BIZCOMMUNITY

Recruiting millennial graduates through EQ

By Antoinette Pombo

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The reason it is so difficult to recruit graduates that are able to fit in and positively contribute to their team is the generational gap between the Millennials (graduates entering the workplace) and previous generations.



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A candidate, who seems promising on paper and in the interview process, can turn out to be a complete disaster, causing frustration and disruption to business. Eventually, the candidate leaves the company and the 'hit-and-miss' process starts all over again.

Millennials have been brought up in a very different world. Their main source of communication and pleasure comes from their cellphones, they are perceived as more aloof and sure of themselves, but they generally struggle to adapt in the workplace. Because of their 'spoilt' upbringing and fixation on digital screens, they have missed many simple but essential life skills that older generations take for granted - most significantly, their ability to communicate and express themselves effectively at a face-to-face level.

How to get the right candidates on board

To increase your chances of recruiting the right candidates, forget IQ and focus your energy on identifying candidates with high Emotional Intelligence (EQ).

Recently, EQ has been shown to be a greater contributor to success than IQ. EQ is one's ability to identify and manage both one's own and others' emotions, and to apply the emotions to tasks and problem solving.

Emotionally smart people are able to:

- Effectively manage their responses to situations and take appropriate actions
- Motivate themselves
- Accurately discern others' feelings, understand their emotions and relate to others effectively
- Work as part of a team, build relationships, lead, negotiate effectively and manage conflict

It is clear why people with high EQ are so much more valuable to businesses than those are with a high IQ.

Identifying candidates with high EQ

Instead of focusing on whether the candidate has the exact qualifications or academic skills you would have typically insisted on, delve deep to reveal their EQ by asking them to write a one-page essay on one of these meaningful topics, relating to their personal lives.

1. A time when they overcame a difficult situation and how they approached it
2. A quote that resonates with them
3. A time when they thought they needed to adjust their behaviour
4. An occasion when they discovered they were on the wrong course in life

In the interview, ask them about things other than their academic and work achievements, like, sports, hobbies, charity, family responsibilities, team roles, leadership roles and other aspects that show character.

You will be able to get a good sense of their ability to express their feelings and make good judgement calls based on how they answer these questions on paper and in the interview.

Remember, someone with high EQ will be able to quickly pick up on the technical and academic skills necessary for the job because they will ask for help and get the support they need from their team members so don't be tempted to choose IQ over EQ.

Watch this clipping of a recent Carte Blanche episode on millennials, featuring YDx research director, Andrea Kraushaar.

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