar advertising campaign to change their terrible customer service image should have spent the money on assessments and training! An order placed a month in advance, with a confirmed installation date, resulted in service 10 days late. When asked, their "customer service" response: "I apologize. What else would you like me to do?"

**Satellite TV:** This company's customer service was much like the phone company—late and rescheduled without notice. They exhibited no apparent concern about their customer service.

**Local government:** Impeccable, better than expected. They provided friendly, in-depth communications and services just as promised!

**The tiny little tavern** in the town half-way to the new place: Exemplary! The owner who cooked, tended bar, swept, washed, and cashiered should be concierge at the Ritz-Carleton!



Service With a Smile—A Dying Art?

So, what can we make of all of this?

**Great customer service can be produced, without huge infrastructure or needlessly complex mission statements.**

It starts and ends with people. Great people with great attitudes produce great service! Many businesses, regardless of resources, cannot recruit, identify, or train great people.

If your business depends on servicing customers, ask your Profiles representative to help you identify people who will deliver great customer service, and help you coach them to deliver it in your way!

Invest in customer service, as though your future depended on it—it does!

## INSIDER THREAT—THE MOST COSTLY IT CONCERN

Perimeter Data, a Salt Lake City company in the business of countering insider threats to enterprise computer data, estimates the average insider attack costs companies about \$2 million! Their existence depends on helping companies develop systems to thwart these attacks, by

preserving and protecting data.

The recent impact of Sarbanes-Oxley has created a strong push to company efforts to protect computer information from insider attacks, and the proliferating systems approaches are elegant and impressive. Given

the escalating chain of attack and counterattack technology, however, it seems that it might be more effective to prevent the hiring and promotion of those likely to produce the damage. Honesty-integrity testing is long-proven, well-documented, and very inexpensive. Is

it likely that an individual with a high level of integrity would attack an employer's IT system? Almost certainly, not as likely as an individual with a low level of integrity. Consider this low-cost alternative—it may prove to be the best defense against insider attacks.

**Coaching provides feedback, while projects and people issues are being handled. It will develop and strengthen solid leadership skills.**

## Leaders Hire Coaches – They Need the Help!

*By Jeannette Seibly, SeibCo LLC*

Do you promote a vision, mission, and purpose for your company--yet no one follows you?

Do you empower others--yet these same people criticize you?

Do you allow ongoing conflicts among managers?

Do you avoid admitting a mistake?

If you answered any of these questions “yes”, you are among the vast majority of us who could benefit from coaching!

A coach can be critical to any leader’s success. Listening to theories and concepts will not, by itself, develop leadership. Coaching provides feedback, while projects and people issues are being handled. It will develop and strengthen solid leadership skills. Coaching accelerates growth and contributes to success! A good coach can help you:

**Set and achieve goals!** If you don’t know where you’re going, how will you know when you get there? To achieve results, you must set goals and develop a structure to track and ensure progress. Put together action plans and review them frequently!

**Be consistent!** Maintain your commitment to fulfill

your goals, even when “you’ve hit the wall” and it looks like failure may be imminent. This sends a very clear message to your employees. It says they can trust you in good times and bad. It helps them make better decisions, and keeps them in action.

**Work with and through others!** This will help ensure that your job will be on time and within budget. Poor communication skills are a major factor in leadership failure. People are too often promoted for their successes, without assessment of their communication skills. Simply put, the higher up the corporate ladder you climb, the more people rely on your communication skills. A leader with poor communication skills must improve, or negotiate another position without people responsibilities. The good news: Good communicators are coached, not born.

**Listen to those with different ideas!** Most people consider themselves good listeners, but they do not always hear the critical factors that keep customers and co-workers happy and satisfied. Knowing how to get a point across while listening to others, particu-

larly when what you hear is unpleasant, can make or break your career!

**Handle conflict promptly:** The sooner you’re able to resolve conflict, the less likely it will negatively impact your people, projects, and customers. Work will always include disagreements, differing points of view, and concerns that people bring from outside. The key is to resolve issues promptly, effectively and efficiently while empowering the people involved to work them through.

Being accountable for ALL the results, including your own growth, is a true mark of a leader. Being accountable entails managing the details, and acknowledging the results—both positive and negative. Let others take credit for a job well done.

**As a leader, hiring a coach can accelerate your growth and success.** You will see your weaknesses faster and more clearly, and develop your strengths sooner and more fully. The fact that you are open to coaching will inspire confidence in your co-workers and customers. If your goal is to be a good leader, start by hiring a good coach!

## One-Third of Teens Say They Would Act Unethically

A recent poll conducted by Junior Achievement and Harris indicates that 33% of teens say that they would act unethically to make more money or to get ahead, while another 25% were not sure. 42% said they would not act unethically.

While JA is using the results to promote their

“Excellence Through Ethics” initiative, a much-needed educational effort aimed at teens, the results also raise immediate concerns for those who employ young people.

As an employer, how do I make sure that I am hiring the 42% minority that will not act unethically?

Use of a reliable and valid

honesty/integrity assessment is likely to help employers reduce the hiring unethical people, teens or otherwise. Raising the bar on ethics in business has become a flashpoint issue in America, and customers will support businesses that insist on the highest standards of ethical behavior.

# CASE STUDY:HOSPITAL FINDS THE PROFILE PRODUCES RESULTS!

The people challenges faced in a large state-run mental health facility are enough to make any manager lose sleep; in this case of a large state in the Southcentral region, things were even worse!

The facility led the state in turnover rate (a dubious honor, at best!), with a two-year average turnover rate over 40%.

In their most critical job classification, Mental Health Worker (MHW), the rate was 69%!

To continue the dismal stats, 30% of their turnover in the MHW cate-

gory was firings within the first 6 months, and 80% of those firings occurred in the first 60 days! Hiring boards, used to screen and interview applicants, were taking one full day per week; 32 person-hours of expensive Nurse Manager time!

For 6 months, the Profile assessment was administered to each MHW applicant selected for interview. The results were not used in hiring decisions during that time.

At the end of the 6-month period, Nurse Managers rated each of the Mental Health Workers hired,

regardless of whether they were still employed, on a 10-point scale of suitability for the job. Using these data, a success pattern was constructed for the job.

At this point, the facility began using the Profile results in making hiring decisions; those with a distortion score of 3 or less, or with a match of less than 75%, were not interviewed.

For those who were hired, the Coaching Report was used to help increase the likelihood of success on the job. The outcomes are summarized below.

*Return on investment: \$10.56 for each \$1.00 invested...*

## RESULTS OF THE PROFILE IN USE:

### Before the Profile:

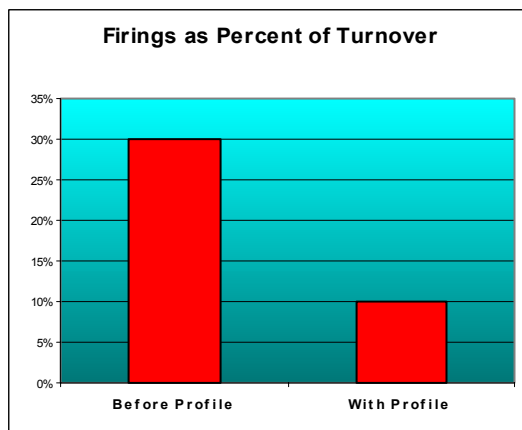
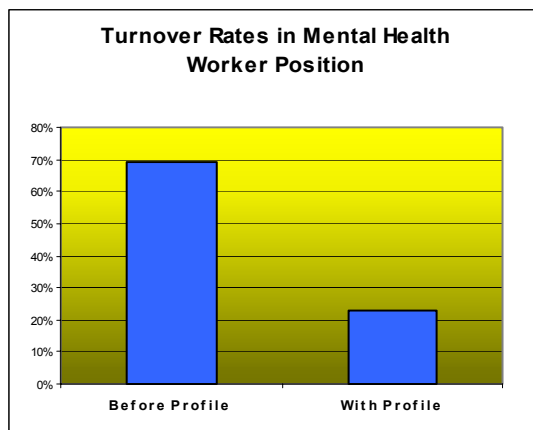
- Led the State in turnover
- Annual turnover of over 40%
- MHW turnover of 69%
- 30% of turnover was Firings
- 80% of firings were <60 days
- Hiring Boards took all day, weekly, with 4 Nurse Managers

### With the Profile Program:

- Dropped to 4th in state in turnover
- Annual rate less than 20%
- MHW job category dropped to 23% turnover
- Only 10% of turnover is firings
- Weekly hiring boards were cut to less than 1/2 day per week

### ROI Calculations:

- Annual **Cost** of Assessments and support: **\$44,500**
- **Savings** in reduced Hiring Board time: **\$20,000**
- **Savings** in cost of turnover @ \$6,000/hire: **\$450,000**
- Return on Investment: **\$10.56 for each \$1.00** invested.



Leaders must understand  
some people will inevitably  
sell out to the evil side. Don't  
waste your time wondering  
why; spend your time  
discovering who.

— *Jim Rohn*



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