

Finding and developing talent at deloitte essay



1. Using the descriptions of different behaviors, attitudes, and abilities that Deloitte seems to deem desirable in its applicants, describe the key personality characteristics that you think the company is seeking in its employees? Explain the reasoning behind your answer.

It appears that Deloitte is seeking applicants with an internal locus of control; those persons who look inward for motivation and believe that they control their own contribution, productivity and outcomes. Moreover, it is important to Deloitte that persons have high self-efficacy, which involves ones confidence in one's own professional agility. Applicants who are self-starters with the ability to independently determine outcomes and can simultaneously work together on a team is important, but most paramount to Deloitte is an entrepreneurial spirit so that employees possess an internal gauge of personal responsibility and a commitment to their profession.

Deloitte is a diverse transnational company with a commitment to employee satisfaction, professional development and investment in its people.

Deloitte's corporate website states that it was recognized for its leadership in cultivating diverse talent, and was ranked No. 8 on the 2011 DiversityInc Top 50 Companies for Diversity. Further rankings included, but are not limited to: "Top 10 for People with Disabilities," 2011; "Top 10 for Asian-Americans," 2008-2011; "Top 10 for Global Diversity," 2009-2011; DiversityInc recognized Deloitte as the "Top Company for Generational Communications" for 2011.

This award recognizes Deloitte's pioneering research and solutions in talent development, performance, engagement and communication – particularly

among Millennials, Generation X and baby boomers. (Deloitte, 2012) These accolades lend themselves to Deloitte's all inclusive policies and professional growth philosophies. Bloomberg BusinessWeek magazine's recent profile of Deloitte's recruiting details list the following three characteristics as the most important factors of candidate qualification: " 1) Communication skills, 2) Leadership skills and 3) College grade point average" (BusinessWeek, 2012). Deloitte hires the best and the brightest and then cultivates them into Deloitte leaders. It appears that they want promising, yet young and malleable, candidates so that they can be shaped clean and without having to unlearn many undesirable habits from external environments in the same sector.

2. How might the characteristics of the perceiver, the target, and the situation affect the social perceptions that employers like Deloitte likely have regarding participants in the Teach First program?

Participants of the Teach First program were primarily selected as high performing students and then went on in the program to evidence what they've learned through a ' trial by fire' experience in which they must learn a new field, earn certification in that field and then manage not only their position individually, but also on an academic team working with students in a challenging academic environment needing improvement in a short span on time. It is a highly-selective program that only accepts " the top 3 percent of their graduating classes, and they have degrees in finance, math, engineering and philosophy" (Nelson & Quick, 2011).

These students in very specific fields are then thrust into a foreign environment with a diverse student body to not just teach, but also to mentor, manage, empathize and counsel students toward a measurably improved outcome. With regard to characteristics of the perceiver, Deloitte is already familiar with, and developed a positive opinion about, the Teach First program and the rigor that it provides in shaping young minds and character. This knowledge extrapolates itself onto Deloitte applicants before even meeting the applicants themselves. Deloitte already knows for what it is they are looking – motivated self-starters with managerial acumen and experience working in complex interpersonal environments with ability to learn and adapt quickly.

In terms of the characteristics of the target, it is difficult to say as the Teach First program surely brings many different kinds of applicants with varying backgrounds, styles of dress and personality types to the fore. However, just the philosophy behind the intentions and character of a person enlisting in the Teach First program; gaining acceptance and then matriculating beyond the program successfully lends itself to the manner in which an applicant might present oneself. This applicant is not inexperienced and fresh out of college with no notion of the working life. This applicant is confident in his/her abilities, has learned from mistakes and misjudgments through trial and error and, more than likely, is wiser than the average college graduate applicant approaching Deloitte for the first time. The characteristics of the situation already set the stage for success.

For Deloitte, being a participant in the program is almost a self-fulfilling prophesy. Entering in to the interview, the perception is that the interaction

will prove a positive one if for no other reason than the preconceived notions held by Deloitte about the Teach First applicants.

3. What attributions are prospective employers like Deloitte likely making regarding participants in the Teach First program? Why are employers making these attributions?

“‘Teach First graduates demonstrate skills that often take years to learn on the job,’ says Jo Owen, a former partner with Accenture...Owen notes most graduates are learning technical skills early in their business careers, but these are not the skills that people must have in order to succeed in the long term. ‘ Future leaders learn early on the tough lessons of managing people, leadership, initiative and entrepreneurialism’” (Nelson & Quick, 2011). Employers and making these attributions based upon evidenced work performance of the program’s graduates in terms of the skills they are learned in the program and now apply on the job.

Program graduates understand the mechanism of injury when they make mistakes because there is, inherently, an entrepreneurial feel to the program and the individual’s role within it. They know from the beginning that the onus is upon them to perform and to make a social contribution. The motivation is set from the initial acceptance, and from that point on, the focus is shifted to the philosophy of “ What can I do here in this situation?” rather than looking externally for assistance, change or supervision. Participants also know from the outset that they are there to correct a failing situation, so the infrastructure in place clearly is not a sufficient appeal to any kind of authority that has proven viable in the past.

4. How can the use of personality and vocational interest testing benefit Deloitte? What risks might be associated with Deloitte's use of these testing devices?

Personality and vocational interest testing allows Deloitte a metric for determining how employees are better and more productively placed within the company. Personality types can vary greatly, but it takes divergent thinking on the part of a company to determine how different personality types can serve most effectively. An ENTJ personality type, for example, might prove better in forensic accounting or auditing than in customer service or sales because they are analytical and are shown to judge material critically whereas sales and customer service members are often required to be more positive and less critical.

Knowing this ahead of time saves the company time, effort and training costs. Moreover, in building teams, it is important to know what the team dynamic for each goal needs to be and how different components of it can work together. Almost like social engineering, personality testing allows companies to build teams customized to complete specific tasks or to determine whether or not an individual matches either the corporate culture of workforce dynamic as a whole. Some risk is associated with personality and vocational interest testing in that personalities vary within and across cultures, and can alter over time.

As individuals mature and learn from interactive and consequential situations, their personalities adapt. Further, it is relatively simple to consciously taint personality test results based upon answers provided if an

applicant believes that a certain personality type is desired. Testing implies that respondents are acting in a complete genuine fashion, which might not always be the case.

5. How might social perception and attribution processes factor into the operation of the Deloitte Career Connections (DCC) program?

The DCC program gives employees the benefit of the doubt by assuming that their disconnection is merely a byproduct of an unsavory situation in which the employee has been placed, either in terms of a poor organizational fit or environment. Likewise, however, the DCC also eliminates this as a factor if the tools provided to better suit the employee elsewhere in the organization are not fruitful. Rather than expending more time and money to hire a new employee while wasting what the dissatisfied employee might still bring to the table, the program enables both the company and the employee a period of time to reflect on the individual's role within the company in an attempt to mitigate any breach made on either part along the way.

Retooling an employee for a new role better suited to them may prove to be a positive experience for all and a long-term win as opposed to termination or voluntary separation from the company. Many factors might have played into whatever undesirable situation might have led the employee to the program such as: their perception of their own environment, the misperception of the employee by others, whether or not they expressed an internal or external attribute to their previous situation or even employee burnout or boredom. If the employee is given the opportunity through the

career connections program, they might be granted a chance to review their previous affectations and make improvements for the future.

The program, through a positive attempt toward employee improvement and retention, does not place the employee in a negative light, but at the same time, illuminates possible factors that caused issues for the employee in the first place. At this point, the employee is faced with a choice – either acknowledge what has been learned through the process or leave the company.