

Prepare Your Hiring Team To Deliver the Best Candidate

To ensure that you get the right hire, it takes more than simply putting your hiring team in place. In fact, that is only a starting point.

Once the hiring team is selected, it is necessary to align the hiring team members in terms of responsibilities, goals and ensure they have an understanding of the job requirements and duties. If you don't have this much-needed alignment, there really is no telling what you may end up with for employees.

Getting your hiring team aligned for the best results requires that a detailed information gathering process is followed. A Search Prep Questionnaire (SPQ) enables you to build team unity with everyone being on the same page.

The answers to the questions will also enable you to produce a highly refined single document that contains all the essential information about your current open job position and how to properly promote it. Information gathering is a three-step process that ensures team alignment and a quality opportunity-marketing document. They must be followed each time that you have an open position.



Patrick B. Ropella
Chairman & CEO, Ropella
Tel: (850) 983-4777
Web: www.Ropella.com

Patrick Ropella is Chairman & CEO of the Ropella Group an international Executive Search, Leadership Transformation, and Corporate Consulting firm. He authored the book and web-based training program, *The Right Hire – Mastering the Art of SMART Talent Management*, and has seen his content featured in many trade magazines, business publications, and industry journals. Patrick regularly speaks at webinars, career fairs, and conferences.



Step 1.

The hiring manager must perform this introductory step. He or she must look at the job description and ensure that it is up-to-date, accurate, and includes all aspects of the job and its responsibilities. In order to take it one step further, the hiring manager's leader should take a look at it and upgrade it with the desired objectives, goals and expected outcomes required of the person in the job position.

Step 2.

Using the SPQ, the HR manager answers basic company information, compensation, benefits, hiring process and culture questions. The hiring manager must answer the other questions to get the depth and sizzle that will help sell the opportunity. Once the questionnaire is completed, it should be submitted via email to each member of the team. Each one will review it and add their comments, notes and any further questions.

Step 3.

The hiring manager and other team members meet to create another important document to present to potential new hires. They will look at various marketing and promotional company information such as brochures, websites, organizational and departmental materials, and will use this information to create a SMART Opportunity Marketing Piece (OMP). Additional OMP information should include local information. You can even provide some promotional materials from those places at the first

interview. By taking this extra step, you show the candidate that your company is not all about work. You care about the needs and welfare of the employee's family, too.

Why Gather Information?

Readers may wonder why these steps are necessary. The main objective of taking time to gather the right information is to ensure that the hiring team is all on the same page and aligned for maximum productivity and success. The process clarifies the requirements needed for the position in terms of qualifications, experience, education and skills, and how best to interview for and how to promote the opportunity.

Others on the team may have some additional and valuable considerations, questions or comments that must be considered prior to the interview process. This process gets everyone talking, thinking and contributing before any interviews are scheduled. Not having this clarification leads to confusion, and may lead to some hiring team members wondering why certain candidates are being considered at all. Make sure the team has all questions answered beforehand

Another important reason to invest in this planning and preparation process is to ensure that the company looks good. With candidates often approaching a company with a highly polished presentation of their qualifications, as well as being ready for the questions with excellent answers, the company must provide an image that is equally polished, well thought out and with a hiring process that is clearly presented.

Candidates can easily grab tips about how to prepare for an interview and find out how to answer select questions. This enables them to be more competitive than ever—which requires that an interview and hiring team also must have it together to determine the best candidates.

A third reason is because it helps to establish your company as the leading employer of choice in your local community — not just one of your nationally or globally based competitors.

Most importantly, the SPQ enables you to gather the information you need to put together the OMP. Once you have the information, then it is essential to produce a first-class marketing piece that draws in candidates, causing them to want to know much more.

Having a professional OMP, well-informed interviewers and hiring team members, combined with a clear understanding of the position, will easily motivate candidates to believe you, listen to you, and then to want to work with you.

Collecting the Information

When gathering position information, it is important to remember that it be a collaborative procedure. You want the opinions and thoughts of others to consider all angles answer the questions uniformly. The SPQ provides a base of questions to get started. You will need to add a few questions of your own, possibly 5-10, that are position-specific. This will enable you to custom design the information to your company's goals or criteria.

Do not presume that any hiring team members will answer the questions in a particular way. This may limit the flow of vital information that will enable a better document to be produced. Some of the information should not be shared openly with the team, such as compensation, benefits and relocation.

Repeat this process for every open position. To simplify it, save the questions and answers from your first open position and use them to move quickly when the next position opens. Of course, you must eliminate questions and answers that do not pertain to the position. Use the SPQ each time you start a new search for a different position and revisit the SPQ when the same position re-opens.

Re-consider questions and answers for accuracy and relevance. Changes could have been made in the duties, requirements and skills that mandate a review

and correction to produce an up-to-date document.

It may surprise you just how many questions can be raised when your team meets to discuss an open position. When team members are allowed to add their thoughts to the discussion, it may open areas of discussion that need further analysis and examination. As surprises, disagreements and other elements enter into the discussion, each one must be fully answered. This lets you hammer out a precise document and interview and selection process and it will bring your hiring team into a highly refined position of focus — allowing them to work as a single unit when the time comes.

The SMART Questionnaire

Here is a sample of the Search Prep Questionnaire so that you can see the type of questions involved. Altogether, there are more than 60 questions.

Position/Responsibilities Basics

- Typical key day-to-day responsibilities?
- What are our overall specific targets, objectives, outcomes and/or expectations for the person in this role?

Value to Our Organization

- How does your team describe success as it relates to this position?

Where Are We?

- Why is the position available? Is it new? Did someone leave or get promoted?
- How long has the position been vacant?

Interview Process

- When interviewing candidates for this position in the past, what frustrated you the most about the candidates interviewed?
- Do you have a deadline for filling this position? If yes, what is it and why?

Selling Points

- What's unique about the opportunity that makes it exciting and attractive?
- What's the potential for growth in this position? In 3-5 years, where could you envision this person in our organization?

Corporate Culture

- Are there any issues worth noting or unspoken rules, clues or strong opinions about our culture we should be aware of when comparing the fit of candidates?

Candidate Challenges

- Are there any problems or politics that we should be aware of that might present roadblocks to the ability to do this job well?

To see a full list of SPQ questions visit www.ropella.com/therighthire.

After the hiring team has met and discussed all of the questions and added their own thoughts, the entire document needs to be assembled with all comments and views in it. The compiled document then needs to be emailed to each member of the team for a review and further notes or comments to be added. Once that is done, it needs to be edited and put into its final form for all members.