

## Employee Engagement Begins with the Hiring Process

Finding the right people is no easy matter. We are all looking for those employees who will become “engaged employees” –employees who will be committed to their jobs and routinely give 110 percent effort. Research shows that those are the kind of employees who will help their employers achieve better productivity, customer satisfaction, and profitability with increased retention.

The question is, within the hiring process, how do we recognize an applicant who could become an engaged employee and one who might become a premature turnover statistic because of a mismatch with aspects of the job, supervision, or company values and norms? We know how to ask questions that help assess an applicant’s knowledge and skill, but what questions might we ask to help generate information on the “fit” between the applicant and the job or organization?

One of the best ways of assessing fit is to obtain information about when and why a candidate found a particular job either very satisfying or dissatisfying. Just as a hiring manager wants to obtain specific information about the candidate’s knowledge and skill so that a good comparison can be made with job requirements, the hiring manager will also want to get specific information about what was satisfying or dissatisfying so that comparisons can be made to aspects of the job, supervision, and company culture.

Here are just a few questions that can generate valuable information to assess fit:

### **Job**

“Tell me about the best or most challenging job you have held?”

“Tell me about the most satisfying job you have held and why it was satisfying?”

### **Supervision**

“Tell me about the best supervisor you have had and what specifically made the individual so good to work with?”

### **Work-Life Balance**

“How have you balanced your work and personal life?”

“What are your expectations of a potential employer as it relates to work-life balance?”

### **Culture**

“Describe the work environment that would best meet your needs?”

Even if a candidate meets or exceeds the job’s knowledge and skill requirements, a mismatch with the areas of “fit” may result in either early turnover or an employee who is only partially committed to the job and the organization. The better the match between the candidate’s responses and the job or organization, the better chance there is that the candidate will be satisfied and become an engaged employee. That should translate into a more productive employee who will stay with your organization longer.