

Casey Accounting & Finance Solutions

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Casey Accounting & Finance Resources Inc.

Specialists in the Placement of Accounting & Finance Professionals
Direct Hire, Temporary and Temp to Hire Placement
"Our People are our Greatest Asset!"

Using Assessments In The Hiring Process

Hiring the right people for your organization has always been a key ingredient of success, but is more critical today than ever before. Individuals come into the workplace with diverse cultural, education, experience, and backgrounds and many have clear expectations of how they want their job to fit into their overall lifestyle. With increasingly strict guidelines for hiring practices, how can an employer differentiate among qualified candidates without discriminating against them? Background and reference checks may allow a decision maker to eliminate some candidates, and a well-planned interview or series of interviews can provide valuable insights into the candidates. Unfortunately, the usefulness of the information gathered by these means greatly depends on the skill of the individual gathering that information.

Organizations seeking additional insights into candidates are turning with increasing frequency to assessment instruments or processes.

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Do You Have Outstanding Teams Working For You?

Different Talents Create Powerful Teamwork

- ◆ *You have teams that work, but do you have teams that WORK?*
- ◆ *Often the full potential of teamwork is blocked due to misunderstandings of different behavioral styles and motivators.*
- ◆ *Enable the success of teams in your organization by recognizing and leveraging the full spectrum of their different talents.*

Our workplace has become a perpetually changing environment fueled by flexible teamwork. People are called upon to participate in teams to repeatedly rethink, restructure, reinvent, and redeploy business resources. The changing times in which we live require talented individuals skilled at working in teams.

Teams are enriched with individuals who offer a wide spectrum of talents in areas such as behaviors and motivators – that is a given. Or is it? After closer observation of teamwork in your organization, you may find a number of team members who are merely tolerating their counterparts due to what is commonly described as “personality differences.”

Gregory E. Huszczo, author of *Tools for Team Excellence* (1996), and *Tools for Team Leadership* (2004), advises that successful teams must develop an awareness of the individual strengths each member contributes.

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These processes may include assessment centers, where candidates go through a battery of assessment instruments, role playing exercises, and interviews over a period of one or more days. Psychological assessments by an organizational psychologist, assessment instruments administered by company personnel either on site or on line, or some combination of these approaches may also be done. *(Assuming that the individuals administering and interpreting the assessments have been properly trained)* The advantages of using assessments as part of the hiring process are as follows:



- 1. Benchmarking** – This is the process of determining what skills, talents, attitudes, and behaviors are important for successful performance in a given position. By analyzing the results of individuals who have demonstrated success in a given position and the requirements of the position, candidates can be compared with a set of objective standards.
- 2. Comparative analysis** – Standardized assessments allow for the direct comparison among individuals on whatever dimensions are measured by the instruments. For example, if a given position requires a high level of attention to detail and the assessments used measure attention to detail, the suitability of one candidate over another on that dimension can be directly determined.
- 3. Quantifying organizational culture** – Organizations have their own personalities, just as individuals do. A major contributing factor of an individual's success in an organization is how well that individual assimilates into the organization's culture, which has been loosely defined as how we do things around here. In fact, as an individual rises in an organization, his or her technical ability becomes less important and his or her ability to understand, work within,

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and influence the culture of the organization becomes critically important. Assessments can quantify many aspects of an organization's culture, although not all.

- 4. Technology** – The workplace has changed dramatically in the last decade and technology has driven those changes. Individuals cyber commute or work flex hours, companies conduct virtual meetings to reduce travel time and expense, and almost instantaneous communication is the norm rather than the exception. Many standardized assessments can be administered on-line, allowing for individuals to respond at any time, day or night, and from their office, home, or laptop. This allows organizations to determine which candidates meet the minimum requirements to move ahead in the hiring process without the cost in time and manpower of bringing obviously unsuitable candidates in for a visit to the company office.

Although the advantages mentioned above are real, a word of caution is in order. The use of standard assessments is only one element in an effective hiring process. They should not be used instead of background checks, reference checks, and personal interviews. Assessments should be used together with these other sources of information. Your organization is never going to be one hundred percent accurate in hiring new employees, but a systematic approach to hiring, effectively using assessment tools, can greatly reduce the number of hiring mistakes and its accompanying pain for all involved.

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Motivational Quotes

Opportunity...Often it comes disguised in the form of misfortune, or temporary defeat.

— Napoleon Hill

There is no future in any job. The future lies in the person who holds the job.

— George Crane

In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity.

— Albert Einstein

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“Capitalizing on the natural strengths of your personality and enjoying interaction with people who are different from you are crucial for (team) success. Tolerating differences in the personalities of people you work with is not enough – you need to celebrate those differences. They provide the natural strengths you may need to benefit the team.”

Personality conflicts are common, and they inevitably lead to “talent withdrawal” by team members who are experiencing them. As a result, these individuals most likely have opted out of actively contributing to attaining team goals. The team cannot perform up to its maximum potential until solutions are found.



How do you recognize talent withdrawal in your teams? It can be demonstrated in several ways. Here are two of the most common:

1) LIMITED PARTICIPATION in TEAM MEETINGS

If team members withhold contributions during team meetings, this signals talent withdrawal. Their energies are being directed elsewhere. Looking through their eyes, some reasons may be:

- One or two members consistently dominate meetings by talking all the time
- A member habitually uses the team meetings to promote personal successes and self-interest
- Too much theory and details are regularly discussed at length, with no practical applications
- A couple of members regularly engage in heated debate, perceived by others as undesirable conflict and aggressiveness

2) MISUNDERSTANDINGS between TEAM MEMBERS

No two people are exactly alike, and differences can contribute either great value or unwanted tension to any team. Misunderstandings between team members can often be a matter of the following:

- A team member with an indirect communication style feels continually “shut down” and resentful about another’s naturally direct communication style
- Another is not aware that his lengthy, analytical communication style regularly blocks his messages from being welcomed by others



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ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Suggested Reading For Leaders

The book *Conversations on Leadership* is a collection of conversations from some of America’s most dynamic leaders. Their insights, perspectives, and strategies are having a dramatic impact on people, organizations, and even countries, across America and around the world. You will learn from these leaders and find encouragement and inspiration to continue your own leadership journey. It is a journey well worth taking.

Contact Ray Russell at ExecuTrends for your copy.
(480) 668-7335



Compliments Of –

Casey Accounting & Finance Resources Inc.

5105 Tollview Dr, Suite 263
Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

Tel: 847.253.9030
Or 312-332-TEMP (8367)



E-mail:
Info@CaseyResources.com

Visit Our Web Site at:
www.CaseyResources.com

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- Someone consistently displays a lack of value for people-related topics, offending those whose motivators are more people-oriented
- One team member is personally motivated to take the lead all the time, while others feel their contributions are consistently overshadowed

How can you take steps to prevent talent withdrawal in your teams? Many team leaders use behavior and motivator diagnostics to reveal how team members can leverage their different talents to work together most effectively. Individualized reports on behavioral styles and personal motivators reveal both strengths and potential weaknesses. With this knowledge, teams gain effective tools for addressing teamwork issues and maximizing performance.

Teams will continue to fuel progress in the workplace, and valuing and leveraging different talents will remain essential tools for achieving powerful teamwork.

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Three grand essentials to happiness in this life are something to do, something to love, and something to hope for.

– Joseph Addison

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Casey Resources, Inc. 847.253.9030 or E-mail: Info@CaseyResources.com

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5105 Tollview Dr, Suite 263

Rolling Meadows, IL 60008

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