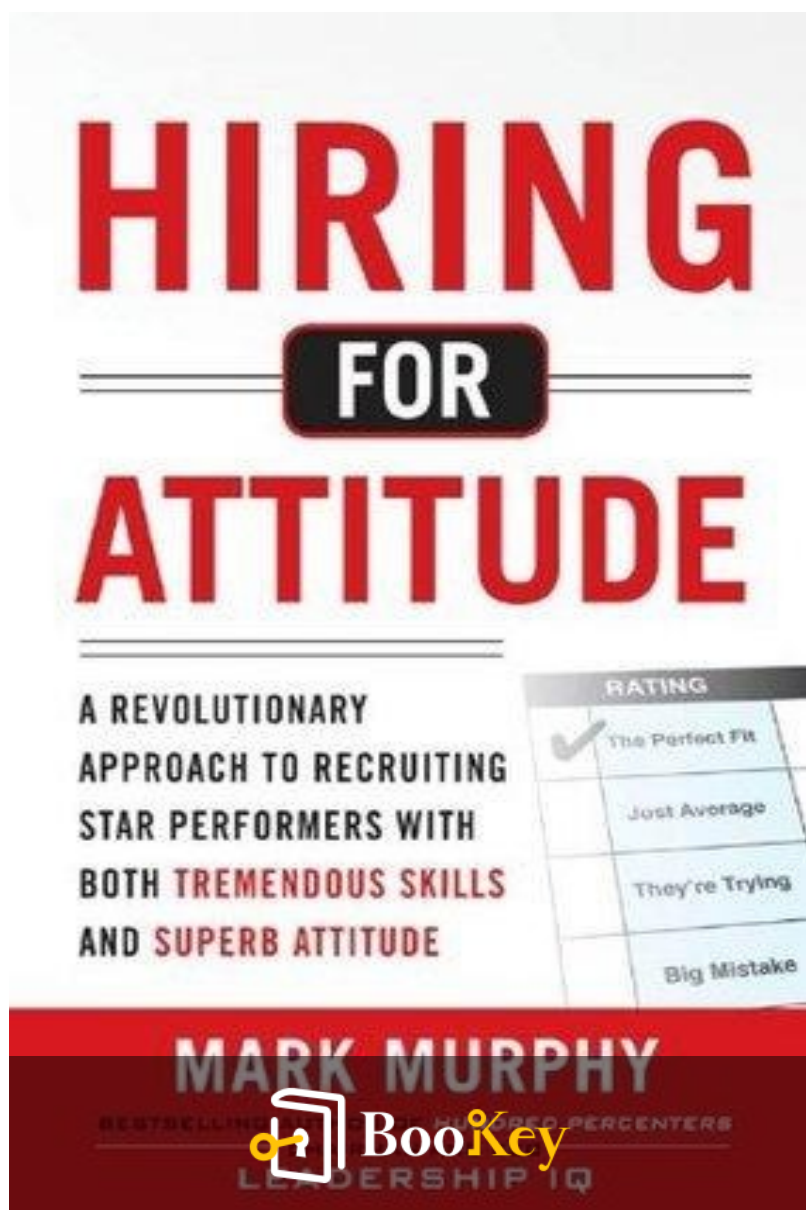


Hiring For Attitude PDF

Mark Murphy



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Hiring For Attitude

Selecting Talent with Mindset over Skills for Success

Written by Bookey

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About the book

In a world where technical skills are no longer the sole determinant of success in the workplace, Mark Murphy's "Hiring For Attitude" emerges as a groundbreaking guide for modern recruiters and managers. This compelling book unveils the critical, yet often overlooked, element that makes the difference between a hire who merely fits a role and one who propels the organization forward: attitude. With a persuasive blend of real-world examples and actionable insights, Murphy reveals how the right mindset can elevate performance, enhance team dynamics, and fuel innovation. Dive into this eye-opening read to discover why attitude outweighs aptitude and how you can master the art of discerning and cultivating the right attitudes in your hiring process.

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About the author

Mark Murphy is a renowned leadership and organizational expert, acclaimed speaker, and prolific author, known for his ground-breaking work in the field of workplace performance and talent management. As the founder and CEO of Leadership IQ, Murphy leverages his deep industry insights to help organizations foster better leadership and enhance employee engagement. His work has been widely recognized and featured in prestigious publications such as Forbes, Fortune, and The Wall Street Journal. Murphy's expertise is solidified through his extensive research and innovative approaches to hiring and leadership practices. With a background rich in consulting for Fortune 500 companies, Murphy brings a practical, real-world perspective to his writing, particularly evident in his impactful book, "Hiring For Attitude."

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Chapter 1 : The Critical Importance of Attitude in the Hiring Process

In the realm of hiring, many organizations have traditionally placed a premium on candidates' skill sets and technical competencies. However, Mark Murphy's "Hiring For Attitude" delves into the often underestimated yet crucial element of attitude in the hiring process. Murphy posits that while skills can be taught and refined, an individual's core attitude is much harder to change and has a profound impact on their performance and fit within the company.

Research and statistics back this assertion, highlighting the tangible effects of attitude on job performance. According to Murphy, up to 46% of newly hired employees fail within 18 months, and a staggering 89% of these failures are attributable to issues with attitude rather than lack of skill. This underscores the critical importance of evaluating attitude during the hiring process. Organizations that emphasize attitude tend to see higher performance levels, better team cohesion, and lower turnover rates.

The financial and operational costs of hiring mistakes are



significant. Bringing the wrong attitude into the workplace can lead to decreased morale, disruption in team dynamics, and a harm to the overall organizational culture. Conversely, prioritizing attitude aligns employees with the company's core values and mission, creating a more harmonious and productive work environment.

Through these insights, Murphy advocates for a shift in how organizations approach hiring. By elevating the importance of attitude in the recruitment process, companies can avoid costly missteps and build stronger, more cohesive teams that drive long-term success.



Chapter 2 : Identifying the Right Attitudes for Your Organization

Identifying the Right Attitudes for Your Organization

Defining the unique attitudes that align with your company's culture and values is paramount in creating a cohesive and thriving workforce. Every organization has its own culture, defined by its mission, values, work environment, and the behavior of its people. The first step in identifying the right attitudes is understanding your company's core values and culture. What does your organization stand for? What behaviors and mindsets are critical for success within your team? These questions help in pinpointing the attitudes that will resonate well with your organizational environment.

For instance, if your company places a high emphasis on customer service, then attitudes such as empathy, patience, and a proactive problem-solving mindset become crucial. Conversely, an innovative tech start-up might prioritize creativity, resilience, and a willingness to take risks. By defining these core attitudes, you create a blueprint that guides your hiring decisions and ensures that new hires align



with the overall culture.

Methods for determining which attitudes are most critical to your organization vary. One effective approach is conducting surveys and focus groups with current employees to understand what attitudes they believe are essential for thriving in the company. Another method is to analyze high performers within the organization. What common attitudes and behaviors do they exhibit? Interviewing stakeholders, including leadership teams, to gather insights on desired attitudes can also provide valuable perspectives.

Additionally, performance reviews and employee feedback mechanisms can help identify attitudes that contribute to success and those that hinder progress. By systematically collecting and analyzing this data, organizations can distill a clear set of attitudes that are indicative of success within their unique context.

Case studies from successful organizations that prioritize hiring for attitude provide compelling evidence of the benefits of this approach. Take, for example, Southwest Airlines, famously known for its strong emphasis on customer service and employee-centric culture. Southwest



Airlines hires primarily for attitude, looking for candidates with a warrior spirit, a servant's heart, and a fun-loving attitude. This strategy has paid off; Southwest consistently ranks high in customer satisfaction and employee engagement metrics.

Another example is the global furniture giant IKEA, which emphasizes a down-to-earth attitude, humility, and teamwork among its employees. IKEA's recruitment process is tailored to identify these specific attitudes, ensuring that new hires will fit seamlessly into the company culture. As a result, IKEA enjoys a low turnover rate and a highly engaged workforce.

Google is also renowned for its hiring process that focuses on cultural fit and attitude, in addition to skills and knowledge. Google looks for candidates who are “Googley,” a term they use to describe individuals who are passionate, innovative, and align with their values of collaboration and a desire to make a positive impact on the world. This focus on attitude has contributed significantly to Google's innovative prowess and strong organizational culture.

Implementing these insights involves a concerted effort not



just from the HR department, but from the entire leadership team and the organization as a whole. By clearly defining and consistently emphasizing the attitudes that matter most, organizations can create an environment where employees feel aligned with the company's mission and values, leading to higher engagement, better performance, and ultimately, greater success.

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Chapter 3 : Crafting Job Descriptions That Highlight Desired Attitudes

Crafting Job Descriptions That Highlight Desired Attitudes

Crafting job descriptions that effectively highlight the desired attitudes is crucial in attracting candidates who not only fulfill the technical requirements but also align with your organization's culture and values. A well-crafted job description serves as the first point of contact with potential candidates, and it must concisely and clearly communicate the attitudes you are looking for.

Effective job descriptions should begin with a compelling overview of the company's mission, vision, and values, encapsulating the essence of the work environment and the collective ethos of the organization. This sets the stage and attracts candidates who resonate with these values. Following this, the job description should feature a detailed description of the role and responsibilities, interspersed with references to the attitudes and behavioral expectations necessary for success in the role.



Balancing the focus on skills and attitudes in job postings is a nuanced task. While it is important to mention the requisite technical skills and qualifications, equal emphasis should be placed on the attitudes that are essential for the position. For instance, if teamwork and collaboration are critical, the job description might state: "We are looking for a candidate who excels in a collaborative environment, supporting and working seamlessly with team members to achieve shared goals." Incorporating such language helps to set clear expectations and attracts individuals who identify with these traits.

Examples and templates for attitude-centric job descriptions can provide a useful starting point. Here is an example of a job description snippet that balances skills and attitudes effectively:

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Chapter 4 : Interview Techniques to Assess Candidate Attitudes

Designing interviews to assess a candidate's attitudes can be one of the most pivotal stages in the hiring process. Mark Murphy emphasizes that traditional interview setups often fall short in revealing a candidate's true attitudes. This is because many conventional questions tend to focus on skills and experience rather than digging deep into the attitudes that align with the company's culture and values. Thus, the book advocates for a more strategic approach using detailed techniques to effectively unveil the candidate's core attitudes.

One prime strategy is incorporating behavioral interview questions. Behavioral questions prompt candidates to reflect on past experiences and discuss how they handled specific situations, which can provide insight into their habitual ways of thinking and acting. For instance, asking a candidate, “Can you tell me about a time when you had to adapt to a significant change at work?” can help gauge their flexibility and openness to change. Answers to such questions often reveal more about a candidate's real-world application of their attitudes than hypothetical scenario questions might.



Situational assessments are another effective technique. These involve posing hypothetical, job-related scenarios to candidates and asking them how they would handle them. The candidate's responses can provide a glimpse into their problem-solving approach, resilience, and ability to handle stress. For example, presenting a scenario where a candidate has to mediate a conflict between team members can help assess their interpersonal skills and their attitude towards conflict resolution.

The book also underscores the importance of actively looking for red flags during the interview process. Red flags might include a candidate consistently blaming others for past failures, which could indicate a lack of personal accountability. Similarly, candidates who seem overly focused on salary and benefits without showing genuine interest in the role or the company culture may not have the right attitude. On the contrary, positive indicators to watch for include self-awareness, evident enthusiasm about the company and position, and examples of proactive problem-solving.

Murphy also suggests scrutinizing the consistency of the



candidate's responses. Inconsistencies can sometimes highlight discrepancies between a candidate's purported attitudes and their real ones. Attentive listening and follow-up questions can help interviewers probe deeper when inconsistencies arise. For instance, if a candidate claims to excel under pressure but later describes a stressful situation where they took a backseat, it's worth exploring further.

Moreover, Murphy recommends creating a structured interview process that allows for multiple perspectives. Involving various team members in the interview process can provide a more rounded view of the candidate's attitudes. Each interviewer can focus on different aspects, from technical skills to cultural fit, and then collectively assess whether the candidate demonstrates the attitudes that align with the company's values.

In conclusion, assessing candidate attitudes during interviews requires a strategic, nuanced approach. By leveraging behavioral questions, situational assessments, and being vigilant about red flags and positive indicators, organizations can better identify candidates with the right attitudes. Ensuring a structured and multi-faceted interview process further enhances the likelihood of making a successful hire



who will thrive in and contribute positively to the organization's culture.

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Chapter 5 : Attitude-Based Reference Checks and Testing Methods

Part 5: Attitude-Based Reference Checks and Testing Methods

Conducting attitude-based reference checks and employing various testing methods are crucial steps in ensuring that a candidate's attitudes align with the needs and culture of your organization. Reference checks, if done correctly, can provide deep insights into a candidate's behavioral traits and attitudes that are not always apparent during interviews. In parallel, psychometric tests and other evaluation tools can offer objective, data-driven insights into a candidate's personality and attitude.

Approaches for Conducting Reference Checks that Unearth Insights about a Candidate's Attitude:

1. ****Structured Reference Interviews:**** Unlike traditional reference checks that often focus on verifying employment dates and job roles, structured reference interviews delve into specific behavioral questions. By asking past supervisors or



colleagues about a candidate's reactions to stress, collaboration style, and how they handled failures, you can gain qualitative data on their attitudes.

- Example Questions: "Can you describe a situation where the candidate faced significant stress? How did they handle it?" or "How did the candidate contribute to team dynamics?"

2. ****Behavioral Anchoring:**** To gain objective insights, reference checkers can use behavioral anchors which describe different levels of performance. This method helps to quantify the attitudes and behaviors of candidates by comparing them against specific, predefined criteria.

- Example: "On a scale of 1-5, how would you rate the candidate's willingness to receive and act on constructive feedback, with 1 being resistant and 5 being highly receptive?"

Utilizing Psychometric Tests and Other Tools to Evaluate Attitudes:

1. ****Personality Assessments and Psychometric Tests:****
These tests, like the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or



the Big Five Personality Traits model, help in measuring various dimensions of a person's personality, such as openness, conscientiousness, and emotional stability.

- Benefit: These tests can uncover insights into how a candidate might fit into the organizational culture, their likely reaction to different work scenarios, and their alignment with critical team attitudes.

2. ****Situational Judgment Tests (SJTs):**** SJTs present candidates with work-related situations and possible responses. These tests evaluate not just problem-solving skills but also preferred ways of handling typical work-related challenges.

- Benefit: SJTs allow hiring managers to understand a candidate's decision-making process in context, shedding light on their natural inclinations and attitudes in professional settings.

3. ****Cultural Fit Assessments:**** Tools like culture surveys or value alignment tests can measure a candidate's alignment with the company's core values and culture.



- Benefit: Ensuring cultural fit helps maintain a harmonious work environment where employees share common goals and values, contributing to overall organizational success.

Real-Life Examples of Successful Attitude-Testing Methods:

1. ****Zappos' Two-Part Interview Process:**** Zappos divides its interviewing into two distinct parts: evaluating skills and assessing culture fit. The latter involves questions aimed at understanding a candidate's core values and behaviors, reflecting whether they mesh with Zappos' famously unique and customer-focused culture.

- Result: This dual approach has helped Zappos maintain a strong, cohesive culture that drives its renowned customer service.

2. ****Google's Use of Cross-Functional Interviews:**** Google integrates cross-functional interview panels that include potential team members and a separate 'culture champion' to ensure the candidate's attitudes align with the Google culture.

- Result: This comprehensive interview strategy contributes



to building versatile, integrated teams that uphold Google's innovative and collaborative culture.

3. **Southwest Airlines' 'Warrior Spirit' Evaluation:**

Southwest Airlines identifies candidates with a 'Warrior Spirit' through focused interview questions and reference checks that explore resilience, optimism, and a customer-centric attitude.

- Result: Southwest successfully hires employees who excel in customer service and thrive in the company's fast-paced, dynamic environment.

By effectively leveraging attitude-based reference checks and testing methods, organizations can deepen their understanding of what a candidate will bring to their team beyond mere skills and experience. This comprehensive, attitude-centric approach to hiring helps build a resilient, aligned, and high-performing workforce that drives long-term success.



Chapter 6 : Integrating Attitude into Onboarding and Team Dynamics

Integrating Attitude into Onboarding and Team Dynamics

Once the hiring process has successfully identified candidates with the right attitudes, the next critical step is ensuring these attitudes are nurtured and reinforced during onboarding and throughout team interactions. A well-structured onboarding program that emphasizes the importance of attitude can set the tone for new hires and integrate them seamlessly into the organizational culture.

Best practices for reinforcing the importance of attitude during onboarding start with a clear communication of the company's values and expectations. From the first day, new employees should be immersed in an environment that highlights the significance of their attitude in their daily work and overall contribution to the organization. This can be achieved through various means such as orientation sessions led by senior management, where the importance of maintaining a positive and proactive attitude is underscored.



Additionally, incorporating attitude-focused content in onboarding materials can be beneficial. This might include case studies showcasing employees who exemplify the right attitudes and the positive impact they have had on the company. Regular check-ins during the initial months of employment, led by mentors or supervisors, can help reinforce these attitudes and offer support as new hires acclimate to their roles.

Moreover, strategies for nurturing and maintaining a positive attitude within teams are essential for the long-term success and cohesion of the workforce. Team-building activities that promote collaboration, trust, and mutual respect can help cultivate a supportive team dynamic. Regular team meetings that encourage open dialogue and feedback can empower employees to express their concerns and celebrate their achievements, fostering an environment where the right attitudes are constantly recognized and rewarded.

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Alex Walk

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Chapter 7 : Long-Term Impact and Continuous Improvement in Hiring Practices

Measuring the long-term impact of hiring for attitude on organizational performance is crucial for understanding how this approach benefits your company over time. When you prioritize attitude in the hiring process, you lay the foundation for a culture that promotes sustained success. One effective way to gauge this long-term impact is through key performance indicators (KPIs) that are linked to both employee performance and organizational health.

For instance, employee retention rates can serve as a vital metric. Employees with the right attitudes are more likely to be engaged and satisfied in their roles, reducing turnover and the associated costs of rehiring and training. Additionally, productivity metrics can highlight the positive influence of a workforce that is aligned with the company's values and mission. Higher productivity often translates into better financial performance and can be a direct result of hiring individuals whose attitudes drive them to excel.



Another important aspect of measuring the long-term impact is employee engagement scores. Regularly conducting surveys to gauge how engaged and motivated your employees feel can provide insights into how well they fit into your organizational culture. High levels of engagement typically lead to lower absenteeism, higher morale, and improved team collaboration, all of which contribute to overall organizational performance.

Regular review and improvement of hiring processes are essential to ensure continued alignment with attitude goals. This involves not just a periodic assessment of the current hiring practices but also staying updated with the latest research and trends in recruitment. Soliciting feedback from new hires about their experience can provide valuable insights into aspects of the process that are working well and those that need refinement.

In addition, performance reviews and exit interviews can serve as tools for continuous improvement. Analyzing why employees stay or leave can unearth patterns that inform better hiring decisions in the future. For example, if exit interviews reveal that departing employees felt misaligned with the company culture, it might indicate a gap in the



initial attitude assessment during the hiring process.

Implementing a continuous feedback loop where hiring managers and team leaders share their observations about new hires can also help refine the hiring process. This collective intelligence ensures that the organization evolves its hiring strategies in a way that continuously seeks and recruits individuals with the desired attitudes.

Finally, sustaining a culture that values and prioritizes the right attitudes requires a commitment from leadership. Leaders must embody the attitudes they wish to see in their teams. This trickle-down effect ensures that the attitude-centric culture permeates all levels of the organization. Regular training and development programs can help reinforce this culture, providing employees with the tools and understanding necessary to maintain the right attitudes.

Creating recognition programs that celebrate employees who exemplify the desired attitudes can further embed these values into the company's fabric. Celebrating these behaviors not only motivates the individuals being recognized but also sets a benchmark for others.



In conclusion, hiring for attitude is not a one-time event but an ongoing strategy that requires diligent measurement, continuous improvement, and strong leadership commitment. By focusing on the long-term impact and regularly reviewing and refining the hiring process, organizations can build a resilient culture that thrives on the right attitudes, leading to sustained performance and success.

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