

## Key Traits in Solid Candidates & Employees Dean Tracy

As a seasoned recruiter and career coach, I have worked with a number of companies and individuals over the years, and as such I have hired or have represented high-earning candidates. While every applicant is different, I have learned some universal traits to look for in successful candidates.

In screening and qualifying candidates for open positions, and as you consider candidates or current employees for new roles, these five points below highlight a few of the most important traits for you to review as you assess their qualifications.

- **Accountable – Integrity**

Being reliable and dependable is a “given” in today’s competitive professional market, but the point to consider is whether or not this is a candidate who can be held accountable. What would his or her “accountability report card” look like?

In other words, you want to be able to count on this person to be on time to meetings and have tasks and reports completed within the prescribed timeframe. A candidate who is making excuses or is not able to answer your “accountability” questions with confidence is probably not the person who will be the most enthusiastic about the role.

- **Scalable – Growth**

You need to determine if this candidate has the capacity to be successful in this role on a long-term basis. It’s relatively simple to find someone who will show up day-in and day-out and do the job, but you must be able to identify traits in this candidate that will embrace long-term scalability and growth with the company. You need to know that this is a person who is committed to continuing education and professional development and is in alignment with your business continuity plans.

- **Conversational - Good Interpersonal Skills**

Lack of conversation reflects lack of interest. A solid candidate should have exceptional communication skills on several levels. Sure, you want the candidate to be able to make small talk, but this must also be a person you can count on to deliver presentations to internal and external clients and customers.

- **Ethical - Claims versus Evidence**

Be mindful of the candidate who claims to have all of the qualifications for the role, but none of the evidence necessary to be successful. I see resumes daily that might read like a job description, and, unfortunately, very few of

them have the “so what” factor that might be evidence of their accomplishments.

Nearly every task in every job has an impact on revenue, systems or people. This is the evidentiary and supporting data that is vital to understanding the impact that this candidate has had in his or her previous role.

- **Financial - Demonstrated Quantitative Results**

Among other things, remember that the hiring manager really cares about the financial aspect of this candidate’s contribution to the company and the department. Regardless of the role that is being filled, there are usually two important considerations that must be reviewed: revenue and timing.

**Revenue**—Based upon the background of this candidate and the role that he or she will fulfill in the company, the hiring manager must be able to determine or anticipate how much revenue will be generated as the result of the engaged candidate.

**Timing**—The hiring manager needs to understand how quickly this candidate can begin to generate revenue for the company. The return on investment will vary based on the role being filled, but this is invaluable in determining and anticipating the sustainability of the candidate and the company.

As a human resources professional or leader in your company, finding quality candidates is paramount to the organizational success. If you take the time to engage with your candidates at deeper level, you will find that behind the shell of fear, intimidation, sweaty palms and probably a degree of desperation, there is a quality candidate who will usually jump at the chance to be held to a higher standard in the selection process.

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