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Top Hiring Mistakes

Take a look at your staff right now. Some workers may be high-performing employees who you enjoy seeing on a daily basis. Others may be individuals that you wouldn't hire again, if you could go back in time and have a do-over.



We may not be able to give you a do-over, but recognizing the errors companies typically make in the hiring process can help avoid making bad hires in the future.

Marion Bayers, a human resources consultant with Leading Edge Human Resource Services in Fort Myers, Fla., identified the biggest hiring mistakes among companies of all sizes:

1. Failing to train yourself or your managers about proper interview techniques

From asking discriminatory questions about religion, sexuality, or race, for example, to doing all the talking and not asking the candidates enough questions, you or your managers could screw up the hiring process. Provide training so that you or your staff doesn't jeopardize your company's ability to attract and hire qualified individuals.

2. Conducting insufficient background and reference checks

Bypassing criminal history, drug, and even credit checks could get your company into hot water if an employee commits a crime when on a job. There is the potential for you to get sued for negligence, if a client is harmed by one of your workers, Bayers says.

3. Hiring the first person that comes along

If you wait too long to fill a position, your desperation may cause you to hire the first person who expresses interest in the job, even if they are unqualified and are not

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the best fit for the position, Bayers says. Also, don't wait until the last minute to create a job description. Instead, use the job description to measure each candidate's qualities.

4. Thinking too narrowly

Sometimes people think they need someone who is young and energetic for a certain position, which could lead to discrimination in the hiring process, Bayers says. Maybe a more experienced candidate or someone who is an introvert could actually perform better in the job. If your idea of the right person for the job is too narrow, you could be making a major error.

5. Taking too long to fill the position

It's almost the opposite of No. 3. If you're interviewing people and not really ready to hire someone for the job, that's unfair to the candidates, Bayers says.

Maybe one or more of these mistakes have been a routine part of your hiring efforts. Take the first step to being more proactive as an employer in your hiring and interviewing process by addressing these errors, and you can be on your way to creating a team that can help your company thrive.

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Lori Johnston is a Georgia-based freelance writer and former Associated Press reporter. She has contributed to many publications, including The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Atlanta Business Chronicle, and People magazine. A 1995 graduate of the

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