

Making the Most of McQuaig – 2

Interview more effectively using The McQuaig System™

The Third Factor

They say no one will admit to being a poor lover. In just the same way no manager will admit to being a poor interviewer – and that perhaps is the problem. Yet do we see interviewing as a skill to be learned, practiced and developed, the same as any other skill?

While professional interviewers practice daily, as line managers we may only interview two or three times a year. Yet get it wrong and the pain is great, not only in terms of cost to the company, but also in terms of the severe knock to our self respect and self esteem.

Gut feel and ability won't wash

Many managers make interview decisions based on only two factors:

1. Gut feel - "I think they will fit in here" or "I like him/her".
2. Ability – "The candidate's technical skills and track record are good and that's enough for me".

Thus, we spend most time questioning the candidate on information we can get from the CV or application form.

We hire on technical skills and fire for lack of behavioural fit

Behavioural fit impacts ability to perform the job. So how can we become expert at picking the right person? In reality we will always consider gut feel and ability. **But we need to**

look at the more important third factor – how well the candidate's behavioural traits match those required by the job and the impact they will have on performance.

That's where The McQuaig System™ helps us to objectively qualify and counter balance our gut feel and not depend entirely on technical ability.

Knowing what you're looking for is obvious - maybe not!!!

One 30,000 employee organisation that uses the McQuaig System asked for our consultant Malcolm Slade to be involved in the assessment process for appointing a senior manager. He was to have national responsibility and report to a number of divisional MDs.

Two MD's spent half a day drafting a job description and the person specifications. Each was then asked to separately complete the McQuaig Job Analysis and McQuaig Job Survey to come up with a behavioural profile for the job.

Each came up with opposite behavioural requirements. If this had not been picked up prior to interview, each would have been interviewing for opposite qualities. The chosen candidate would not have lasted long in a stressful and impossible position which would require conflicting personalities to meet both expectations!

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Interview more effectively using The McQuaig System™ cont.

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That's why the third factor is the most important. That's to say we need to clearly define our **behavioural requirements** for the job using the McQuaig Job Survey® so that we can assess the candidate against these requirements. Comparison with the McQuaig Word Survey® will allow an objective match of candidate to job – much better than gut feel and more predictive than technical ability.

Identify past behaviour as a guide to future performance

The challenge for any busy manager is finding time to prepare quality interview questions. Without time, we will tend to base these on technical ability because that's what we know and because we tend to think on our feet during the interview.

With the McQuaig Job Survey and McQuaig Word Survey there is a ready made set of behavioural questions. These are specific to the candidate and the job – at the same time there's a clear outline of the types of response we need to hear to make a successful appointment.

To sum up

To be an effective interviewer we need to take into account all three factors with a much stronger emphasis on the third factor – behavioural requirements. The McQuaig System is there to help us draw out this third factor - to help us pick the right person for the job.

Interview Checklist

Before the interview...

1. List the key behavioural job requirements
2. Produce a McQuaig Job Survey so you can match appropriate candidates
3. Assess the candidate's behavioural temperament using the McQuaig Word Survey.

And remember during the interview...

1. **The First Factor** - welcome and introductions etc. should take no more than 3 minutes
2. **The Second Factor** - checking information from the CV and application form on technical requirements should need no more than 7 minutes
3. **The Third Factor** - asking behavioural based questions to identify future behaviour should take the majority of the interview time.
4. Always communicate next steps before you close the interview.

Free Booklet

Professional Practices – Interviewing and Selecting Exceptional People

We have a number of free booklets which expand on the principles outlined in this brief. If you would like a copy please email mcquaiginfo@holstgroup.co.uk stating whether you would like this in electronic format or hard copy (please give postal address).