

## **Recruiting – putting the right person in the job - using Belbin Team Roles Technology**

Top performance is the result of not just the skills a person brings to the job but also how those skills are used on the job. And the manager's challenge is to identify and recruit the person who can deliver on both.

This placement dilemma can be addressed in a straight-forward manner by working a selection process that balances *Eligibility* with *Suitability* – 'what a person knows' with 'who they are'.

When faced with a number of candidates, the challenge is to choose the person who best satisfies both these *Eligibility* and *Suitability* measures.

Meredith Belbin's research findings defined *Eligibility* factors - qualifications, past experience, presentation at an interview, references - as the entry criteria that show past performance. These can be verified by independent means. He found that *Suitability* factors – aptitude, role fit, versatility – are more significant in pointing towards sustainable high performance – but are harder to determine.

So how can a manager select the best person for the job?  
Rigorous checking of references, qualifications and such will assess *Eligibility*. The more difficult area of *Suitability* can be evaluated by using Belbin Team Roles technology.

With this approach it is possible, in several straight forward steps, to reliably identify both the suitability traits the job requires and then to match these up with a candidate's suitability characteristics.

1. Using the Belbin e-Interplace Team Roles Advice System a Job Requirement Exercise is completed by several people who know the job thoroughly. This identifies the key behaviours that the job requires of the job holder and expresses these in Team Roles terms – the Job Profile.
2. If not already on the database, short-listed applicants are profiled to identify each person's Team Roles profile.
3. The Job Profile and individuals' profiles can then be evaluated within the e-Interplace software programme for suitability. The degree of Team Roles alignment between the job and each candidate's preferred work style gives a reliable indication of potential suitability.

The work the Belbin research team did around recruiting also identified two other phenomena that have positive implications in getting the right people into the right jobs:

1. People already working inside the organisation often make the best project team and management appointments. They have 'pre-selected' their work place and know the culture. Their orientation can focus on the job in hand rather than learning the organisation ropes and building networks.
2. In every organisation there are people who, while not readily identified as candidates, are keen to 'step up'. When people who are only partly eligible - in that they lack a particular qualification or certain experience - are given the opportunity they often make 'surprise fits'. They tend to make the most of the opportunity, working to prove that they are worthy and can quickly perform to a level an external appointment would find hard to match.

Further benefits are that such people also tend to be 'long stayers' rather than ambitious short term job chasers and there are positive cost advantages with in-house appointments.

This balanced approach addresses the placement dilemma. Get it right and you will achieve an effective balance between *Eligibility* and *Suitability*; a lasting result for a relatively low recruiting cost; and, where in-house placements are made, positive career pathways within the organisation - all attributes of a high performance organisation.

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Reference- Team Roles at Work, Meredith Belbin, Butterworth Heinemann, 1993