



Media Jockey

A Newsletter from Xanthus Communications

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Brand Legacy

How to Make Good Hires

By Joseph M. Puggelli

I've been hiring people in business and education for 25 years and in that time I've learned two things. The first is that Jim Collins is right on target in his excellent book "Good to Great." Collins says that the way to create a great organization is get the right people "on the bus." In other words, hire well and win; don't, and lose.

The second lesson that experience has taught me is that most people who hire are as clueless about the process as I was when I started, when I seriously underestimated the

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You're hired. You're fired. Brand People.

Dear Friends and Colleagues: Greetings! The strategy behind smart Public Relations must always take into account Human Resources. The two most important "Rs" in business are Public Relations and Human Resources. Seattle-based branding expert Sean O'Connor thinks Human Resources should be renamed Human Relations. I agree. The people who work for you are the evangelists for your brand. The people who work for you are your face to the world and they can talk you up or talk you down. They can make or break your business. Who is really bringing value to your business and who is not?



Regardless of industry or sector, I have observed large-cap companies, mid-cap companies, startups, solopreneurs, government agencies, academic institutions and professional firms hire people to just do a job instead of taking the time to explore whether a new hire really fits within the "brand culture" and in particular fits with its mission, vision and core values. We have all worked with people who were just good enough to get you beat. Who is doing the minimum to get by? Or maybe their definition of good isn't good enough. It is a time to make tough decisions about who to let go and then to recruit new talent. No matter the position, top to bottom, from CEOs to receptionists, everyone who works with you is actively engaged in your public relations outreach and is executing your brand for the entire world to see.

This month we are proud to feature Sally Haver, a Senior Vice President of Business Development with The Ayers Group/Career Partners International, and a division of Kelly Services. From her office on the 16th floor of the Chrysler Building, for over 15 years, she has been delivering career management services to the key executive population. Sally has some great ideas about how to attract and retain key talent in good markets and in bad. In this issue, we also have the brilliant organizational management expert Joseph M. Puggelli who shares some thoughts about how he successfully hires top talent in-house. We have devoted this entire issue to the R's because we believe when you have your R's in alignment, it is inevitable that the

time and resources and focus that need to be devoted to hiring if one wants to get the right people on the bus.

The key to hiring is to make it a process, one that is as diversified as possible both in terms of the situations the candidate is in and the people who interact with him: a candidate should go through multiple interviews, some more formal, some less so, with multiple people over several days. I considered it a high compliment years ago when a candidate said to me, "That's the most extensive and intensive interview process I've ever been through."

The interviewers should work as a team, which should include individuals who have great experience and success in the candidate's field and some who have great intuitive "people" skills but not necessarily experience in the candidate's field. All interviewers should know what they're looking to evaluate, which include the candidate's competence in the job area, character, fit with the company culture, and strengths outside of the job area

third and most important R of all (Revenue) will follow.

Best Regards,

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[Visit PRforPeople to learn more about our experts.](#)

Featured Expert

Sally Haver| Expert in Career Management and Staffing

Sally Haver is a senior sales/marketing professional and career management consultant with a broad-based business background encompassing human resources consulting services, recruitment, university placement, advertising/marketing, and show business. At The Ayers Group, Ms. Haver leverages her wide range of corporate senior contacts, combined with excellent writing and platform presentation skills, to the bottom-line benefit of her firm. She is known in the field as a competitive, persistent, and a highly creative contributor who mentors with a generosity of spirit.



Before joining The Ayers Group, Ms. Haver consulted to other major firms in the career transition field. Prior positions include Director of Placement and Professional Services at The New School for Social Research, where she advised and placed alumni; Vice President at Jerry Fields Associates, the oldest and largest recruitment firm in the advertising industry; and Account Executive at a creative agency/boutique offshoot of Wells Rich Greene Advertising. Ms. Haver, for a number of years, founded and ran Monterey Music, a musical production company that created and produced broadcast commercials for radio and television. Early on, she had a stint in show business. She was the on-camera principal of an NBC-network show for children, The First Look, Kraft Music Hall, and FTD/Bell Telephone industrial show, where she honed her presentation skills and learned to become at-ease in front of TV audiences.

Ms. Haver holds a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology from Wellesley College and a Master's Degree in Musicology from the New England Conservatory of Music. She is certified as a Career Management Fellow, the highest ranking given by the International Board for Career Management Certification, and helped found the New York Chapter of the International Association of Career Management Professionals. Ms. Haver is an active member of numerous professional organizations; she is a pro bono lecturer at The Bottomless Closet, an organization that helps economically disadvantaged women gain employment.

she is interviewing for. Most importantly, the process should include the candidate's having to do something that shows his skills, not just talk about them.

The diversification of both situations and interviewers increases the likelihood that that you will get a "true read" on a candidate rather than a "false positive" from someone who interviews well or an equally possible "false negative" from someone who does not interview well. A woman whom we hired as a receptionist in my client's marketing research company made a poor impression in the initial interviews because she was nervous, but by the middle of the second day she was wowing everyone. She later became a partner in the company.

I know no one who can correctly assess a candidate after an hour of conversation. But after the candidate has spent two days with eight different people who have experience working as a hiring team and we pool our notes, thoughts, and impressions, a more complete picture of the candidate's reality emerges.

Ms. Haver has given lectures on career management issues at corporations, organizations and universities. She has been quoted in Fortune, Working Woman, Newsday, Newsweek, The Daily News, The Wall Street Journal, The Philadelphia Inquirer, U.S. News and World Report, and The Christian Science Monitor; trade publications: Business & Finance, Employment Review, Employment Crossing, Human Resources Executive. She has appeared in the broadcast media: Good Day, New York, CNN, CNN Financial, Wall Street Journal Radio, Bloomberg Radio, and Reuters. For more information, please see <http://www.prforpeople.com>.

Expert Quote

"Smart workers are learning machines. They keep their fingers on the pulse of not only 'what is' but 'what will be' - so that their skills will be a good match for a company's - or an industry's - strategic plans. Smart workers understand where their hard and soft skills lie, what makes them happy, and what the market is and is not looking for at any given time.'

--Sally Haver, **Expert in Career Management and Staffing**

All those with extensive experience in hiring know that the most difficult candidate to guard against is the articulate, intelligent incompetent. When I identify someone with great intuitive skills in my organization, I always make sure that he or she spends considerable time with a candidate even if their skill areas seem to be unrelated. I've worked over the years with men and women who have exceptional intuition honed by life experience and who are to the articulate, intelligent incompetent what the canary in the coal mine was to methane gas: if they say "There's a problem here," get out of the mine shaft.

The other thing that weeds out those who can talk but not do, and also gives a chance to shine to those who do far better than they talk, is to have the candidate complete an exercise that showcases key strengths and skills necessary to do the job well. For example, in business I have given candidates writing tests and then had them read a case study and then prepare an oral report with recommendations to solve the problem

in the case study. The woman who started as a receptionist and became a partner did a brilliant job of responding to an interviewer who was role playing as an angry customer. When I'm part of a team hiring teachers, every teaching candidate has to teach two separate classes: any bad teacher can have one good class and any good teacher can have a bad one. Over two classes, the truth will probably assert itself.

I've learned to keep a notebook with great interviews questions I've "borrowed" from others. Here's one: Tell me about a mistake you've made, what made you realize the error, what steps you took to fix the problem, and how the experience changed your behavior in the future. Every outstanding person I've ever seen became outstanding by taking responsibility for mistakes and by learning from them. I once saw a CEO candidate nail the job with of the best and most revealing stories I've ever heard.

The literal and figurative cost of making good hires is extensive. This high

executives. It is the place to get personal with people concerned about Personnel.

Brand Name--Our Guest Author

Joseph M. Puggelli



An outstanding principal, teacher, management consultant, and former coach, Mr. Puggelli has won a national Newsweek-Sallie Mae award for excellence in teaching and also several awards for coaching football and wrestling. He is now the principal at the nationally ranked Seattle Academy, where he also teaches honors English at the Upper School. Under his management, during the past twelve years, Seattle Academy has quadrupled in the size of its staff and students. Prior to joining Seattle Academy, he had his own management consulting firm in New York City. Clients included the Greenfield Consulting Group, Eastern Consolidated Properties, and SL Green Realty. For more information, please see <http://www.prforpeople.com>.

HR Tip

According to Sally Haver: To attract and retain key talent, in good markets and bad, there are numbers of perks that should be taken into consideration. Make certain that incentives and perks demonstrate your company's brand. Here are some thoughts:

1. Guaranteed bonuses based on the level of risk associated with the job, i.e., new company with financing issues; newly created position within the company; company's success based on sales of a new product or service, etc.
2. An exit package (severance, outplacement, change of control agreement, etc.) based on level of seniority.
3. Underwriting of expenses for attending industry conferences and other professional events to keep the exec "plugged in" and growing in his or her expertise.
4. Training & development, including fast-track executive coaching, assimilation coaching for new senior executives, etc.
5. Customized benefits packages tailored for the executive's unique needs.

"Brand Turf"

If Word-of-Mouth is the most effective of all Public Relations tools, then you need to work with people who can passionately communicate your brand's message to the world.

cost is exceeded only by the cost of making bad hires.

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Brand Value

Is your internal PR in alignment with your external PR? Do the people who work with you understand your company's mission, vision and core values? Do they put these core values into action?

pr for people™

Be famous for who you are and what you do.

Please visit PRforPeople.com to learn more about our experts.

For questions or comments, please reply to patricia@xanthuscom.com

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