

Staffing Case Study

Company

The Stars Hollow Hat Company was founded in 2005. The company embroiders and sells hats to clients consisting of athletic organizations and other companies who want to give their employees hats with their company logo.

Community Profile

In 2007 the City of Stars Hollow had a population of 1,500 and County Milky Way, of which Stars Hollow City is the County Seat, had a population of 5,000. Given current trends, the City is expected to achieve a population of 2,300 by the year 2010. The projected increase was due to a large population of Mexican immigrants moving into the area. The 2007 census indicated that 23% of the population was of Mexican decent. Stars Hollow City is located on the South West region of Wisconsin. Agriculture is the primary industry and a major component in the economy of the Stars Hollow City and the North East region.

Current Situation

It is now February 2007 and the business is very successful. The customer base has grown substantially and there is a need for more staff. The owner has asked the Customer Service Supervisor to hire a few more customer service representatives (CSRs). She thinks there is probably more need in customer service since the over-time pay has increased 20% in the past 3 months. The owner mentioned that there was a job analysis completed for the CSR job (see Appendix A), which she thought would be helpful to develop some interview questions.

The Supervisor, who was just recently promoted to the position (she had been a CSR since the company began in 2005), was excited to hear the owner was willing to add more staff. She told her current staff that there would be more job openings, and asked them for referrals. Three referrals came in immediately. The Supervisor called two of the three people and asked them to come in for interviews. The referral who wasn't chosen was the son of a CSR who was Mexican. While this CSR did a good job, she did have an accent and the supervisor thought that she was hard to understand at times. Therefore, she thought the CSRs son probably had an accent too, and was probably not a good choice. In the mean time, the Supervisor also placed an advertisement in both local papers and also on the job board at the county workforce center. The advertisement read:

Stars Hollow Hat Company

Customer Service Reps Wanted

Stop by for an interview

715-895-3097

The supervisor came to work the Monday after the advertisements were run in the papers and on the job board. There were 45 people standing in the lobby waiting to talk with her about the job. Further, there were 36 voice mails from people who were interested in the job, but they didn't know where to find the company. The supervisor grabbed a cup of coffee and asked who was there first. She said she could talk with 15 people that day, and the rest would need to come back another time. She looked around the room and said the first 15 people who showed up should stay. That was only fair. She asked the receptionist to schedule the rest for interviews for the next day. She then went into her office and shut the door (she was a bit flustered). She took 5 minutes to calm down and then opened her office door again. She was glad to see that a number of people had left. She called out "who ever showed up first, please come into my office."

A young man came into her office and she began the interview. During that 1st interview she asked about the man's work experience and career goals. She thought he looked familiar and was pleased to discover that he was the son of an old friend. She hired him on the spot. The 2nd interview took a bit longer because she had asked more questions of the individual. She didn't, however, write them down, which she regretted later because she thought they were good questions. Some interviews went very fast, as the supervisor could tell by looking at the individuals that they wouldn't be a good fit. During those interviews, she would ask a few general questions, but knew in the back of her mind that she wouldn't hire them. Other interviews took longer because she asked more questions or the conversations went smoother—she was able to build a rapport with the individuals and talk about their personal life.

The supervisor believed that her gut instincts were always correct, and she used this philosophy in most of her decisions. Making the hiring decisions for her team would be no different. After all....they were HER team. By noon the supervisor was exhausted. She had finished all 15 interviews, but when she came back from lunch, there was another large group waiting to talk with her about the job. She asked the receptionist to schedule interviews for the next 3-4 days—however long it would take, she was committed to hiring the best candidates; although, she had a pretty good idea of the 8 best so far.

As she thought about the 8 that had risen to the top, she began to wonder how many she really needed to hire. The owner never really said. Well, 8 seemed to be a good number, or maybe 10. She would conduct the rest of her interviews, and then decide how many to hire.

Over the course of the week, the supervisor continued conducting interviews. On her lunch break on Thursday, she sat down at a table in McDonalds and reviewed her notes from 59 interviews she had conducted so far. She decided to prioritize the list. She really liked the fact that some applicants had at one time or another worked on the family farm. She grew up on a farm and knew that these individuals had good work ethic. Work ethic was important. She could train the rest. She thought, as long as they were good communicators and showed up to work everyday, that's all she needed from them. No one she interviewed had any sales skills, and this was one of the duties of the position; upsell products. But, again she figured she could easily train someone to upsell. It wasn't that difficult. You just had to be motivated.

Once she prioritized the applicants, she slurped the last few drops of soda and started to gather her things so she could get back to work and continue the interviews. She threw away her food wrappers, and also threw away the interview notes on those individuals who did not make her cut. Why hold onto the notes, when she knew she wasn't going to hire any of the people listed.....besides, all the paper was getting to be too much. She needed to stay organized if she was going to get these interviews done by the end of the week.

By Friday early afternoon she had 6 people that she wanted to hire as CSRs. She called each of them and asked them to come to the office and complete the company's application form, and also some payroll paperwork. She was tired, but she was also proud that she was able to get this task done within one week. She still had people showing up to talk to her about the job, but she turned them away saying she had already made her decisions. She called the local papers and county workforce center and ask them to remove the advertisement.

Late Friday afternoon, the owner stopped by the supervisors office and asked how the hiring was coming along. The supervisor proudly said that she had 6 really solid people hired. They would start on Monday. The owner was surprised she hired 6 people. The owner thought there was a need for 2-3 additional people, but not 6. The supervisor replied, "Given the focus on growing the business, I thought adding 6 CSRs would be the appropriate number to meet the demand." The supervisor said that perhaps these 6 positions would focus more on sales, which would help achieve even more growth. The owner did want to grow and adding more people in the field making cold calls would help. The owner was reticent, but accepted the decision. Then, the owner asked about the 6 people hired. Who were they? What about their sales skills? The supervisor said that she would put together a training program right away and make sure that all 6 new CSRs went through the training. She told the owner she thought some had the natural ability to sell; she could tell. Others could use some training. All 6 were local folks who had lost their jobs in a recent plant closing in Springfield, a town next to Stars Hollow. They were hard working; she could tell. There were 2 females and 4 males. Ages ranged from 19 to 45 years old. All were white/Caucasian.

The owner and supervisor walked out to the parking lot together. It had been a long week. The supervisor was looking forward to some down time over the weekend. She knew the next week would be busy, given she had to get the newly hired CSRs through training. She was looking forward to it. She was going to have a great team.

Appendix A

Job Analysis

Position Title: Customer Service / Sales Representative

Subject Matter Expert: Customer Service Supervisor, Stars Hollow Hat Company

This job analysis is based on input from the subject matter expert(s) (SME) named above. The purpose of this job analysis is to identify the functions (group of tasks) performed by the job, and the competencies (knowledge, skills and abilities) necessary for successful performance at Stars Hollow Hat Company. Once the functions and associated competencies are confirmed by the SME, a job description will be created. Only those functions and KSAs that have CRIT scores of 15 or above are considered “essential.” Essential functions are used as part of the Job Description. Further, if there is no incumbent in the position, selection exams (based on the criticality scores) may be created as part of the hiring process.

Functions: Functions performed by this position include, but are not limited to, the list that follows. The functions are to be rated by the subject matter expert on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 representing the lowest and 5 representing highest level for their importance to the job (IMP) and their difficulty of learning (DIFF). Their criticality (CRIT) is derived by multiplying the importance rating by the difficulty rating. Thus, if a function is important but easy to learn, it has a low criticality score and may not be considered critical to include in a job description.

	Functions	IMP	DIFF	CRIT	
1	Take incoming calls from customers	5	3	15	
2	Key enter customer orders	5	3	15	
	Troubleshoot problems for customers who call				
3	In with questions or concerns	4	4	16	
4	Email confirmation of order	4	3	12	
	Suggest additional products to current				
5	customers (upsell)	5	4	20	
	Travel to customer location and present new				
6	products (about 30% of time)	4	3	12	
7	Maintain customer files	3	2	6	
8	Track backorders and follow up with customer	4	3	12	
	Work with production to expedite orders				
9	when	3	3	9	
10	Recommend new product ideas	3	2	6	
11	Mail marketing materials to customers	4	2	8	

Essential Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities: The following is a list of the knowledge, skills and abilities needed to do the functions involved in the position. There are 22 KSAs included in the list; you may not need to use all the core KSAs or you may need to add additional KSAs.

The column labeled "Functions" contains the function number of the representative functions requiring the particular KSA. These function numbers are to be referenced to the function list above. If you do not need to use a particular KSA, you should indicate not applicable (n/a) in the functions column for that KSA.

The column labeled IMP contains the average importance rating of the KSA on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 representing most important to doing the job. The column labeled DIFF contains the average rating of the difficulty in learning or making a significant improvement in the KSA. The column labeled CRIT contains the criticality measure obtained by multiplying the importance rating by the difficulty rating. If a KSA is important and difficult to learn, it will be considered critical to include in an assessment for selection in this position.

The last column labeled ENTRY is the level of the KSA needed at hire. These will be rated on a 1 to 5, with 1 representing little or none of the KSA needed and 5 representing a high degree needed. Those KSA determined to be needed at hire will be weighted accordingly when scored.

	KSAs	Functions	IMP	DIFF	CRIT	ENTRY
1	Business Acumen	5, 6, 9	5	3	15	2
2	Customer Service	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9	5	4	20	5
3	Sales	5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11	5	4	20	5
4	Communication - Interpersonal	1, 3, 5, 6, 9	5	4	20	5
5	Communication - Verbal	1, 3, 5, 6	5	4	20	5
6	Communication - Written	4, 8	4	3	12	4
7	Decision Making	3, 9	3	2	6	2
8	Financial / Math	N/A	0	0	0	0
9	Influence & Motivation	5, 6, 8	4	4	16	4
10	Information and Computer Technology	2	3	2	6	3
11	Judgment	3	3	3	9	2
12	Leadership	9, 10	3	3	9	2
13	Management	9	5	4	20	4
14	Negotiation	5, 6, 9	4	4	16	4
15	Organization	7, 9	5	4	20	5
16	Planning	6, 9	5	4	20	5
17	Presentation Skills	6	5	4	20	5
18	Problem Solving	3, 9	5	4	20	5
19	Project Management	9	5	5	25	5

Directions: You will evaluate the design and implementation of the recruiting and selection process using the following criteria:

- Appropriateness of recruitment sources
- Links between job description and selection assessments
- Identification of adverse impact, and
- compliance with applicable laws.

Once evaluated, you will make recommendations on improving the design and implementation. Provide a rationale for your decisions and whenever possible, link your decisions back to learned materials in the readings and module content.