



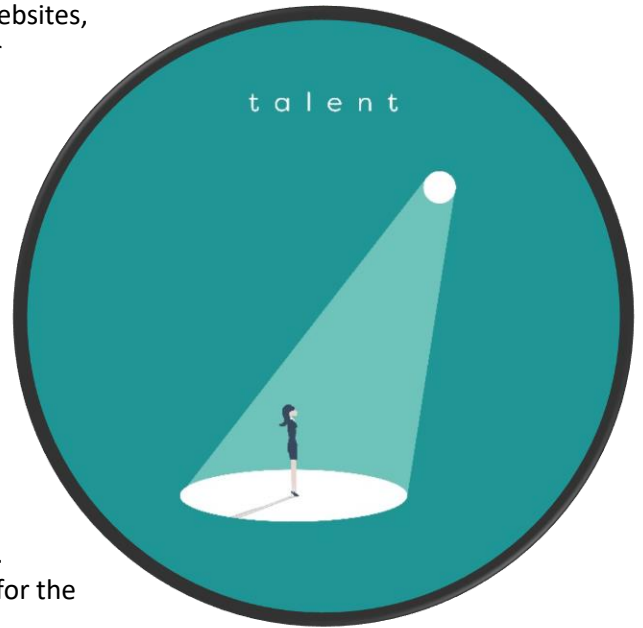
Acquiring Top Talent

Using a Competency-Based Recruitment Model

Prior to the advent of the internet and online recruitment websites, the easiest way to hire people who weren't an immediate or extended family member or someone from your community was to post an announcement in the newspaper. Typically, the announcement would include a standard job description and, as a result, applicants would apply who may or may not have the qualifications actually needed to perform well in the position.

Today, many organizations, including most Fortune 500 companies, strive to create a competency-based job profile instead of just a standard job description. A competency-based job profile clearly defines a combination of skills, knowledge, behavior, personality traits, and aptitudes required to perform essential functions of the job in question and to succeed within an organization. These critical elements ensure that a candidate is a good fit for the job, the team, and the overall company culture.

Through competency-based recruiting, you can ensure that your human resources (HR) department is efficient, targeted, and geared toward acquiring the best talent possible.



Why Use Competencies

Your organization's competencies are the cumulative fundamental knowledge and abilities or expertise of your workforce. Your core competencies can distinguish you within the marketplace, help you keep your current audience, as well as gain new ones. By implementing a competency management framework, your company can identify skill gaps through assessments, align training and continued learning initiatives to company goals, and establish a leadership development system and succession plan.

When a competency management framework is in place, the valuable data gained can give leadership a basis for strategic decision making. With the ability to track, measure, and evaluate each individual's competencies, your company can take inventory of your current workforce and make informed decisions about next steps and the recruitment and selection process.

Advantages of Competency Based Recruitment

Competency-based recruitment means taking into account more than just the hard skills listed on an individual's resume and the hiring manager's gut feeling. With competency-based recruitment, in addition to accounting for candidates' technical skills and knowledge about a subject area, a hiring manager also focuses on those characteristics that can't be taught post-hire such as behavioral attributes, personality traits, and their potential.

While the benefits of competency-based recruitment are numerous, here are the top three advantages:

Advantage #1: Better Hires

One way to identify the best candidates is through competency-based prompts that give insight into the way a candidate thinks and



behaves in a real-world situation. An example of a competency-based prompt might be, “Tell us about a time where you had a challenging project where you were up against a hard deadline.” Prompts like these encourage candidates to talk about a specific past situation and allow the interviewer to get a glimpse of how the candidates have performed in their position, as well as anticipate future performance to bring in the best candidates for the job.

Advantage #2: A More Diverse Workforce

An important outcome of competency-based recruiting is fairness and a more diverse workforce. When managers hire staff according to a competency-based rubric, the results are no longer based on that single manager’s opinion and preference, but on who is actually best for the position. Competency-based recruitment also shields managers from the “cloning effect,” or the tendency to hire those who most resemble the hiring manager’s background, personality, and workstyle. While it may not always be deliberate, “cloning” will have an adverse effect on your organization’s diversity goals.

Advantage #3: Lower Turnover Rate

Another huge benefit of competency-based recruitment is a lower turnover rate. Although some amount of turnover is expected, and even healthy, using a competency-based recruitment model can limit your company’s turnover rate

by bringing in individuals that truly fit your open positions, as well as your company culture.

How to Implement a Competency Based Recruitment Model

Some actionable ways to promote competency-based recruitment are:

#1 Standardize the Interview Structure

When a consistent structure is used to interview candidates company-wide include the same competency benchmarks, it’s easier for hiring managers to make a competency-based comparison between candidates.

#2 Gear Questions Toward Experiences Instead of Technical Skills

During the interview, hiring managers should ask questions that encourage the candidates to talk about personal experiences that detail their thought process rather than their skills.

#3 Create a Standard Scoring System

If hiring managers company-wide are scoring candidates based on the same rubric, leadership can understand what is working, what isn’t, and where to make changes in the recruitment and interviewing system. It’s also important to allow leadership throughout the organization to have access to this data in an organized and efficient way.

Integrate Hiring into Your Competency Management Plan

The most impactful and comprehensive way to infuse competencies into your hiring and recruitment practices is by implementing a company-wide competency management system. When you have a big-picture competency management plan in place for your organization, the cycle of understanding skills gaps, implementing learning initiatives, and staff assessments provides your HR department with the data needed to choose the recruits that are the best fit.

Establishing a competency-based recruitment system isn't only advisable, it's essential for the livelihood of your business. Creating a competency-based recruitment model as part of an overall competency management plan isn't just for large companies with unlimited resources. With the right tools, small and medium size companies can implement a competency-based recruitment protocol with ease.

Ready to Take the Next Step?

If your organization doesn't have the staff available internally who are able to spend time creating a competency-based recruitment framework, it may be wise to hire experts to help make the transition. Our specialists can help you navigate integrating a competency management system and get you on track toward company-wide competency management. To explore how to make some improvements in your organization, [contact us](#) to learn more about [WebMentor Skills™](#), Avilar's competency management platform.