

How to spot the **fakes** & attract **good talent!**

By Pam McKean, Director AB Dental Employment Agency



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The challenge of recruiting good talent becomes even more challenging in a tight labour market. You might be getting a good response on your job adverts, but great candidates, no matter how good the market, are always hard to find. Bad hires can result in early resignations or terminations – which means recurring costs for the same position at a time when hiring costs are already high. With the cost of hiring, even at only an entry level position running into the thousands, you want to ensure that you make the right decision.

Good candidates certainly exist, even in a tight labour market- but it's firstly about being able to spot them, and then reaching out to them. With many candidates now becoming 'interview' professionals, it's increasingly difficult to spot the real talent from those who are just skilled in interviewing techniques.

How do you to Spot Fake vs. Real Talent in an Interview?

This is a real troubling question with employers these days. A tight economy, restructuring in the industry, and the consequences have proved beyond dispute that poor performers or problem candidates can really kill your business, and good performers carry an organisation on their shoulders.

This is why the question of "fake" performers comes, because 'poor performers' have learnt to fake the attitudes and responses of real performers and fool interviewers. The potential employee pool has learnt well that who knows how to get hired has a better chance of survival than who knows how to do the job, and on their part, companies need to know how to spot 'fakes' right during interviews and not make the costly mistakes of hiring poor workers who are exceptional interviewees. Here are some things to look out for when conducting your interview to help you spot the fakes:

- ◆ The person who does best at a behavioural interview questions may not be the best candidate for the practice. If the answers seem rehearsed that usually means they are.
- ◆ If you're not skilled in the art of conducting an interview, do some research beforehand. It's likely that a poor performer will have had more experience with interviews than you have.
- ◆ The person who has the best level of skills on their resume may not be the best candidate for the practice, if he/she is not motivated or experienced to put those 'on-record' skills to good use
- ◆ People who draft job advertisements can sometimes try to simplify the role to pull in a greater number of applications and end up overloading interview processes. Don't be afraid of asking for exactly what you're looking for. A good candidate won't be put off if they don't meet one or two criteria of your role

Top performers are not difficult to spot as their answers are simple, direct and quick. They are fully aware of the tasks they have done, they would have measured them, and they would be able to prove whatever they claim. Any candidate who fumbles or says he/she "can't remember" something, or tries to define something as too complicated to explain on the spot, is a fake. Go for those who have 'drive' in them and you can always train them.

Here are techniques to use for spotting good talent:

- ◆ Employee referrals can be a big help from your existing employees. No one wants to refer to a poor candidate – after all, it's their reputation at stake too!
- ◆ Networking works. Go back to your networks and spread the word about your available position. Ask acquaintances and friends if they had former employees who were excellent employees matching your requirements
- ◆ Hire a professional recruiting firm that may already be working for others in your industry
- ◆ Post job openings on reliable job boards which assure you a serious applicant flow. With the selection of job board around, you will find a few that are free to use. You want to get news of your available role out to as many candidates as possible.

Keep your business well-funded with the right talent:

- ◆ Reduce employee turnover. The fewer people you lose translates into lesser need for recruiting afresh
- ◆ Create a "good employer" reputation for your practice. When you're known to care you're your employees and have good HR policies in place, prospective candidates will proactively seek employment with the practice.
- ◆ Start recruiting even when you don't have an immediate need – be on the lookout always

Any compromise on your requirements for good talent can lead to performance erosion in your practice. Talented employees like to work for employers that have other good talent. If they start feeling that your hiring standards are depreciating, they may want to move on to another practice that houses more talent than you, and that gives their career an easier push.

Identifying and hiring high performing employees is what your company needs most in a challenging economic environment. At the same time, high performing employees are the most difficult to get in such market conditions. It's important that you do not fall back on low-quality labour in such times. Hold on to your high level of requirements – you are better off leaving a position or using temporary staff than hiring a less-talented employee. ◆

Pam McKean is a Director of AB Dental Employment Agency. The company has been in operation for over 15 years. Over the last 10 years AB Dental has grown into one of the country's leading recruitment agencies for the dental industry, servicing all sectors from government, corporate and private practice.

Currently, AB Dental services over 1,200 businesses with recruiting services including supply of temporary, contract and permanent employees. As professional recruiters, AB Dental can manage as much as little of the recruitment process as required, even if only providing advice.