MONTHLY MENTOR

"A" Player human capital leadership by HUNT EXECUTIVE SEARCH

Volume 16, Issue 2



For twenty seven years, the Monthly Mentor has been a value added service to encourage our employer and candidate clients in their Personal & Professional Development.



LeaderShift Architect Interview Basics

By Joe Hunt

It's been said you're only as good as the people you surround yourself with. The most important Leader Shift Competency any successful executive has to develop is their ability to get the right people in the right seats on the bus. For many of our clients, this article will serve as a refresher, for to know and not to do, is really not to know. For others, this could serve as a game changing blueprint to your next level individual success that can be compounded throughout your organization.



It's as simple as 1-2-3-A-B-C. Literally. The 3 most important practices any manager can use to hire better, help determine who the A, B, and C players are, and help multiply success promoting people.

The Leader *Shift* Interview advice we espouse may seem like common sense but as we all know, common sense is rarely common practice, even among most of the best-in-class multi-nationals. As such, applying these best practices is a significant competitive advantage.

1. Use the Leader Shift Interview "Truth Serum," the TORC Technique.

TORC stands for Threat of Reference Check. At *every* step in the hiring process, let candidates know that your interview and selection process requires candidates arrange reference check interviews with at least their last 3 direct supervisors as well as peers and subordinates you choose.

1 | MONTHLY MENTOR

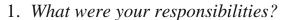
"C" players, *don't* want you talking to their former supervisors or can't get them to talk, so they drop out of the hiring process. Congratulations! You just saved a lot of wasted time and avoided hiring a loser. "A" players, *want* to arrange calls with former supervisors and can enlist cooperation from most former colleagues.

2. No matter what hiring methods you currently use, add the Leader Shift Interview.

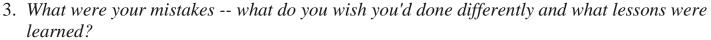
I'm not taking the credit for inventing this process. Drs. Brad Smart and his son Geoff Smart were amongst my mentors and I simply re-engineered what I learned and then applied and validated the Leader *Shift* Interview 10,000 times. It's the best practice for all "A" player hiring. Several books have been written on the Chronological, In-Depth, Structured (CIDS) and Performance interviewing methods and every manager I know of who achieves 90%+ *high performers* hired uses this interview.

Here is the essence of a Leader Shift Interview in a nutshell:

Starting with the first full time job and coming forward to the present job, ask 7 simple questions plus follow-up questions:



2. What were your successes and how did you achieve them?



- 4. What was your supervisor's name and what did you like and dislike about him/her?
- 5. What's your best guess as to what that supervisor would say, in a personal reference call you would arrange, were your strengths, weaker points, and overall performance?
- 6. Of your direct reports, how many A, B, and C players did you inherit, how many in each category did you end up with, and what did you do with respect to coaching, hiring, and firing?
- 7. Why did you leave that job?

What's so brilliant about a thorough chronological interview? It's the *patterns* that are revealed about literally dozens of competencies. Those patterns reveal what a candidate is really like today, and you don't have to have a PhD in Psychology to get it.

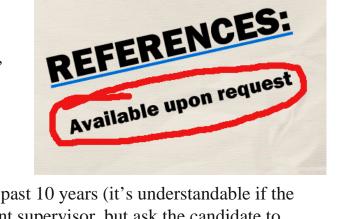
For instance, suppose your administering a dose of "truth serum," TORC to a candidate who admits that her supervisor 10 years ago would criticize her for being disorganized. She admits that her biggest mistake was lacking a follow-up system, so she missed due dates and went over budget on 2 of 5 projects.

2 | MONTHLY MENTOR

That's helpful, but the *pattern* is most revealing and as you discuss her performance in the past decade you will learn if she got organized or not. Those patterns give you extremely deep and accurate insights into *all* key competencies.

3. Ask finalists to arrange personal reference calls with supervisors and others you choose.

The TORC Technique is not an idle threat; you absolutely should talk with supervisors and others, but make the candidate do the work of arranging them. After you've extracted details on all supervisors (and others), *you* choose which ones you'd like to talk with.



I recommend talking with all supervisors over the past 10 years (it's understandable if the candidate doesn't want you to talk with their current supervisor, but ask the candidate to arrange a call with someone at the supervisor's level who left the company or someone that can be trusted not to jeopardize their current position).

THE GLOBAL BEST PRACTICES FOR AUDITING AND PROMOTING TALENT

Leader*Shift* Architects usually learn hiring methods first and find that with just a small tweak, they can promote with much greater success, and they can audit their people to learn who is the most talented.

Leader*Shift* Architect projects at multi-nationals who have been ranked by [Business Week] as the "Best Companies for Leadership" were not initiated to improve hiring, but to improve their success promoting people. And it worked!

When dozens of leading Human Resource executives at Global 100 companies were surveyed, they said only 25% of the people they promoted into management turned out to be high performers, except for the Leader Shift Architects in the group, who reported they multiplied their promotion success exponentially using the Leader Shift Architect methods.

How do these best in class companies and others do it? Simple - train managers in Leader *Shift* Architect methods and instead of using external reference calls, arrange internal interviews with boss(es), peers, and subordinates. By following the Leader *Shift* Architect process, it's virtually impossible not to achieve ~90% high performance success in those promoted.

3 | MONTHLY MENTOR

Finally, do you need deeper insights into your current managers? In these problematic and fast changing times, former high performers slip, and it's common to wonder if they still have what it takes. Or do you simply want to know who your current A, B, and C players are?

The Leader *Shift* Architect audit is exactly the same as the promoting methods just described with one tweak: in promoting people you have one job in mind, and in the audit you look broadly at where someone can be an "A" player.

CONGRATULATIONS! If you use the Leader*Shift* Architect 1-2-3 punch list, you may not achieve 90% high performers being hired and promoted, but you will know you've been far more thorough, and you've gotten much deeper insights into candidates than ever before. By simply using internal vs. external "references," you can use the same basic method to audit your talent gaining deeper insights into who really are the high potentials.

We're experts in applying the Leader *Shift* Architect and you can be too. It's time consuming upfront, but investing a little more time at the beginning will save you a great deal of time later. There simply is no better process or assessment tool to give you the insight into people's behaviors, motivations (drivers/values), acumen (capacity/potential) and competencies (personal skills). Not to mention your skill as a Leader *Shift* Architect could make or break your career.

Joe Hunt is a Managing Partner at Hunt Executive Search/The Hunt Group, a boutique executive search firm that provides human capital solutions to consumer goods, retail, life sciences and diversified industrial markets.

Contact Joe Hunt:

 $212.861.2680 \mid 800.486.8476 \mid \underline{info@huntsearch.com}$

Retained Executive Search

Executive Assessment

Private Equity Advisory

Executive Coaching & Outplacement

Human Capital Consulting E-Dossier

Video Presentation



4 | MONTHLY MENTOR