

## Using Action Learning to create a different way to select employees

Every organization is made up of people, who follow work processes, use resources and generate results. People are such an important asset that recruitment and selection can be considered as one of the most important processes in people management.

Selecting people becomes more and more strategic for organizations since it is the first contact between company and candidate. During the recruitment process both parties can know more about each other and decide to be part or not of the organization's team. The selection process works in two ways: the company chooses the best candidate and the candidate chooses the company in which he or she plans to further develop a career.

More than ever, engaging talent is a process that requires a lot of professionalism. A selective process not only evaluates the experiences, skills and competencies required for the position to be held, but also – and perhaps more importantly - evaluates the candidate as a person, with their experiences, values and potential. It is necessary to determine if the behaviors and attitudes are suitable for the culture, mission, vision and objectives of the organization.

Because the process involves finding the best fit and as it can involve hundreds candidates for a few positions, the current approach to selection stimulates competitive behavior. Applicants strive to take every opportunity to differentiate themselves from the other candidates. Many of these candidates have already taken part in a number of selection processes and have already "learned" and "trained" certain behaviors that they believe to be effective. Through their experience with selection processes, candidates have become skilled in demonstrating skills such as frequently making statements demonstrating their knowledge, sharing previously prepare personal presentations or ways to behave in group settings. These behaviors, which are not spontaneous or genuine, can misrepresent the real potential of each candidate. Professionals in Recruitment and Selection are always looking for tools that can increasingly improve the identification of the best candidate.



Action Learning, a methodology for solving real, important and urgent problems that generates learning while solving the problem, works by stimulating questioning, genuine curiosity, systemic thinking, and group work. A multinational company tested the use of Action Learning in a selection process for trainees, and found several positive outcomes:

- Change the selection process from very competitive to more collaborative;
- Shift the mindset of what is a selection process by adding value to the candidate's experience with individual learning

- Evaluate the candidate for non-predictable behavior and the ability to question. Good quality questions are the result of good quality thinking, genuine curiosity, creativity and good background.

We can say that the application of Action Learning had a very positive impact, not only from the company's perspective. The candidates reported that they felt quite challenged by having to ask questions and work on a real company problem, perceived that the company was treating them with respect, had a very positive image of the company's selection process and realized that they had learned during the process.

Recruitment and selection professionals, as well as the managers involved, affirmed that during the application of Action Learning they could observe the candidates' reasoning, background, creative thinking, compliance with rules, ability to focus, ability to diverge and converge and ability to work in a group. These were relevant inputs improving the process of choosing the final candidates.

We can say that Action Learning is quite effective in candidate selection, adding value to this process that goes beyond competition. It is possible to learn, improve the image of the organization and over all strengthen the win-win relationship between company and candidate, with this very simple and effective tool.

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