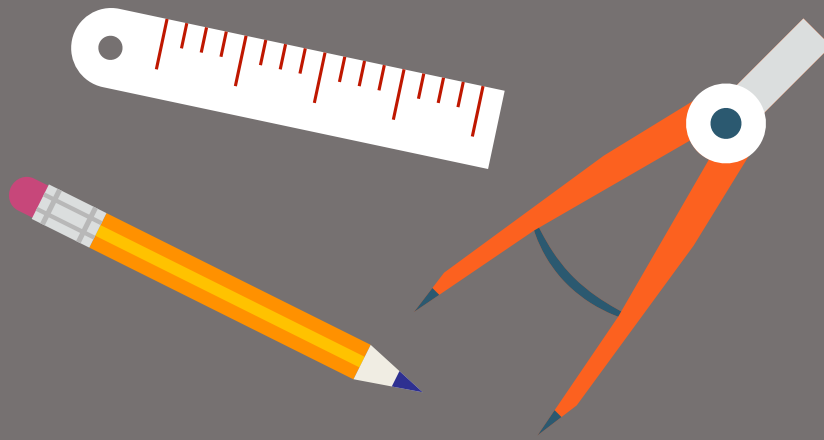


25 Desirable Traits You Want in a New Employee



PRACTICAL TOOLS

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So what kind of traits are you looking for in the ideal new employee you're trying to recruit for your company? What traits should you test for in hiring interviews?

Hundreds of interviews with employers have resulted in the following list of 25 highly desirable traits everyone is seeking in new employees. And you can test for those qualities in hiring interviews by asking them for examples of what they've done in previous jobs that would show that quality.

Just don't get too demanding. The perfect employee who possesses all 25 qualities to the fullest probably doesn't exist. But a few positive hits on this scale can tilt the balance toward one candidate or the other.

Here are the highly desirable 25 traits:

1. Computer literacy

It's a must in any job. It's not so much what they know now, because everything will probably change again in a couple of years, but whether they've shown the ability to learn new systems quickly.

2. Motivation

No one wants an unmotivated slug. External motivation can go only so far. You want people with intrinsic motivation who can motivate themselves.

3. Leadership

Good leaders are hard to find. Does the applicant have leadership aspirations and abilities? Did he or she successfully occupy leadership positions in previous jobs?

4. Trustworthiness and ethics

This is not just the absence of a negative – that the applicant never stole anything from a previous employer and has a clean criminal record. Does the applicant actively accept responsibility for errors? You want people who have no time for fault-finding, finger-pointing and blame games.

5. Organization

Disorganized people struggle to get things done. What did their desk or work area look like in their previous job?

6. Results oriented

You want people who are focused on results, not on process. They know what the goal is and won't rest until they get there – somehow.

7. Problem-solving

Your A players show a remarkable ability to solve problems, which will inevitably crop up in the business world. Ask them for an example of a knotty problem they solved – and how they did it.

8. Training and development

Training and development is a lifelong commitment. There's always something new to learn. Has the candidate proactively sought out training opportunities? Have they shown any aptitude for training and developing people under them? Have they participated in coaching and mentoring programs, either as a mentor or as a mentee?

9. Team-building

People can rarely do it all alone these days – they need to work in teams. Some people are not so good at teamwork. When someone else offers an idea, they just sit on their hands, figure that it's someone else's idea so they can coast along on this one. Good team members respond constructively to other's suggestions and ideas, much like a sports team in which people build on each others' achievements: One player puts the ball on the 15-yard mark, but another finally takes it across the goal line.

10. Commitment to excellence

Do they fact-check their work? Do they always seek new ways to improve and increase productivity?

11. Career progression

Has the applicant's career shown a steady upward progression? You don't want to get anyone who's on the downslide of a career and past the top.

12. Structured thinking

Can they communicate technical specialized information clearly and concisely to the non-initiated?

13. Future planning

Have they shown that they can anticipate stumbling blocks and develop contingency plans for when things don't quite go as planned?

14. Persuading and influencing people

This may be one of the most important traits in business, since no one can do anything alone anymore. You'll be impressed if they can give an example how they did that effectively.

15. Social and emotional learning

This is the ability to recognize others' emotions and perspectives and take them into account as you ask them to work on a new project – or do anything else above and beyond the normal call of duty.

16. Change management

Can they successfully navigate through important changes, which are inevitable in today's business world? Getting other people to go along also involves the previous two traits – persuading and influencing people, and social and emotional learning.

17. Methodical approach

This involves an innate ability to break complex tasks into manageable sections. Applicants should be able to give examples how they've done that in the past.

18. Identifying patterns

One of the most sought-after skills is the ability to understand the impact of data patterns on the business. If they can give you an example how they did that in a previous job, they should rise a mile in your estimation.

19. Research

Have they shown that they can effectively use data and their own independent research to reach informed and effective decisions?

20. Tenacity and resilience

Do they have the grit to hang in there through inevitable tough times? Every job has its share of day-to-day grunt work, especially at the start. In sales, as in many other positions, people have to be able to overcome rejection. Can they hack it?

21. Resourcefulness

Have they shown the ability to tackle unforeseen challenges using existing resources? Anyone can solve problems if given more time, staff, etc., but who gets the job done within normal business constraints?

22. Analysis

More and more data is available from computers these days. But do they drown in a glut of data, or can they analyze the data and come up with important conclusions out of it?

23. Impact

You want to see that something they did had a measurable impact on business results. If they did it elsewhere, they'll likely be able to do it for you.

24. Polish

Do they appear calm and confident, unflappable even in times of crisis? You don't want anyone going to pieces under pressure.

25. Curiosity

You want people with a curious mind, always seeking to know more about what they're doing, how it impacts others, and how it could be done better in the future – and how they can adapt something from an apparently unrelated field to their own jobs.