Driscoll’s Berries Cultivates New Hires With Behavior-Based Interviewing

Nurturing a cohesive company culture with custom training from Cabrillo College.

Driscoll’s is family-owned business and constantly growing. With approximately 1,200 regular employees worldwide (not including those hired at various seasonal peaks), interviewing was taking too long and didn’t always yield the best results.

The company’s culture is focused on three core values: humility, passion and trustworthiness. “They’re ingrained in the company’s DNA,” said Janet Heien, Driscoll’s Director of Growing Great People, “and our challenge has been to quickly and effectively screen for those core values in our candidates.”

Driscoll’s has candidates interview with employees one-on-one, as well as with panels of employees. Says Heien, “We were wearing out our employees who excelled at screening. They’re not professional recruiters—they have other responsibilities. Somehow we had to find a way to clone them.”

The Solution

Create a custom training program that would enable interview team members to learn and practice behavior-based interviewing skills.

“We felt certain our employees would do a better job screening candidates if they had more knowledge and felt more confident about what they were supposed to look for,” stated Lana Pieri, Driscoll’s HR Manager, Talent Acquisition, “We also wanted to partner with an organization that knew our company and culture well, but wouldn’t bring any pre-conceived ideas or pre-packaged approaches to the table.”

“We wanted to partner with an open-minded and creative organization to help us overcome the challenges in our interviewing process. Cabrillo helped us focus on the most critical pieces and co-created a solution that worked—training many of our people in behavior-based interviewing—so we’ve increased our bandwidth to consistently screen for candidates who fit our company.”

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CASE STUDY

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2,500 (seasonally)
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Driscoll’s chose behavior-based interviewing techniques because they empower the interviewer to probe for how candidates have acted in the past, in various scenarios — the best predictor of future behavior.

The Benefits
Since incorporating this training into its hiring practice, Driscoll’s has seen:

- More thorough interviewing cycles
- New employees integrating faster into the workplace
- New employees are more productive quickly
- A 700% increase in creating a pool of experienced interviewing team members
- Increased confidence among interviewing team members
- Common language and expectations about value-based behaviors among all employees

The Implementation
Pieri worked with Cabrillo to develop the program’s design — what content was included, the content flow, the activities that would best help the content “stick”, when, to whom, and how often to provide the course and the plan for continuing to improve it.

Two courses were created to help hiring managers and employees develop their interviewing skills and to learn how to manage the hiring process. Both courses were test-piloted, after which content, flow and activities were refined. The end result is a comprehensive program that is highly interactive with a framework that quickly adapts to the skills and knowledge of the participants.

The program gives hiring managers and interviewing team members:

- A safe place to try out new knowledge and skills
- Lots of practice:
  - Asking behavior-based questions
  - Listening to and quickly analyzing candidate’s answers
  - Asking appropriate follow-up questions
  - Providing clear recommendations about candidates to the hiring manager
  - Using common, consistent language to describe behaviors

“With Cabrillo’s innovative way of creating a contagious learning environment, our employees actually look forward to their training. And as a result, we’ve become much more nimble in hiring new employees who fit pretty seamlessly into our company and immediately add value in our day-to-day business,” stated Pieri, “It doesn’t get much better than that.

Take our free assessment and learn how ready your organization is for change.

Visit: cabrillo.edu/services/corporate/change
or call 831.479.5649