

Connections

Covering the people side of contact center management



March-April 2009

The Recruiting Methods Behind “March Madness”

With America’s college basketball championship tournament — better known as “March Madness” — just completed, we have seen dozens of examples of the hard work it takes to create a successful team. There is, after all, a method to building a winner.

It Takes a Pool of Recruits

The coaches and recruiters of successful programs know they need to evaluate hundreds of prospects each year to find the talent they need. They build a program that effectively assesses the skills, abilities, and personal characteristics of each prospect. The more prestigious the program, the more they focus on quality.

Cloning Doesn’t Work

Recruiters know that top performers can vary greatly in size, speed, and specific skills, so they base their decisions on a player’s performance-related capabilities and how well those match their needs. Not relying on preconceived notions of what a superstar “looks” like, they assemble a team that maximizes each player’s top qualities and manages his or her weak spots. These teams win because they have a mix of players who can fill vital roles: players who dominate the space near the basket, are great outside shooters, possess breakaway speed, are agile ball handlers, or can come off the bench to provide a quick burst of energy. Similarly, your center should staff its various positions based on the required skills and knowledge for that position.

Evaluate the Entire Package

Coaches are looking for players with more than just skills. They evaluate the complete player. What are the prospect’s motivators? What are her expectations? What is his personality — on and off the court? What are her work habits? Can he learn our offensive and defensive system? How hard does she practice? These questions and more lead coaches to carefully evaluate many facets of each prospect.

Webinar Explores Virtual Work Strategies

Thinking about remote work arrangements? Join us for a free Webinar on April 29 from noon – 1:00 p.m. EDT. Barbara LoRusso, Ph.D., will discuss the current state of virtual work and how companies are navigating this cultural and tactical shift. She will cover

- Trends in virtual work deployment
- Skills, preferences, and attributes that differentiate successful virtual workers from others
- Strategies to effectively manage and coach virtual workers and virtual teams

[Register today!](#)

New Program Helps Your Company Bridge Generation Gaps

The ability to recognize and bridge generation gaps can create a powerful competitive advantage. LIMRA’s new *Managing and Training Across Generations* will help your company create a work environment that supports and includes the different styles of today’s workforce. Participants will add tremendous value to your business by learning how to

- Create cross-generational synergies
- Reduce workplace conflict
- Better manage, train, coach, and retain employees from different generations

For more information, please contact Wendy Weston at 860-285-7727 or wweston@limra.com.

Motivation Matters

Geno Auriemma, head coach of the University of Connecticut's championship-winning women's basketball team, was once asked whether it was difficult to keep his players motivated when they often win games by 30 or more points. Geno replied, "It's easy. I recruit kids who are self-motivated and want to get better." Just think about how much time he saves by selecting players who want to succeed.

What Are Your Competitors Doing?

Coaches don't look at their team in isolation: They also consider the strengths and weaknesses of their league and of national competitors. Recruiting and selection programs are designed to provide a winning edge over competitors wherever possible. They determine areas where they can gain a competitive advantage and then work to meet those needs. Coaches know that losing one of their key prospects or players to a competitor will hurt their own team and bolster the competitor.

Differentiate Your Program

Coaches know that recruiting is a two-way street. Recruits must want to join their team — and top players will have more than one university to consider. Coaches and their university work together to create a valuable opportunity that helps star performers achieve their goals and fulfill their potential both on and off the court. The program must enhance player skills, provide an in-depth understanding of the game, teach players how to overcome real-time obstacles, and provide the support they need to succeed in the classroom. Anything less won't deliver winning results.

Develop a Recruiting Culture

Some college programs consistently qualify for the tournament even though they lose their best players to graduation and professional contracts every year. These teams have built a superior recruiting culture and programs that focus on attracting and finding the best recruits.

Lessons Learned

How a coach recruits and evaluates prospects is crucial to building a winning team. Coaches know that all the training and support programs in the world cannot take the "wrong" recruits and make a championship team. They understand that by finding and developing the recruits they need, they can fuel the success of their team now and into the future.

Identify and Develop People Who Can Successfully Work Remotely

The new [Virtual Worker](#) assessment test identifies current employees and job candidates who can succeed as remote customer service, sales, claims, underwriting, IT, and operations personnel. Equally important, you receive the coaching advice and self-development information you need to enhance their on-the-job performance outside the office.

For more information, please visit us [online](#), or contact Rhonda Giacomarra (860-298-3951 / rgiacomarra@limra.com) or Nicole Overmeyer (770-984-6450 / overmeyern@loma.org).

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