



Put the **RIGHT**
TALENT IN THE
RIGHT POSITION
RIGHT NOW!

UPDATED 1/2021



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Hiring v 1: The number one complaint of CEOs **2:** Bringing aboard the best possible candidate, someone who will develop into a leader **3:** Ability to be retained in the organization for a long time.

We have found that hiring the right people for the right job has enormous potential in resolving THE top three issues most CEOs encounter: Hiring, developing, and retaining the right people. Hiring is critical because:

Demographic trends show a serious shortage of management and leadership talent by 2020. Certain areas of the country are already seeing a brain drain. On average, CEOs tell us that 50-60% of their people are mediocre performers. Employee turnover costs from a few weeks' pay to many times the annual salary for the position.

There are many books on the subject of hiring—and for good reason. Hiring errors cost 7-9 weeks of pay for an entry-level employee, about a year's salary for a professional person, and several years' salary for senior executives and senior sales people. The following is NOT presented as a complete or total guide to the subject of hiring, but is offered as a design template to assist you with beginning a new hiring process or testing your current system.

STM stands ready with our assessment tools and experience to support that hiring process from Hire to Retire, but it is ultimately your decision when it comes to hiring a candidate or not. With our proven system, we can define and utilize the appropriate process together to generate the right outcome the first time, every time.

Sincerely,



Art Boulay, MBA, CMC
CEO, Strategic Talent Management

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Introduction

The hiring objective is: ***Hire a person who will be successful and stay with the organization for the long haul.*** Do you agree?

In our experience, the unstated hiring objective is: ***Hire the best applicant, and do it as quickly as possible because we need somebody yesterday!*** Is that wise, even if the whole group you just interviewed is below par? Will you really save time if you bring in the wrong person?

The STM process explores in detail the process of determining the need to hire an employee, recruit and screen prospective candidates, conduct the interview process*, select the appropriate candidate, make a job offer, and actually hire the employee. Not all of these suggestions will make sense for your organization, but before dismissing a recommendation out of hand, consider the impact on the bottom line of eliminating one hiring error, or retaining one more employee in whom you have invested so much time, money and energy.

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*See also the STM booklet, *Interview as if Your Bottom Line Depends on It!*

Hiring Plan

A hiring plan can assist you in offering a position to the right candidate the first time, and will assist you in developing a database for future hiring. To a prospective candidate, you will appear professional, organized and business-like, putting you a step ahead of other firms competing for their attention. Key elements to have in place for a successful plan:



- ✓ Job descriptions and performance standards reviewed annually for each position, new or established.
- ✓ Job application that addresses the following questions: how they heard about the opening, previous employment history, demographic information, references, outstanding non-compete contracts they have signed, and if the applicant has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor. A general background check, and an on-line criminal background check should be completed through the state police for a modest fee.
- ✓ Process for prospective applicants to apply: make an appointment for a telephone interview, and if appropriate, schedule at least two face-to-face interviews.
- ✓ Assess the position using a process to eliminate bias and highlight specific measurable criteria for success on the job
- ✓ Assess senior staff to establish culture, and assess the direct supervisor to establish management style.
- ✓ Plan to assess the candidate in an objective and accurate manner for fit into the organization, suitability for the position, and ability to perform based on the preceding assessments. The assessment process must include all your technical requirements for software, craft, machine operation, and so forth.
- ✓ The interview process should be performed by the owner, supervisor, and group or individual who will have the final decision in hiring an applicant. Consider team members when planning interviews.
- ✓ Provisions to store all applications for at least one year. You never know when you will need their particular services, or will want to consciously avoid spending more time with them in the future.

Strategic Talent Management, Inc. offers full support to prepare a complete plan and develop a database for future hiring.

Establish the Need to Hire

Along with what and who you are looking for, the need for an additional employee may mean business is good and growing, a key employee might be leaving, or an individual may have been fired. Before committing to hiring an employee, carefully answer the following questions:

- ✓ **Will this new hire fill a vacant position?** If so, why did the last person leave? Knowing the answer might offer insight in the recruitment of a new employee. For example, if the former employee left because there was little advancement opportunity, make sure you hire someone who is not looking for career advancement. If the former employee had a difficult time handling the tasks of the position, identify what key skills that person did not have, and what skills the new employee must possess to meet your expectations.
- ✓ **Did the last person leave because of the way the boss treated her?** This is the most common reason for employee turnover. If the answer is affirmative, do you need to modify the manager's behavior before bringing in a new employee, or must you find an employee who will work well with this manager? The most accurate and successful hiring process in the world will result in failure if good employees are driven out of the workplace by poor management behavior.
- ✓ **Who will work with the new employee?** Who are the key people with whom this person must interact? Have you factored in their behavior styles and attitudes when you look at candidates for this position? Going a step further, what are the behavior styles and attitudes of a typical client this person will be working with?
- ✓ **Is this for a job classification that already exists?** If former employees did a great job, benchmark their behaviors, attitudes, capacity and skills to judge the new applicant. On the same note, what are the styles, traits or weaknesses that are intolerable for this position; things you do not want to see in any candidate for this position? You may find it useful to consider past strong (or poor) employees when answering these questions.
- ✓ **Is this a new position?** If so, is there a job description with defined responsibilities? Who will train the new employee? Objectively determine the behaviors, attitudes, capacity, and skills necessary for the position then let it speak for itself. What are the key reasons you are filling this position? What do you need to accomplish? What are the key goals, objectives, or outcomes? Another way of thinking about this: what would NOT get done if you did not fill this position?

- ✔ Do you need an additional employee? Has there been a productivity assessment of existing staff? Would new technology reduce workloads? What does the business plan have to say or imply about the need for additional staff? Will the budget support a new employee?
- ✔ Is this position full-time or part-time? How about a temporary worker, or outsourcing all or part of the function? A classic example is hiring additional back office people when payroll and bookkeeping can be outsourced at a savings.

Prior to initiating recruitment efforts, it is very important to define the roles and responsibilities of the new employee. Create a detailed job description with objective and measurable performance standards.

Recruitment

Before beginning the recruitment process, define the most important skills and knowledge you want the future employee to possess:

- ✓ **Relationship Results:** With what type of clients, employees, vendors, or prospective customers will the candidate interact? Will the candidate's style match that of the organizational culture? How will the candidate communicate with others; how will she react to communication from others? Because you have assessed the position, your culture, and the supervisor's management style in the planning phase, you know what you need for soft skills.
- ✓ **Production Results:** What technical skills or educational background is required? Will the candidate match or exceed the required standards for production? Are they motivated to improve and grow their skills over time?

It is essential to define the characteristics that are most wanted in your new employee. Your goal is to hire the applicant who fits your needs and your company's culture. Think about the capacities needed by everyone in your company. Capacity is a set of skills and characteristics required to successfully complete a task or achieve a goal.

- ✓ What sets the company apart from the competition? What skills are required to ensure there is a competitive advantage?
- ✓ What does your organization do better than others? Specifically how do we maintain our competitive advantage?
- ✓ What existing skills do your employees already possess? Do you need to complement or supplement those skills?
- ✓ What skills and characteristics will be required from employees in the future? What does the strategic plan call for?
- ✓ How will you assure that the candidate meets these standards? How will you define these capacities?

Identify specific skill sets an employee needs to do the job well.

- ✓ What previous experience is required in order to be successful in this position?
- ✓ What education or specialized training such as degrees, certificates, and technical training is required to do the job successfully?
- ✓ Are there licensing requirements that must be met for this position?
- ✓ What specialized skills are necessary to do this job (e.g., computer software)?
- ✓ What type of learning curve (time required to get up to speed) can you afford?

Begin to recruit and interview. There are many ways to recruit without spending a lot of money. Free and inexpensive sources include:

- ✓ The most inexpensive and most often overlooked method is recruitment from within. Many employers often overlook qualified employees willing and ready to take on new challenges. How well do you know your current employees?
- ✓ Technical schools, high schools, colleges, universities, and other educational institutions have bulletin boards and job placement offices.
- ✓ Community centers, government sponsored employment centers and libraries may have bulletin boards with listings of potential candidates.
- ✓ Friends, neighbors, professional contacts, accountants, bankers, salesmen, and others can direct potential applicants your way. This assumes you and your staff have maintained excellent relationships with these people. It can also work the other way around.
- ✓ Local professional organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce, women's groups, or trade organizations may be able to refer applicants.
- ✓ Public employment services such as the state-run unemployment office have access to data bases of possible candidates.
- ✓ Customers, vendors, and businesses that are downsizing or going out of business may serve as an additional resource.

There are many sources you can tap into for advertising positions or attaining assistance with recruitment:

- ✓ Local, regional or national newspapers, magazines, and trade publications are still valuable resources. Just keep in mind that national advertisements for applicants may result in travel-related expenses.
- ✓ The internet is the recruitment tool of choice. Cover letters and resumes are available electronically. Quality applicants will tend to be looking for you online. Look for sites with a statewide or regional presence, and where appropriate, a national presence. There are many and inexpensive internet sites today—keep in mind that you often “get what you pay for” in terms of productivity and quality applicants.
- ✓ Business organizations are available to employers for recruitment purposes. They often work under two methods: contingency and retainer. In the case of contingency, the hiring firm pays the recruiter a percentage or some pre-negotiated sum for successfully placing an applicant. In the case of the retainer method, the firm pays a monthly or annual fee for the contracted service of recruitment.

Strategic Talent Management, Inc. offers a full online-based recruiting process, or will work with you to augment your own recruiting efforts.

Prospective Candidates

Before scheduling the interview, each resume and cover letter must be critically analyzed to determine if the candidate meets your needs. Does the style and quality of the cover letter and resume represent the style and quality of the individual you want to represent your company?

Analyzing Cover Letters

Look for personalized cover letters with the correct titles, addresses, and specifics of the position. By assessing the style of writing, you can determine the applicant's ability to communicate in a written format. Even for a low-level position, written communication skills are essential. How many times must people make written notes to a file, leave messages for others, or communicate to employees on another shift? Are all components of a cover letter present? Does it meet the following criteria?

- ✓ Concise—no longer than three or four paragraphs.
- ✓ Contains an introductory paragraph that explains why the applicant is applying for the position
- ✓ Contains one or two middle paragraphs highlighting accomplishments and experiences.
- ✓ Closes with a take action paragraph, i.e., the applicant states he or she will be calling to request an interview
- ✓ Sincerity.
- ✓ Demonstrates correct grammar and spelling; has clear thoughts, avoids repetition, does not repeat the resume.
- ✓ Persuasive.

Assessing Resumes

Various types of resumes exist, from chronological to functional. Whatever format the applicant chooses to use, the resume should include the following:

- ✓ Summarizes skills, accomplishments, education, and work experience.
- ✓ Communicates interest in the offered position.
- ✓ Serves as an advertisement to a potential employer.

Pre-Interview Cover Letter and Resume Evaluation Sheet

If you are inexperienced in evaluating cover letters and resumes, or have a large number of them to review, consider using the Pre-interview Cover Letter and Resume Evaluation Sheet.

- ✓ Personalized Cover letter or email
- ✓ Correct letter format
- ✓ One page-- three to four paragraphs
- ✓ No typos, correct grammar, readable
- ✓ Introductory paragraph
- ✓ Paragraph explaining background
- ✓ Concluding action paragraph
- ✓ Enclosure stated (demonstrates attention to detail)
- ✓ One to two page Resume
- ✓ Visually attractive and able to scan
- ✓ Job objective or summary of qualifications
- ✓ Communicates abilities
- ✓ No typos
- ✓ Does not state salary requirements
- ✓ 8.5 x 11-inch (standard) paper
- ✓ Avoids personal information (e.g., date of birth)
- ✓ No unexplained time gaps
- ✓ Supports ability to perform job

The Assessment Process

The dilemma in Human Resources has long been that you know exactly what you need, but how can you be certain this particular candidate can deliver? In Section 2, the need to hire someone and know exactly what you are looking for in a new employee is established. If you do not have the means to measure the job candidate's ability to meet all these requirements, then you are at risk of selecting the wrong candidate.

There are hundreds of highly accurate and relatively cost-effective tools on the market today that organizations use to assess jobs and individuals. Only the very best interviewers can match the results of a validated assessment, but not every organization can afford to keep a talented interviewer on the payroll. When you consider that hiring errors cost 7-9 weeks of pay for an entry-level person, about a year's salary for a professional person and several years' salary for senior executives and senior sales people, an assessment package is a trivial cost.

Individual Assessments

The most popular assessments look at individuals and consider four core assessments: Behavior, Motivation, Capacity and Skill. Look for assessments that are validated and have been normalized over time. Be wary of free or seemingly inexpensive assessments that do not include interpretation and support. Like any tool, assessments are only as good as the person who is using it. If you lack familiarity with these types of assessments, you may proceed with false confidence and spend more money, only to make the same old hiring mistakes.

Motivation Assessments—Why the candidate does what they do and what motivates them. Its best use is to determine fit within the culture and the propensity to succeed in a particular role. Someone motivated to make money will be success-oriented as a salesperson, but would be very unhappy as a social worker, for example.

Capacity Assessments—Will the candidate perform? This is best used to confirm that the candidate has the inner strength and drive to do the job. Someone may be motivated to make money, for example, but they will not succeed in sales if they have personal problems standing in the way of success, or lack empathy for their prospects.

Behavior Assessments—How the candidate will communicate and get along with other people. Its best use is to determine communication style and relationship-building approach. It is not predictive of success on the job. An extrovert will be gregarious and comfortable with new people, but not all extroverts are successful salespeople, for example.

Skill Assessments—Can the candidate do the job? This may be the least important because someone with the right motivation, drive and behavior can be successfully taught. If you do not have the time or commitment to coach, train and develop the candidate then you need to hire someone who already possesses the right skills, education, experience, track record, and portfolio to hit the ground running. Plan to assess for each skill set that is essential for the position, and for each skill set that you expect to need this person to have in the next one to three years.

Position Assessments

There are a few tools on the market that focus on the position itself. If you are hiring for a position where there are several incumbents or people who have held that position in the past, you can benchmark Behavior, Attitude and Capacity by looking at the combined assessments of those individuals. This works very well. If you are hiring for a new position in a brand new division, or simply do not know what you are looking for, it is imperative to objectively determine the capacities required for the position.

Position Capacity Analysis—Involves a great deal of interviewing and data compilation that could get complicated and expensive. Like most everything else in the hiring process, this can now be done over the internet more quickly and more cost-effectively than ever before. As above, seek out validated tools and experienced assistance.

The Interview Process

The interview process can be a difficult one, especially if there are a number of qualified candidates for a particular position. Being the sole interviewer can, at times, make the process arduous. It is very difficult to be objective after a few interviews so, at times, it is beneficial to use other employees as part of the interview process. As an owner, department head, or human resources professional, you can always retain the right to make the final decision to hire or not to hire a candidate. Consider a two-step interview, where you invite only those candidates that did well on the first interview to come back for a second interview.

Pre-Screening—the Telephone Interview

Once you have determined which candidates qualify for an interview with their resume, contact them on the phone and have a brief conversation about what they are looking for in the position. This will identify any red flags before scheduling a face-to-face meeting. Pre-screening can save you valuable time, enabling you to weed out those individuals who lack strong verbal and communication skills. During the telephone interview, ask these questions:

- ✓ What prompted you to apply for the position?
- ✓ What kind of working environment are you looking for?
- ✓ Why are you looking for a new position?
- ✓ What do you especially like or dislike about your current position?
- ✓ Where would you like to be in 12 months? 5 years? 10 years?

If the candidate appears to be a good match, have them complete your assessments and schedule an interview.

Interviewing

During the interview, keep in mind that you will tend to be attracted to people who share your behavior style, and that behavior is a poor predictor of success on the job. Attitudes are a highly accurate predictor of success on the job; but this can be difficult to judge during an interview, particularly if your view is clouded by behavior style that is attractive to you. Refer to a more extensive review of this subject in STM's *Interview as if Your Bottom Line Depends on It!* booklet.

Ask behavior-based questions to help you identify how an applicant will perform when faced with a situation in your company. Behavior questions have three components: Situation, behavior and impact.

Situation—Ask applicants to describe specific situations they have encountered that are similar to those found in your organization (e.g., questions related to securing a new client, managing a challenging employee, or dealing with an unhappy customer).

Behavior—Ask applicants to tell you in detail what they did in one of the situations described above. Probe for specific examples.

Impact—Ask them how the situation was resolved. What was the result of their decisions, actions or strategies?

- ✓ As you are speaking with the applicant, look for verbal and nonverbal signs that will help you identify the candidate's ability to communicate. Know what behavior you are looking for and what you actually see.
- ✓ When interviewing, incorporate open-ended questions in which the candidate is required to expand upon their answers. Remember, you want to attain a realistic picture of your candidate.
- ✓ Keep in mind that it is better to have two or three questions or scenarios that get the applicant to talk, than a dozen vague or “yes/no” questions.
- ✓ Use a second interview to affirm your choice in an applicant and to attain the opinions of others. Avoid discussing anything that could be considered prejudicial (e.g., race, sex, family status, sexual orientation, physical disability, arrests and criminal charges).
- ✓ The only way to compare applicants is to have pre-determined questions and a ranking system on an interview sheet with room for notes (for a sample interviewing sheet, refer to the article *Hiring Wisely* available on our website or in our booklet, *Interview as if Your Bottom Line Depends on It!*). Keep in mind that not only verbal responses, but body language, eye contact, the applicant's preparation for the interview, their questions, interests and interpersonal skills are all important components to be considered.
- ✓ Take consistent notes for each interview.

Some major interviewing errors that are easy to identify are:

- ✓ Applicant is late.
- ✓ Applicant gets lost finding facility and/or did not prepare.
- ✓ Body language does not portray interest.
- ✓ Does not know interviewer's name when it was given to them in advance.
- ✓ Unfamiliar with company—did not do their homework.
- ✓ Applicant asks about salary.
- ✓ Lack of depth to questions.

The qualities of the applicant's questions are essential in assessing their interest in joining your team. Remember to get input from the staff that helped during the interview. They may provide invaluable information about the candidate.

Before the reference checks are completed, the interviewer may often receive a thank you letter for the interview. This may enhance your opinion of the applicant.

Reference Checks

- ✓ Always check references. Reference checks may unveil potential problems in applicants, especially when there are conflicting statements between the applicant and the reference. The applicant can be asked specific questions about the discrepancies. Reference checks may be difficult because many companies avoid providing detailed information regarding the applicant. Michael's Personal Communication recommends that you should start the reference check by attaining factual information verifying employment. From there, proceed to more detailed information regarding the applicant's behavior, attitude and capacity. Ask about communication skills, satisfaction of co-workers, supervisor's satisfaction with performance, ability to meet demands of the job and, most importantly, the company's willingness to rehire.
- ✓ Keep in mind that applicants not hired may sue their current or prior employer for giving a defaming reference. If you are the new employer, you may sue your new hire's prior employer for inaccurately giving positive or complimentary information on the reference check when the new hire demonstrates problems in their new performance. Remember that a reference check may be valuable in giving you critical information, but it is subjective. Information gathered from all references should be compared for similarities. Only one negative reference check may demonstrate a poor interpersonal relationship.
- ✓ Hiring an employee can be a stressful task. A wrong hire is costly, disruptive, difficult for other staff members, and stressful for the employer. Before making a decision to hire an applicant, get each applicant's entire information packet in order then gather and review everything for all your top candidates.
- ✓ As you review the applicant's information, think about the skills that are critical in your new recruit. A second interview always beneficial. Invite the top applicants to come back.
- ✓ Involve other employees in the interview process. It can be interesting to see the disparity between the information disclosed to a potential co-worker compared to what is divulged to the potential supervisor. Valuable insight can be attained from these employees about prospective candidates.
- ✓ Do not hire an applicant just to hire someone. Find the right match. For instance, you may encounter an applicant with all the right skills, but the candidate's personality may not mesh with your business's culture.

Job Offer and Onboarding

After you make a verbal job offer and the applicant accepts, write a formal letter offering the applicant the job. Be sure to include a copy of the employee handbook, company policies and job description, work hours, start date, length of probationary period, and an orientation schedule. If you are including clauses like a non-compete clause and a letter of agreement to be signed by both the employee and the employer, you should have your attorney review or draft the letter.

In the meantime, be sure you have prepared the new hire's supervisor for managing this unique and valuable individual. Switch gears now to the Management Process to assure a regular and open channel of communication between them. Remember the number one cause of employee turnover is ***poor day-to-day management***.

The last thing to complete the hiring process is an onboarding process that is meaningful, thorough, and complete. Keep the door open for communication during the first ninety or more days of employment. Any issue that arises from either the organization's perspective or the new employee's perspective should be resolved immediately. The objective is that the new employee knows they are valued and that they made the right decision in joining your organization.

Components of an effective employee onboarding program:

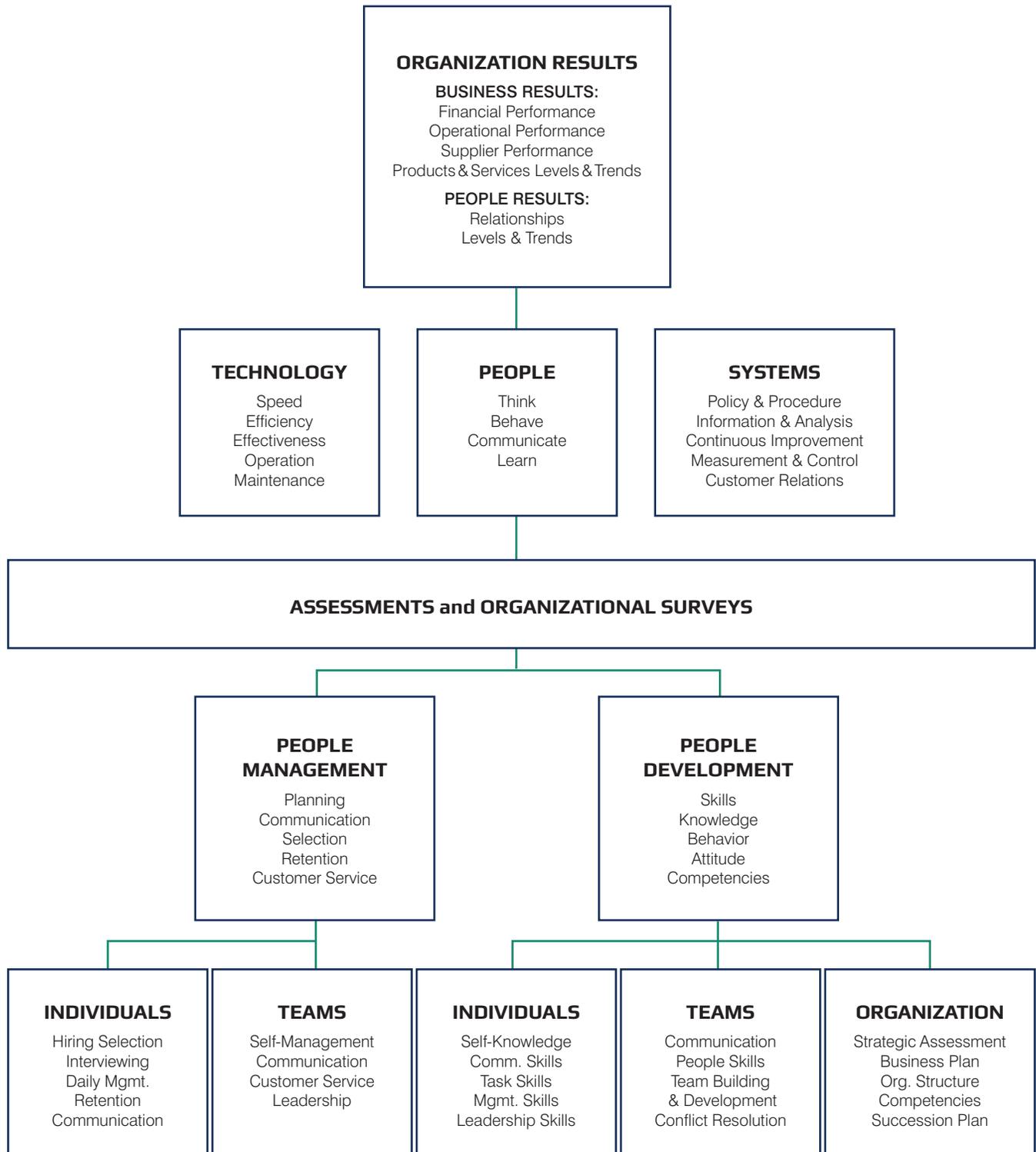
Human Resources designs a formal orientation program, manages an orientation checklist, evaluates orientation activities, places the employee on the payroll, and explains benefits, company organization, and provides personal tour of the facility.

The manager prepares coworkers to warmly receive the new employee, introduces the new employee, and provides an overview of the job setting, department plans and work rules. Where appropriate, the manager provides personal introductions to key customers, vendors and people inside or outside the organization with whom the employee will interact.

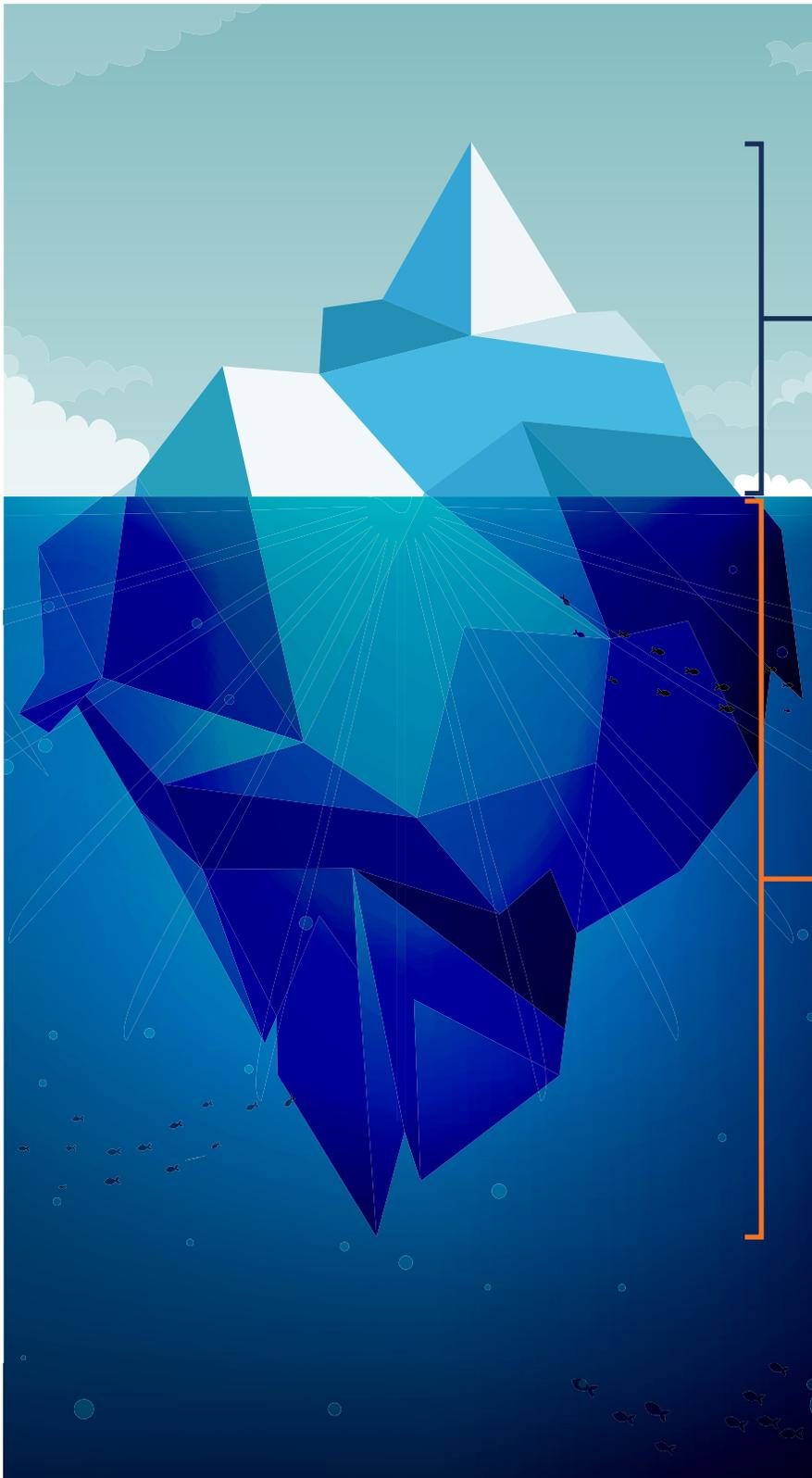
The major underlying theme is to define good communication, maintain open and meaningful communication, and demonstrate by example and by your systems exactly how communication is managed and valued in the organization.

Senior Managers should introduce themselves; provide the organization's history, future plans, and important information about customers, products, and the organization's competitive advantage.

Appendix



How the Assessments are Related



Behaviors

How one is perceived to perform (Communication Style)

Behaviors are visible and observable. They are not about us so much as how we are perceived by others. We are judged by how we communicate and interact with others.

Motivators

Why one performs

Motivators shape Behaviors. They show how we determine the importance of people and things around us and what spurs us to action.

Competency

Will one perform (Capacity, Attitudes, Energy and Drive)

Competency shapes both our Behaviors and Motivators. It informs how we think about the world around us and ourselves. Competency includes attitudes, beliefs, energy and drive.

Attributes

Predict performance (Common Business Success Factors)

Attributes are specific factors common in business and organizational life that speak to our predicted performance.



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