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Sometimes, the answers that we seek in our search for business excellence are overlooked because of their simplicity...if it's that simple, it can't be right, can it? The "YES" yardstick and the theme of the book reviewed in this issue (*The Tipping Point*), both fall in that category... sometimes the obvious is, in fact, right! Look around in your own business. Some of the answers to your questions are probably right there, in plain sight—and overlooked because they are simple! —Editor

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JOB GROWTH LOW, PRODUCTIVITY UP—JOB FIT IS PIVOTAL FACTOR

As the first quarter wound to a close, the government not only reported meager job growth for March, but also revised the already-anemic numbers for the preceding two months—downward.

While economists debated whether the numbers were accurate, many maintained that the methodology missed the thousands of new micro-businesses being created by former employees turned entrepreneurs.

Given that Gross Domestic Profit continued to climb out of proportion to job creation, it was easy for most analysts to agree on one conclusion: Productivity of the North American worker continues to climb.

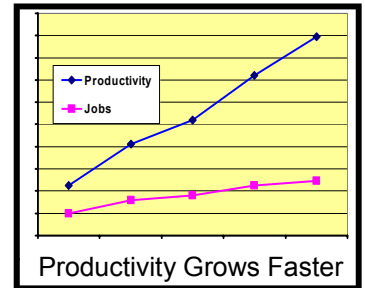
As you analyze your own business, and plan for the future, consider the implications for your own competitive environment:

- Your competitors are probably becoming more efficient.
- Your own profitability would increase if you could increase output without increasing head count.
- Your existing staff is the best place to look for sources of increased productivity.

Research has consistently shown that better JobFit results in increased productivity, and that improving JobFit within a business requires an ongoing process of measurement and action.

The old maxim of management, "If you don't measure it, you can't manage it" applies especially well to the concept of JobFit. Generally, we can't see, touch or smell it, without a measuring instrument.

With ample evidence that JobFit is crucial in the



productivity equation, and clear indications that productivity is central to remaining viable and competitive, the case is more compelling than ever: Now is the time to measure, manage, and improve JobFit throughout your business.

Consult with your Profiles representative, and analyze your current JobFit improvement program. Are you getting the best return on your efforts? Where else can you apply the program? How can you build a business where JobFit is a central goal of management? **Increased productivity and competitive advantage are the payoff!**

MEASURE YOUR PEOPLE WITH THE "YES" YARDSTICK

Employee evaluations are the central topic of hundreds of books and thousand of articles. The schemes and systems run the gamut, from complex and mathematical, to simple and commonsense. Here is one that you can do quickly and efficiently. If

you just tabulate the results as a percentage of "YES" answers, you can gauge your success in hiring and retention in a way that's meaningful and easy to understand. Consider employees who have been with you for a year or more. On bal-

ance, are you happy that they are working for you? If you asked them the same question, anonymously, what would their honest answer be? It takes a pair of "yes" answers to count as a "YES" score. Count those with under a year as "NO"

- **25% YES** scores: about average—you can do better!
- **50% YES** is above average, but leaves lots of room for improving
- **75% YES** is the "gold standard"—you're doing things right, and can be proud of it!

DOES YOUR (HIRING) ELEVATOR GO TO THE TOP?

GUEST ARTICLE BY JAY WERTH, CAREERLIFE ASSOCIATES

Unfortunately, many of these passengers are soon back on the elevator heading down, out the front door, and back onto the street—an expensive ride!

Think of the hiring process as an elevator ride, and your manager as the elevator operator. Job candidates are people trying to squeeze into your elevator. The load of all these passengers puts a strain on the elevator and your manager who must also attend to other pressing issues.

It's tempting for your manager to quickly eyeball the passengers, letting only a few of them onto the elevator at the first floor and turning away the majority. Some candidates get a ride to the second floor (the next phase of the hiring process) based only on their appearance and manners, or how intelligently and enthusiastically they respond to questions. Some passengers express aspirations, interests, and goals that are a perfect fit for your business, so they also get a ride to that second floor.

Earning passage to the second floor also requires passengers to demonstrate their knowledge, acquired through experience and training. Skill

sets, education, and credentials may also be important. Some managers are content to reach the second floor, open the doors, and let the passengers walk out onto an employment floor. Unfortunately, many of these passengers are soon back on the elevator heading down, out the front door, and back onto the street—an expensive ride!

The third floor of the hiring process is characterized by a successful hiring decision: A new employee who has a bright future with your business. It's the hire that all managers dream of but too few actually experience. **What needs to take place in the employee appraisal process to make sure you're hiring on the third floor?**

The behavior-based attributes of most passengers are difficult to determine on the first two floors, but they are the keys to long-term performance and retention. Characteristics needed to get a passenger to the third floor are rooted in the passenger's attitudes and beliefs, maturity

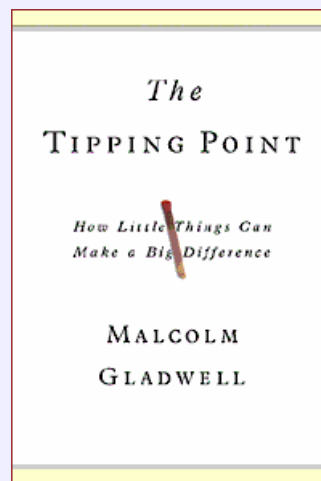
and judgment. What motivates them? Is the passenger stable, able to persevere through complicated and difficult situations?

How does the passenger learn and process information? Assess the person's temperament.

Assessment tools help you measure traits that have a direct impact on a person's productivity and longevity with your business. Tools should include questions for the interview process to ensure objectivity and consistency. First-floor and second-floor observations drive too many hiring decisions, but it's the third-floor determinants that are most important! Behavior-based attributes have the greatest impact on performance. If these are either neglected or misjudged, the result will be a poor hiring decision, followed by an unpleasant and expensive firing decision.

Structure the hiring process with help from assessment tools, and help managers find the right passengers for the ride to the top floor—performance and productivity.

THE TIPPING POINT— HOW LITTLE THINGS CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE



If you've ever felt that the world is just too big, and you're way too small to make a difference, read this book by Malcolm Gladwell. His well-crafted and compelling arguments for the enormous effects of small events, timing, and being in the critical place at the critical time will reassure you: You could make a difference, and a big one!

Gladwell brings together

anecdotes and research, psychology, epidemiology and group dynamics, and comes up with a set of conclusions and a list of implications that is likely to keep you glued to the pages until you finish.

As Diane Brady wrote in Business Week, "...we appreciate the optimism of a theory that supports...the power of one." Reading this book could produce a personal "Tipping Point."

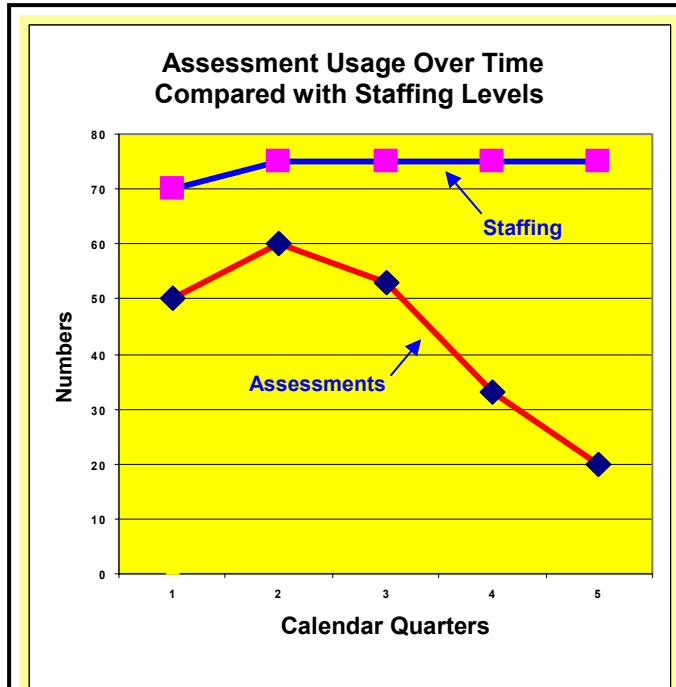
ASSESSMENT COSTS DECLINE WITH IMPROVED HIRING—CASE STUDY

The adjacent graph clearly shows what happens to assessment usage over time, in a properly applied strategic hiring situation.

The client is a commercial janitorial service which focuses on banks and other commercial buildings, and which has been using the Step One Survey as a prescreen instrument for nearly a year and one-half.

While, over that time, their staffing level has increased by about 4%, the number of assessments required to screen new hires has dropped by 67%, as reduced turnover has also reduced the number of interviews and hires necessary to maintain their staffing levels.

The client's unsolicited comments attest to some of the other, positive effects of their program. As always, we appreciate their willingness to share.



Unsolicited Client Comments

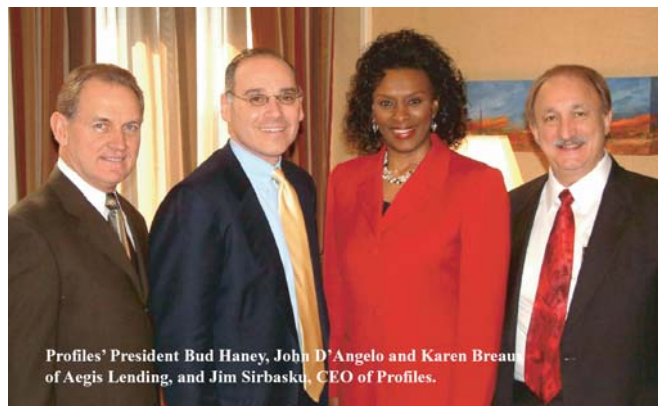
John,
Thanks to you and Michele for all your help in our hiring process. It has made a tremendous difference in quality, reliability, and customer satisfaction. We have received numerous comments from customers regarding the quality of individuals we hire for their sites. Thanks again,

Jim McMillan, General Manager, Germyn's Janitorial

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AEGIS LENDING DOCUMENTS IMPROVEMENTS

In a recent ceremony at the Profiles International Annual Conference, officers of Aegis Lending accepted the Profiles International Client of the Year award. Aegis' President, John D'Angelo and Karen Breau, his VP and Director of Employee Relations, accepted the award before an audience of over 400 Profiles representatives, and went on to describe his company's amazing 4-year turnaround success. In 2000, Aegis lost money. In each of the



Profiles' President Bud Haney, John D'Angelo and Karen Breau of Aegis Lending, and Jim Sirbasku, CEO of Profiles.

next 3 years, they posted steadily increasing profits: over \$9 million in 2001, \$23 million in '02, and over \$42 million last year! While D'Angelo says other factors contributed to the company's turnaround, he credited the

company's use of Profiles assessments for at least 25% of the improvements. That amounts to over \$24 million dollars, an astronomical return on investment! Aegis has over 2,700 employees nationwide, and 101 branch offices.

**“The most important measure
of how good a game I played
was how much better I'd made
my teammates play.”**

—Bill Russell



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