

Essential Qualities, Preferences, and Skills

A well-chosen employee who is successful in performing the job for which he or she was hired almost always will fit into the team and the larger organisation. Review your group's culture to see which qualities are present in successful employees in your group, and compare how well candidates for the position match up.

Think about the most effective people currently working in your organisation and identify the qualities, preferences, and skills you find most valuable.

Start your search for cultural compatibility by assessing each candidate's qualities:

- **Initiative:** Do you need someone who looks for problems and fixes them? Do you want someone who is intellectually curious? Do you need someone who can follow directions? Do you need someone you can train to do more and different work? *Define the amount and type of initiative you and your organization require from an employee.*
- **Flexibility:** Do you want someone who is completely flexible? Do you want someone who will develop rules of operation for you? *Define the flexibility or adaptability required in the position.*
- **Leadership:** How much leadership do you want the new hire to take on? Do you want someone who is capable of creating new ideas, someone capable of discovering the most appropriate solution, or someone who can follow through with the details so that an idea comes to fruition in a product? *Define the kinds of leadership you need from the candidate, keeping in mind that leadership does not necessarily relate to years of experience and that not every employee wants to be a leader.*

After you have considered necessary qualities, consider a **person's preferences** for how he or she likes to work, and match them to your own preferences for how the job is to be done:

- **Procedural preferences:** Is it important that specific procedures be always followed to the letter on the job? Do you need people who take exceptional pride in following procedures? Can you tolerate mavericks who live to break the rules? *Define what procedural tolerance level you need.*
- **Tasking preferences:** Do you need a multi-tasker who likes to work on multiple tasks at one time, or do you want someone who likes to handle only one at a time? Do you want someone who can handle uncertainty, or a person who needs well-defined limits and schedules? *Define your tasking needs, but keep in mind that when looking for a multi-tasker, you want someone who can let you know when he or she can't take on additional work.*
- **Goal-oriented preferences:** Do you want someone who can set and reach his or her own goals without much input from you or others? Can you deal with people who want to set their own goals rather than look to you to set the goals? Can you manage someone who needs specific and detailed goals? *Define the goal orientation you require in an employee.*
- **Problem-solving preferences:** To what degree do you want people to own and solve their problems before they bring them to you? Do you want someone who will ask you to help establish task priority when confronted with conflicting tasks or schedules? *Decide how much independence is appropriate for the job and for your group.*
- **Learning preferences:** How much initiative do you want someone to take to stay current in his or her field? Does staying current matter for the particular job? *Determine whether the employee needs to have a yearning*

Assessing Skills and Qualities Worksheet

to stay up-to-date in all areas of technology or whether current skills are sufficient.

- **Collaboration preferences:** Do you need a person who prefers to work alone or one who thrives when working with a group of people? Are you looking for someone to complement the team? Does the position involve a significant amount of group work or very little? *Define the amount of collaboration you require in the position.*

Finally, consider the **non-technical skills** that might make a person successful in your group:

- **Communications skills:** Do you need someone with excellent speaking or writing skills, or both? Do you want someone to be customer-facing, a person who will be quick-thinking, good at fielding off-the-cuff questions? Do you require excellent phone skills for the job? *Determine your non-technical needs in the context of the specific job.*
- **Performance-versatility skills:** Do you need someone who is strictly tactical and operational, or someone who can think strategically and plan what has to happen? Do you need a person who can handle projects of varying scope or a person who wants to focus on one kind of work? *Determine whether this person needs a variety of problem-solving skills, or a narrow range of skills focused in one product area or one kind of project.*
- **Negotiation skills:** Does the person need to be able to work with people inside and outside the group (or the company)? Do you need someone who can negotiate with potential customers or different groups? *Determine what level of skill your new hire will need as a negotiator.*
- **Problem-solving skills:** How do they handle problems and challenges? How much creativity do you need in this role? *Determine what problem-solving skills are needed for the position.*

Cultural qualities, preferences, and skills will have varying levels or degrees of importance.

On the next page is a sample worksheet that can be used to define the qualities, preferences, and skills required in a particular job. Add other characteristics required or desired for the job, using the Notes column to describe how those qualities, preferences, and skills fit the requirements of the job.

Assessing Skills and Qualities Worksheet

Worksheet: Matching Qualities, Preferences, and Skills with Job Openings

Quality, Preference, or Skill	Required	Desirable	Notes (Cite any required quality, preference, or skill specific to the job.)
Quality: Initiative			
Quality: Flexibility			
Quality: Technical leadership			
Quality: Responsibility and independence			
Preference: Ability to work on multiple projects at one time			
Preference: Goal orientation			
Preference: Passion for learning			
Preference: Teamwork			
Skill: Communications skills			
Skill: Ability to handle projects of varying scope			
Skill: Influence and negotiation skills			
Skill: Problem-solving skills			

For further guidance and information please visit www.famerecruitment.com Employers section for our guides on Defining the Job Needs and a Writing an Effective Job Brief

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