

## Staffing Basics

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As a leader or manager, how would you rate your staff's performance? And, how would they rate your own? What factors would you use and what factors would you omit?

Performance evaluations are always important yet challenging. As in a sales deal, the goal in evaluating performance is to create a win-win situation for both evaluator and the one being evaluated. This is important for many reasons, chief among them is this: turnover is expensive! Your company's investment to find, hire, train and compensate an employee walks out of the door when the employee walks out.

### Show me the money...

Staffing costs generally represent the highest costs of a business. They include employee pay, the company's share of benefits cost and the company's portion of taxes, including social security, medicare, state and federal unemployment. Other associated costs include the company's share in a retirement benefits plan, training and development, relocation and travel expenses. The time and expense of finding, interviewing and on-boarding an employee are also included. So then, depending upon the type and size of the company, employees are the most expensive company resource. And, they can pose a significant risk to the organization's stability when they do not behave as needed or produce the results needed by the organization.

### You complete me...

Selecting the right employee for a position and particularly a team is paramount. Using the letters of the word staff, we can use the following acrostic for identifying a good employee.

S = Skilled. The person must possess the skills needed in order to do the job and produce the expected results. These skills must first be identified by the company and based on the company's actual needs. A written job description listing these skills, previous experiences, and educational requirements will serve as an invaluable tool during and after the job search.

T = Teachable. No one knows everything about everything. In order to be a good employee and/or team player, one must know what he/she knows and be willing to learn from anybody else the things they do not know. People who cannot learn from others can quickly become a liability to the company.

A = Assertive. A good employee will take initiative towards their work and be a self-starter. They will self-check and make corrections without being told or making excuses.

F = Flexible. The only consistent thing about working for a company is change. An employee that is set on how it was done before will surely impede progress.

F = Focused. With the availability of hand-held technology for contacting others, listening to music or talk shows and watching movies, it is easier to be distracted than focused on the tasks at hand. In addition, workplace gossip is an ever-living and thriving parasite that eats away at focus. Employees who can avoid these and other distractions at work are far more productive.

These are areas for review in performance evaluations. We will see how to use them and others in the coming issues.