

## Hire for Fit

I find myself once again aboard a plane traveling to Dallas to attend the annual conference of my supplier Profiles International, one of the leading providers of behavioural assessments in the world.

Like last month, when I sat beside Rachelle from Australia and interviewed her about her work experience in Canada, I was planning to write this month's newsletter article on the trip. So who do I notice seated alone but Mike Grevatt, vice president of sales and marketing for ECHOtape, a leading supplier of speciality tape in North America. Mike is also one of my best customers for Profiles and has been using the Profile XT assessment successfully over the last 5 years to improve the performance of his sales force. Echo Tape has 21 salespeople across North America and operations in Montreal and California. Mike was gracious enough to allow me to interview him for this article about the impact of using Profiles assessments in his business.

*Stephen:* What made you decide to use Profiles assessments?

*Mike:* We had been using another assessment called Caliper and when we compared the two, we decided to go with Profiles.

*Stephen:* What convinced you, when comparing the tools, to use Profiles?

*Mike:* We saw several key advantages to the Profiles assessment. First we found that the tool provided more information about the person and gave a more complete picture of the candidate, in that it looked at the total person, not just at their personality. The processing and turnaround time to get the reports was much faster and more efficient, especially since it is all web-based. But probably the most important factor was the ability to match the person to a customized job pattern for the position. We felt this added tremendous value to the assessment process without costing more.

*Stephen:* How was this job pattern or profile created?

*Mike:* First with the help of Optimus Performance we established success performance criteria for the sales rep position. These were measurable indicators, like meeting targets consistently and growth in sales. Next we evaluated each sales representative in the organization against these criteria on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 indicating the highest level of performance. Doing this allowed us to see who scored the highest overall and then it was easy to select the top performers based on an objectives process.

*Stephen:* How do you presently use the Profiles assessment?

*Mike:* We started off using it for hiring sales reps and we still do. We also use refer to it to coach and train those we hire and we have started using it in more departments, including customer service staff and hiring for most management positions.

*Stephen:* What are the advantages and benefits of using the Profiles assessments?

*Mike:* I feel more confident when making hiring decisions because the tool provides me with objective information that I have come to rely on. I know it is reliable information because I can see over time that the persons' behaviour validates what the reports indicate. I like the fact that the placement report provides good interview questions to explore areas where the person lacks job fit, and the coaching report helps me and my managers to better understand the person and to be more effective at coaching them. The feature that allows us to match the person to the job pattern - based on our most successful sales reps - is very powerful too.

*Stephen:* Can you give an example of a successful hire using the Profiles?

*Mike:* We hired Celine in Montreal last year and she is on the way to becoming a top performer. Another example is Jimmy in our California office. Both had almost no background in our industry or products, and Jimmy was quite young with little sales experience. Both fit the job well according to the reports and the proof is in their results. Of course we do invest in training and development when they start.

*Stephen:* What are your plans for continuing to improve the sales performance of your reps?

*Mike:* I would like to see an improvement in the time we spend and the quality of the ongoing training and coaching to the sales reps by their managers. I feel we can make positive gains in performance through helping the reps be more effective in the selling process.

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