

Hiring the Right People

by Andy Deyo

Employees are the lifeblood of any organization. You can have a great product and a great facility, but the only way the organization has a chance to be successful is by having outstanding team members. For managers, the task of hiring, training and supervising employees must be a priority.

Pre-Hiring

The first question to ask is: For what positions are you hiring? Either review or write job descriptions for each position you seek to fill. Determine, and list, the important characteristics the right candidate for each position should possess.

Once management has determined the types of positions for which they are hiring and have prepared job descriptions, the next step is to advertise the job opening(s). The following are suggested avenues to explore with advertisements:

- Local and suburban newspapers
- Local colleges/universities' sports management or recreation departments
- In-house job postings
- Staff referrals with an incentive or bonus
- Community colleges
- Senior centers
- High school guidance centers

Guidelines for writing employment advertisements:

- Start the ad with an attractive and descriptive title
- Write a brief description of the job duties
- List required experience and education
- Sell benefits of the job

It is important to avoid any language that could be considered discriminatory towards people based on race, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, disability or veteran status. Refer to local and federal laws for more complete information.

Successful Interviewing

The goal of an interview is to enable the interviewer to judge an applicant's qualifications and to gain insight into the applicant's strengths and/or limitations in relationship to the job. To prepare for the interview:

- Review the job description. Prepare questions that bring out an applicant's background and experience in the job functions.

- Question the applicant's level of education. Does the applicant have the necessary educational requirements that provide the technical skills required?
- Evaluate the experience of the candidate. Inquire about the type and length of pertinent experience. Ask not only, "What did you do?" but also, "How did you do it?"
- Solicit accomplishments. It's important to learn what an applicant has done that makes him/her stand out from other qualified candidates.
- Determine skills. Learn what special skills an applicant can bring to the job.
- Assess personal characteristics. Try to identify characteristics that may affect the applicant's compatibility with you and your team.

An open-ended interview format is usually more informative and revealing of a candidate's capabilities and personality. The following is a list of suggested open-ended interview questions:

- Why are you interested in a position with this company?
- Our number one priority as team members of this facility is customer service. How would you define customer service? Give me an example.
- How did you find out about our company?
- What kind of work interests you the most?
- If you were a hiring employer, what would you look for in your staff? What expectations would you have? How would you motivate your staff?
- Besides receiving a paycheck, why do you want to work for our company?
- What qualities would you bring to this job that others would not?
- Which aspects of your last job(s) did you like most? Least?
- What are your strengths?

In order to attract good employees, a manager must convey lofty goals and expectations. Job candidates need to understand that, if hired, they will be expected to:

- Be prepared for work.
 - Bring your personality to work.
 - Be aware of facility events and programs.
 - Report to work neat and clean in proper uniform.
 - Report to work on time.
- Service the customer.
 - Direct your immediate attention to the customer.
 - Be willing to "step out of the box" to find creative solutions to solving our customers' needs.
 - Commit to keeping current on facility programs.
- Understand that everything we do is a reflection of us.

- Have fun and interact with customers and co-workers.
- Keep your work environment clean and organized at all times.
- Stay focused on job related tasks and challenges.
- Read, review, and know all facility programs, policies and procedures.
- You are responsible for your scheduled shift.
- Help team members to be the best.
- Answer the phone.
- Use proper telephone answering protocols.
- Remember to be enthusiastic and informative.
- Hard work is rewarded.
- Use your time effectively and be efficient.
- Take pride in yourself and your facility.

After successfully hiring the right people, it is equally important to retain them. Work to establish a team environment within your organization and promote from within when possible.