

The Keys to Performance

What do you *really* want to know about a candidate before you hire them?

- Do they have the right **JOB-SKILLS**?
- Will they be **PRODUCTIVE**?
- Will they **FIT** the job?

Job skills include their experience, technical or educational qualifications and basic skills to be able to handle the job.

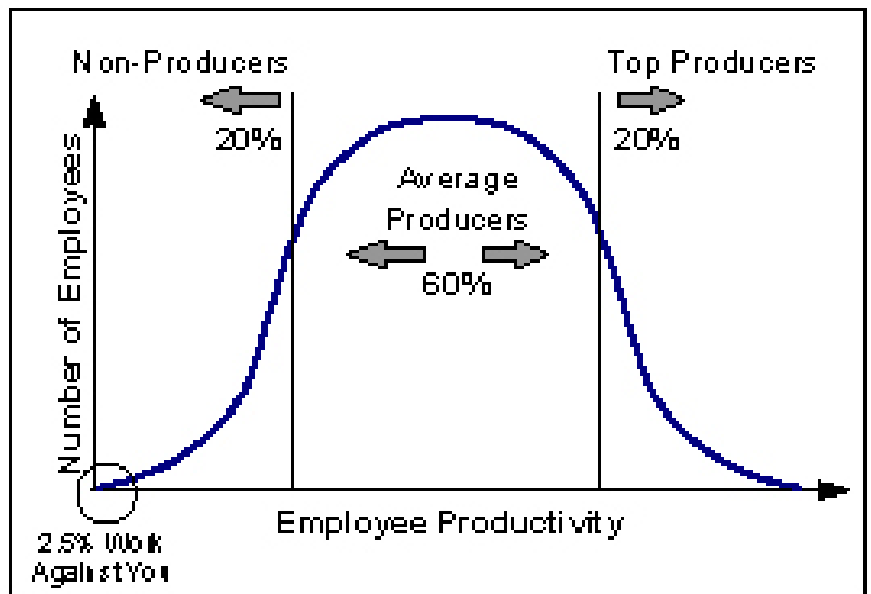
Job-Fit will be addressed separately. For now, we will concentrate on the second point: **How effectively will they perform?**

Productivity

It is a sad fact that, on average, only about 20% of employees could be called “top performers”.

Another 20% are really non-performers, and are deadwood in your organisation. Some of these are actually dangerous.

The remaining 60% have varying degrees of effectiveness. Some are quite good, but others need to be pushed and directed continually to get results. These are the ones who exhaust far too much executive time.



What is a Result?

Every job, no matter what it is, has a **final result** (or “product”), which is *valuable to someone else* in their organisation. That result is the reason the person is paid each week. For example:-

1. A CEO could be producing a “viable and expanding organisation”.
2. A Sales Person should almost certainly be producing “signed orders” or “sales volumes”.
3. A Cleaner should probably be producing “clean premises”.
4. A Personal Assistant may be producing “freed time for the executive”.

Each of these end products is “valuable” because someone else wants or needs them — they are things which can be “exchanged”, i.e. the person producing them gets paid for getting those results.

Ideas — Action — Results

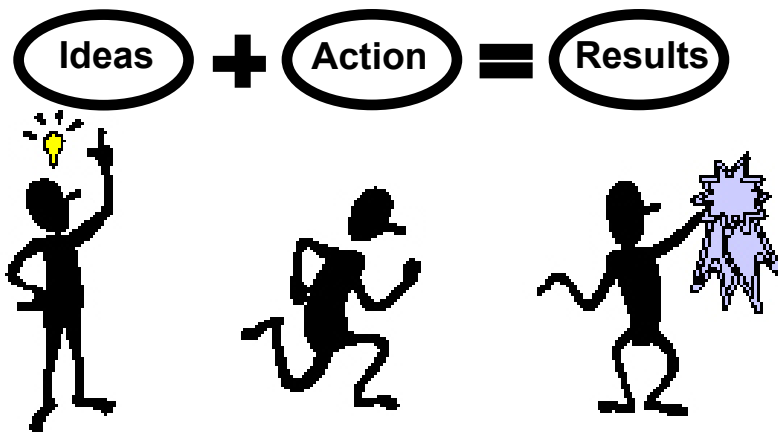
The term “ideas” here also refers to what the applicant *is being*, or *has been*. It is their title, their status, their educational qualifications, as well as their ability to originate new concepts.

Of course, there have to be **ideas** in the first

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place, before anything else can happen. You have to have a “Sales Manager” on post, with the right experience and ability in that area, in order to get a sales team functioning well.

You also have to get some **actions** performed in order to actually attain the required **results**.



But it is also true that some people have great ideas and *never act on them*. And they can sound *really* good when you interview them!

And there are others who can be *very busy* all day without producing any *viable results*. When you check *their* references, you are likely to be told that this ex-employee was “very active” all day long, but that does not tell you if they were *effective*.

Traditional Approach

1. Reading through the applications gives you the *candidate's view* of what they have **been**, and **done**. The problem is that they can make this sound *very* good indeed. Some even get professional help in writing their CVs. Essentially, a CV is the candidate's personal advert.
2. Normal reference checks give you *another person's opinion* of what that applicant has **been** and **done**. And this is also open to exaggeration and embellishment.
3. And finally, the traditional approach taken

when interviewing applicants usually gives them the opportunity to *really* tell you what they have **been** and **done**.

The fact of the matter is that the **ideas** and **actions** of an applicant in a former occupation can be *dressed up* to appear very attractive. Alone, they do not give you an accurate picture of the applicant's **ability to perform**.

Reverse the Cycle

At U-MAN we actually *reverse the recruitment cycle*. We do not, initially, look at the candidate's **ideas** and **actions** when we interview them. We don't ask: “What have you been?”, “What did you do?”.

We go directly and immediately to finding out what **results** they have achieved in their past jobs. If the results are there, *and we can verify them*, we *know* the **ideas** and **actions** must have preceded those **results**.

Spot the Performer

Someone who **gets results** is easy to recognise (when you know how).

For a start, a Performer will **know** what valuable results they have produced in their past jobs. They won't seem to have a sudden “memory lapse” when you ask them what **results** they have achieved.

Imagine a Sales Manager who *doubled the sales figures* in a previous job. Do you think he or she is likely to “forget” that? No! They will remember it for decades, and will be very happy to tell you all about that achievement.

Another very important characteristic of a Performer is that they will always **measure their results**.

They will have their statistics *easily accessible*, either

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on paper or in their heads. This makes it very easy for you to then *verify* those results.

Candidates can (and often do) glorify the ideas and actions of previous jobs. They can make it all *sound* good because there is no way to really measure the ideas they had or the actions they performed. For example:-

“I had a huge sales territory, and I organised it really well with maps showing the location of all our customers, and...”

“OK, but how much did you sell? What were the **results** of all these great ideas and actions?”

Candidates *do* embellish their actions and ideas, **but they can't fudge the figures**. These are definite, measurable.

If a sales candidate says they made \$800,000 in sales last year, *that* can be verified with their previous employer. There is no escape from **concrete results!**

Performance Guide

You can easily recognise a true performer because they will:-

- **Know their results.**
- **Measure their results.**
- **Be able to prove their results.**

They will also be *easy to interview* along this line. Their answers will be **simple, direct and fast**.

If they “can't remember” their results, or if they try to convince you that it was *all very complex*, forget it! They are **not** a performer. By these criteria you will know them.

Performers:

Did you ever work with someone who needed **no supervision, no directing and no pushing**. They just got on with it, achieving the desired results? What a joy that is!

Vision

The first thing about such people is that they can **envision** the end results, before they start.

It doesn't matter what the job is. If you have a cleaner who is effective, that cleaner *will know what a clean room looks like*. You don't have to tell them to clean the corners, or wipe the dust from the window ledge.

Effective Action

A top performer does not keep coming back to management with problems. A performer will have enough force and nous to overcome all the stops along the way. They are focused on the **results** — not the barriers.

Why is it So?

OK, so the result achieved this time was not as good as expected. Why was that? A top performer will **always** ask this question.

Their natural instinct is to *measure their results*. Why? So they can correct any bad results next time! They know what they want, and continually strive to achieve it.

But this attitude of seeking improvement is *equally applicable* to those times when things go really well. Why did it improve so much this time? How can we strengthen that? How can we do it **even better in future?**