

Hire From Outside Your Existing Box



How often do you roll out the same set of qualifications when looking to hire a replacement for a departing employee? The interesting thing about people is that we all know change is inevitable but we often repeat the same process over and over again because our efficient (sometimes lazy) brains find comfort in the familiar.

Research does tell us that hiring managers tend to hire people who are like them or who are like the employee who previously did well in the position being filled. This is not as much about preferences for the same gender, culture, nationality, hometown, university, major and so on as it is about most people's naturally preference for making decisions based on what is familiar and avoid the unknown, at least when it comes to selecting who to work with. And often these are safe and sound choices that can keep the team running smoothly exactly the way it is. Unfortunately, in today's rapidly changing business environment safe and sound is not as safe and sound as it once was.

Hire For Tomorrow Not Yesterday

Many jobs do require specific qualifications and other jobs require specific experience and some require both. You would not hire an accountant as a structural engineer or an engineer as a nurse. However, there are times when hiring outside the box is the way to push your organization to grow and improve.

We know that to grow as a person we need to make changes. In an organization the same is often true. When you are faced with more competition, a changing consumer and a changing marketplace it does not make sense to always make the same choices as you have in the past. This applies to business decisions and strategy, marketing activities, and to hiring employees.

5 obvious ways to find different candidates

- Consider a candidate from a different culture, nationality or country
- Consider a candidate from a different demographic, including age, gender, lifestyle and ability (a candidate with a disability)
- Consider a candidate from a different educational background (a different major and/or institution)
- Consider a candidate from a different industry (a career changer)
- Consider a candidate who is overqualified

What Happens When You Hire Outside Your Perspective?

- **You can gain a new perspective.** New perspectives are often the best breeding ground for innovation. For example an employee who was trained and/or gained experience on the other side of the planet will bring new ideas and different ways of doing business.
- **You can find more great candidates.** By opening up your perspective to be open to a diverse range of candidates, diversity of industry, experience, education and not only culture, gender, and so on, you increase your chances of finding that great candidate who can make a difference.
- **You can re-energize your existing employees.** Different can be uncomfortable but often being uncomfortable is what is needed to push to new heights. Encourage your existing employees to think outside the box with their new colleagues by inviting and not suppressing new perspectives.

Looking outside the box does not mean throwing away the box. You still need to check of certain items on your hiring list, but instead of trying to check off all the standard boxes you add one that says 'Different Perspective'. When a candidate hits the boxes for qualifications but misses some on relevant experience see if you can check off the 'different perspective' box and keep that candidate moving forward in the process.

Recruiting For New Perspectives

To invite diversity from all the 5 outside the box categories you need to get the message out that you are looking for a wide range of candidates. When posting a job include phrases like 'looking to hire outside the box' or 'looking for candidates who can bring a fresh perspective'. This could encourage that great, but different candidate to stop, look and apply.

Worried you will get too many candidates? You still have to keep technical qualifications in mind, so you are not opening the door to unqualified candidates.

Hiring outside the box might seem like one more work and another challenge to add to your plate but it might be the challenge that helps push the organization to remain competitive and succeed.