

Forum Examines Employee Testing, Tracking Systems

6/24/2009

By Steve Taylor

"Science is the secret sauce" of good employee assessment systems. And an integrated, reliable one-stop shopping applicant tracking system (ATS) exists.

Those were the assertions from two vendor companies co-sponsoring the Talent Management Executive Forum "HR Must Lead the Way to Bottom-Line Results" in Rockville, Md., on June 18, 2009.

Some of the 75 HR professionals and others attending the session were willing to be persuaded. "We are eager for this kind of [information], especially in this economy," said Barbara Elky, director of HR and administration for IXI Corp. in McLean, Va.

Jeff Facteau, director of consulting and optimization services for the testing and assessment systems company PreVisor of Roswell, Ga., told the audience that PreVisor's "predictive employment solutions" help companies boost sales by identifying the best potential employees. Facteau said good science is the key and, he added, "The secret sauce is the process."

Jeff Walker, pre-employment services team leader for the outsourcing services giant ADP, promoted his company's ATS, VirtualEdge. "The One-Stop Shop," he proclaimed. "Yes, there really is one, and it works."

The core of the program came from Stacy Hodge, senior manager of recruiting services for Ryder Systems of Miami. She described a talent management operation in need of an upgrade when she joined the truck rental company in January 2007. Ryder's "antiquated systems," she told the crowd, were "not cost-effective." With as many as 5,500 hires per year, Ryder had no assessment platform and no ATS. "What was broken at Ryder," she said, "was the technology around talent."

Hodge said her approach was to work out in detail a desired "future state" for Ryder. The specifications:

- Reporting of ROI including identification of sources of applicants and related expenses.

- Key productivity metrics such as time-to-fill, cost-per-hire and source effectiveness.

- Automatic EEO tracking and reporting for affirmative action planning and Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs compliance.

- Candidate status reporting and pipeline visibility for hiring managers.

"Whenever we could automate," Hodge said, "we did."

The company decided it needed an employee assessment system. Hodge claimed that performance records from tested truck rental account managers showed that, "If you score higher, you make us more money."

To address its ATS and assessment system needs, Ryder selected ADP/Virtual Edge and PreVisor. As a result, Hodge she reported, Ryder has improved efficiency and transparency and lowered costs. It has reduced the number of search firms needed from more than 80 to fewer than 15, including less reliance on big firms.

"That's why I'm here," Hodge concluded. The event was the second forum in 2009 at which Ryder has appeared with ADP and PreVisor.

Reaction from the HR professionals attending was varied. Sharlyn Turner-Bryant, senior HR manager at Marriott International in Washington, D.C., said the one-stop approach is the direction many companies are choosing. "We're in the process of evaluating the use of it."

Consultant Al Sullivan, Jr., of HCD International of Lanham, Md., said, "It was a pleasant surprise to hear someone talk about implementation." He added that he has at times been "stunned" by companies wasting much money by failing to work out how a vendor system will be put into use.

Said IXI's Elky: "There's a lot of scientific basis" for employee assessment testing. She added that IXI might use such tools "as our organization grows."

Craig Smith, SPHR, recruitment manager for the Washington (D.C.) Home & Community Hospices, said the small not-for-profit is rebuilding its HR component. "We need an ATS," he said. "We need to look at more testing [and] competency assessments." He said the organization has a manager retention rate of 50 percent. "We need to improve that."

Consultant Curt Buermeyer, a director of the executive consulting firm tGCP, said he took a special interest in PreVisor's employee assessment procedures. "The key for me was the science of behavior selection and how critical it is," Buermeyer said, "and being able to demonstrate ROI."

Steve Taylor is a freelance writer based in Arlington, Va.

Society for Human Resource Management

1800 Duke Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
USA

Phone US Only: (800) 283-SHRM
Phone International: +1 (703) 548-
3440

TTY/TDD (703) 548-
6999
Fax (703) 535-6490

Questions? [Contact SHRM](#)
Careers [Careers @ SHRM](#)

©2009 SHRM. All rights reserved.