

Recruitment in a global financial services operation – the US experience



The background

Our client is a global financial services organisation that has expanded rapidly through a mixture of acquisitions and organic growth. The business takes pride in its reputation for innovation both for its products and people policies.

A key aspect of recruitment into this global organisation is finding the balance between the local business cultural fit and the candidates matching the global corporate values.

Having used OPQ extensively in the UK, the HR team were keen to expand the use of OPQ into the other global offices.

The need to recruit an HR team for the USA provided the opportunity to pilot the use for a number of posts based in the east Coast, the mid West and the Southern states.

The challenge

The practical challenges of running this assessment project required the support of the SHL offices both in the UK and USA. Key considerations were:

- Client's USA team were not familiar with psychometric tools
- Concerns about the validity of psychometric instruments – litigation culture in the USA
- The potential impact of different personalities in different parts of the USA
- The efficiency and timeliness of a process run from the UK

The solution

The solution reinforced the importance of the best practice when using psychometric tools.

Engaging the recruiters:

Firstly we provided the US validity data. Secondly, all the recruiters experienced the process for themselves, including face to face feedback. The team were therefore



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confident in the reliability of the OPQ as well as understanding the outcomes.

Agree key aspects of the role: The client produced role definitions, person specifications as well as details on the business priorities for each of the locations. We targeted our feedback to specific expanded role requirements.

Use appropriate format: Working with SHL (US) the candidates completed the questionnaires in US English. The results were then set against US norm groups thus adding to the validity of the process and data.

Communication and cultural context: As usual, candidates were briefed. Candidates were receptive and curious but had limited exposure to any personal use of psychometric tools. This was not what we anticipated in the land of self development and motivation speakers!

Match the results to the client's requirements: In this context it would not have been advisable to simply run expert reports. We produced reports specifically attuned to the local business culture and the critical success factors of each of the roles.

Debriefing candidates: It was vital for us to interpret the data actively with the candidates to explore the cultural realities of working in specific locations and their potential contribution.

In conclusion, before you start any cross cultural work

research, plan your tactics and assume nothing!

The results

Successful, robust selection process for business critical posts throughout the USA.

Further information

For further information concerning the HBS and SHL partnership programme please contact us via the contact details below.