



Building Support within the Organization for the Search and the New Hire

By Bruce Dingman

Part of making the right match between a candidate and an organization requires the recruiter's familiarity with the management style, the corporate culture and the personalities on the team. But there is also another excellent reason for the recruiter to get to know the players: The people on the existing team must feel included in the transition process so they'll be supportive of the person selected. It can take just a few days for us to develop internal support for the search and selection process, and it's a very valuable thing to do.

First, we gain insights into the professionalism, abilities and personality of the peers and subordinates of this position, which helps us to choose someone who'd be a better fit with the team. We also come to better understand the corporate culture through communicating with other employees. The culture may be somewhat different than the superior hiring us had suggested—especially concerning collaboration, effectiveness, and team unity. We may find unique characteristics within the organization through this discovery process above and beyond the CEO's description.

Second, the peers and subordinates will feel valued if the recruiter asks them for their input. It is important to pay attention to co-workers' hopes for the new hire and value their description (without attribution) of the organization's management style.

And finally, since they were included in the process from the very beginning, and gave their input before the search was done, subordinates are much more likely to be supportive of the person hired. Without such involvement, some people might tend to withhold support for the person, often taking a "wait and see" approach to the new hire's performance.

When we spend time individually with the peers and direct reports, we typically cover four points: What would you like to see in this person? What should we know about the job, the organization or the team? What would you like to know about the search, vetting and selection process? And do you have any names to suggest?

In organizations where a Search Committee makes the hiring decision, using this approach is crucial. But even in the business world where the CEO has the final say, building support within the organization is a wise decision. We would welcome any reader's thoughts on this subject. Maybe you'll give us a new perspective or a better idea for supporting new hires. We want to keep improving our craft so welcome your thoughts.

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