

Hiring the Right Person

There isn't a company in the world that doesn't wish to have the secret to hiring the right person. In pursuit of this evasive objective, HR professionals have devised a whole series of assessment tests, resume evaluation processes, interview techniques, and reference verification tactics. We have stooped to abstract questions like "if you were an animal what animal would you be", hoping the answer will provide us with some insight into the individual (even though most of us have no idea how to interpret the answer).

The real way to hire someone is to check out their body. What? You must be thinking Tudor has gone mad. You must be wondering how, in an era of correctness and awareness on these matters, we can say such a thing. Well – shame on you for what you were thinking! We haven't gone mad. When we say check out the body we mean:

The Eyes

They say that the eyes are a window into the soul. While we might not submit you to quite an esoteric concept, we do agree that you can learn a great deal by watching how someone watches. The eyes are also a metaphor for vision and insightfulness, both being traits you want to capture in the people you hire.

The Head

Sure the head houses the brain and you want someone with intelligence. But more than just intelligence, you also want someone who knows how to apply that intelligence to the circumstances and realities of your daily work grind. The notion of education fails us sometimes because we hire great degrees, but on occasion find that the degree holder cannot make the leap from being book brilliant to real world smart. Looking at the head gives you the opportunity to check not only what's inside, but also how it works.

The Legs

Be careful here. We don't want you thinking the wrong thing...again. The legs hold up the body and keep it steady. The legs are also the engine of the body and make it move forward. A good pair of legs can get you places, and it is therefore a great idea, if you want to hire someone who is stable and mission oriented, to pay attention to the legs.

The Shoulders

We don't use the expression "I feel like I have the whole world on my shoulders" by accident. The shoulders are the metaphor for responsibility. A good pair of shoulders, in the metaphoric sense of course, can indicate a person who is going to take initiative and become a leader.

The Hands

A good pair of hands is an invaluable asset and something that dooms mediocre employees and highlights excellent employees. The hands are the tools of every trade. It's important to find an employee that not only knows how to use his or her hands, but does so with effort and energy.

The Belly

The belly – or the gut – is typically a symbol for both nerve and instinct. For example, people have gut feelings that help them make decisions, while someone with guts is someone unafraid to take chances. These are both traits that are useful in an employee, particularly if you are, as you should be, the sort of employer that empowers your staff and wants them to try new things.

The Chest

Shame on you...again. The chest houses the heart and the heart is where the difference lies between good and great. You want someone who is all heart over someone who is just brain and you can tell by looking into the individual and seeing their passion, their drive and their spirit.

One might read this article and think that it was written tongue in cheek. Certainly the intent is not to have you review the various anatomical aspects of your next candidate for employment. Still, what we are trying to point out is that the sterile, empty, quasi-scientific methods being used today have served to remove the human from human resources. There is so much we can learn about a person that cannot be written on a resume or gathered from test results. We need to regain our intuition about other humans.

Last week, at a meeting regarding an HR process, someone around the table commented that a bad hire never gets good. While the accuracy of the comment is subject to debate, the core message that the wrong people get hired all the time cannot be questioned. This means, to us, that the processes of selection don't work as well as we'd like to think. Our point is the farther you get from the human being, the farther you get from the right hire.

So check out the body. Just don't stare.