



Helping Organizations Define and Develop Top Talent

## The DNA of Performance

By Jennifer C. Zamecki and the Team at Well-Run Concepts

What does your selection process consist of... a few interviews, a drug test, a background check and a reference check? These are all necessary steps, however, today's corporate environment calls for a more sophisticated level of analysis in selecting the right people for the right job. Over the past thirty years, our society has shifted from an industrial work age to an informational society based on making intangible products. We have moved from making widgets to creating innovation which in turn demands organizations to rethink their hiring methods. Today's successful corporations are turning towards new ways for selecting the right individuals with the required skills to perform in the position for which they are hired.

Unfortunately, many organizations begin this tenuous process on the "wrong foot" by using antiquated methods in their hiring system that tend to focus too heavily on technical or hard skills. The most common errors made in the interview process result from the interviewer's biases based on education and experience and an overall lack of understanding about the performance requirements of the position. This undermines the effectiveness of the entire selection process and all too often results in high turnover rates that cost the company big bucks. Current research estimates that each turnover can cost companies somewhere between 50% - 100% of the position's annual salary.

Starting off the hiring process on the right foot begins with selecting individuals with the soft skill competencies required for the position. In today's competitive job market, soft skill competencies such as communication, teamwork, diversity, and leadership are required for success in the work place just as much if not more than the technical, more knowledge-based skills. Today, companies need to be focusing on selecting individuals who can communicate with others and be team-oriented as well as computer literate. In this new information-based work environment, the question inevitably becomes: how do you measure these soft skill competencies?

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The difficulty in assessing the level of certain competencies in different individuals spurs from the fact that positions are unique and all organizations are different. People therefore view the job description and the position requirements in varying ways.

This often leads to confusion about what core competencies are necessary for superior job performance. Researchers that have studied the challenges of measuring soft skills have developed a system that clarifies the hardwiring of competencies called the DNA of Performance. This particular system is based on a patented process that is used to analyze the unique configuration of skills, intelligence, behavior, attitudes and beliefs required by a specific job.

The DNA of Performance provides businesses with a consistent framework to use in the hiring process that integrates the ideas of people within the company ranging from management to incumbents who are familiar with the skills required for the position. The process begins with a list of 20 competencies that have been identified as the most valued skills in the workplace today such as decision making, listening, problem solving, conflict management, presenting and persuasion. The final product is a computer-generated report that provides a summary of position characteristics, detailed definitions of the top five competencies needed and a list of questions to use in the selection process. What is more, this process is now conveniently accessible through the web.

The competency-based position analysis provides organizations with a benchmark by which to measure how much or how little of the essential competencies an individual has. More significantly, it removes biases from the selection process by utilizing a standard format that is based on the input of key people within the company. It has been proven that the most effective businesses identify and prioritize the competencies needed for superior performance. Then integrate these competencies into the selection and performance management process and consistently apply these methods. How many of these methods is your company currently applying? The competency-based position analysis assists organizations in selecting the right talent for the position and retaining top talent which in turn results in decreased stress, reduced turnover and fewer lawsuits. If you are not yet hiring with these types of methods, you may be wasting time and money by placing the right people in the wrong jobs.

If you would like more information on the DNA of Performance, please feel free to contact us.

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