Case Study – Ecommerce Help Wanted

"You'll be happy to know that we made a strong case to management that we should hire a new system analyst to specialize in ecommerce development," says Al Falfa, a system analyst for the multioutlet international chain of Marathon Vitamin Shop. He is meeting with his large team of systems analysts to decide on the qualifications that their new team member should possess. Al continues, saying, "In fact, they were so excited by the possibility of our team helping to move Marathon into an ecommerce strategy that they've said we should start our search now and not wait until the fall."

Ginger Rule, another analyst, agrees, saying, "The demand for Web site developers is still outstripping the supply. We should move quickly. I think our new person should be knowledgeable in system modeling, JavaScript, C++. Rational Rose, and familiar with Ajax, just to name a few."

Al looks surprised at Ginger' long list of skill but then replies, "Well, that's certainly one way we could go. But I would also like to see a person with some business savvy. Most of the people coming out of school will have solid programming skills, but they should know about accounting, inventory, and distribution of goods and services, too."

The newest member of the systems analysis group, Vita Ming, finally breaks into the discussion. She says, "One of the reasons I chose to come to work with all of you was that I thought we all got along quite well together. Because I had some other opportunities, I looked very carefully at what the atmosphere was here. From what I've seen, we're a friendly group. Let's be sure to hire someone who has a good personality and who fits in well us".

Al concurs, continuing. "Vita's right. The new person should be able to communicate well with us, and with business clients, too. We are always communicating in some way, through formal presentation, drawing diagrams, or interviewing users. If they understand decision making, it will

make their job easier, too. Also, Marathon is interested in integrating ecommerce into the entire business. We need someone who at least grasps the strategic importance of the Web Page design is such a small part of it."

Ginger interjects again with a healthy dose of practicality, saying, "Leave that to management. I still say the new person should be a good programmer." Then she ponders aloud, "I wonder how important UML will be?"

After listening patiently to everyone's wish list, one of the senior analysts, Cal Siem, speaks up, joking, "We'd better see if superman is available!"

As the group shares a laugh, Al sees an opportunity to try for some consensus, saying, "We've had a chance to hear a number of different qualifications. Let's each take a moment and make a list of the qualifications we personally think are essential for the new ecommerce development person to possess. We'll share them and continue discussing until we can describe the person in enough detail to turn a description over to the human resources group for processing."

What qualifications should the systems analysis team be looking for when hiring their new ecommerce development team member?

Is it more important to know specific languages or have an aptitude for programming languages?

How important is it that the person being hired has some business understanding?

Should all members possess identical competencies and skills?

How important is personality and character traits in a systems analyst working in ecommerce development?