

Soft Skills: The New Currency of Performance

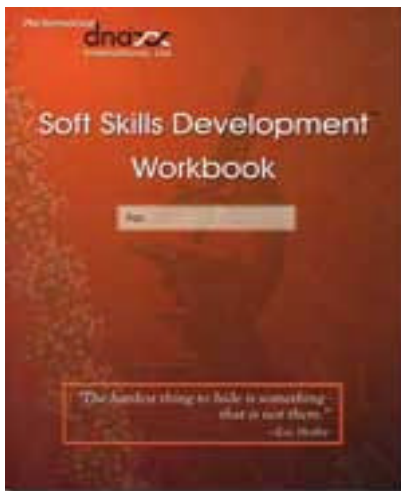
Soft Skills Made Easy

Last year we introduced the DNA of Performance, a system to identify, prioritize and measure the soft skills of jobs and people as they relate to superior performance.

Our first questionnaire, the **DNA Position Survey**, analyzed the input of up to ten (10) subject matter experts to identify the importance of 23 soft skill requirements such as interpersonal skills, self-management, leadership, persuasion, teamwork and others.



The Position Survey report includes detailed descriptions and behavioral interview questions for each of the top seven soft skill competencies. The Position Survey is recommended for **Behavioral Interviewing, Employee Development and Performance Management.**



We are pleased to introduce three new DNA products:

Soft Skill Development Workbook (pictured above)

Job Soft Skills Indicator™

Personal Soft Skills Indicator™

Call us today for a preview or visit www.super-solutions.com

Did you know.....

Interviews are considered "tests". Like all tests, an interview must have "content validity" in order to defend its actions in a legal challenge. This means that interviews must be job-specific and measure job-related performance requirements to be valid.

Ninety percent of all job interviews are made by an interview. Yet traditional interviewing methods are effective less than one out of five times.

The Performance DNA™ System

"What specifically do I ask to find out someone's style?" was the opening remarks in a message a client recently e-mailed me.

"I can identify that Marie is stubborn", she continued. "She likes to do things her way, is easily distracted, can't multitask, does not like authority, and *hates* to look bad. She would rather lie or blame than admit she is wrong or made a mistake. So how would you identify those things in an interview?"

With only a smidgen of sarcasm and a pinch of jest, I asked, "When did you find all this out about Marie - before you hired her or after a few weeks on the job?"

"I'm not sure, she continued. "I guess I suspected a problem during the interview but I just thought she was nervous. Marie had the experience and good references. But did I ever make a mistake."

My client is not alone. Finding enough workers just to fill all the positions available is tough enough these days. But finding the right people is even tougher. So people ignore what they suspect to be true and hire anyway. My client has already described what can happen. So what can you do to find out someone's style before you hire? (See page 2)



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Excerpt: The Performance DNA™ System

Hiring Effective and Efficient Salespeople

Dave (not his real name) is a bright guy. He is well-liked by his customers and co-workers alike. Dave was the top salesperson in each of the last two years. Dave's sales managers and co-workers gave him glowing references and they all agreed..... they "would hire him back in a heartbeat." So why is it that 6 months into his new job, Dave has yet to close a sale?

Dave's story is not unusual. Just ask any sales manager. It's not that Dave suddenly became demotivated or had a brain dump. Professional sales requires a special skill set and not unlike doctors, certain salespeople are better qualified to sell specific products and services in specific industries at different phases of the selling cycle.

For instance, one salesperson may be expected to open up a new territory with a new product while another salesperson in the same industry may inherit an existing client base.

Through our solutions provided to clients and partnerships with leading behavioral researchers we have developed a blueprint for high performing salespeople in high growth, entrepreneurial companies. These clients require rapid penetration into a market and high margins. They use their selling process as a competitive edge in the market.

Our sales blueprint gives any sales manager a solution selling sales process and the tools to:

- Fast track recruitment and interviewing
- Select the right salesperson for your business the first time
- Reduce sales force turnover
- Reduce the time it takes to supervise your sales force

Call us for a no-obligation consultation or to reserve your "seat" at our next web conference for up to five senior managers.

Getting the Complete Picture

Soft Skill Behavioral Interview Questions are designed to help the interviewer evaluate the knowledge, technical and soft skills a job candidate will bring to the job, not how well they can interview or finding out information that is just nice to now.

Besides soft skills questions, there are four other types of questions you will need to ask:

1. Questions designed to determine whether a candidate's background and education are a fit for the culture of the organization, work group or team.
2. Questions designed to determine whether a candidate's technical skills and experience are similar to what is required in the job.
3. Questions designed to determine whether a candidate's past accomplishments indicate a capability of achieving the goals and objectives of the job.
4. Questions designed to determine what a candidate might do given a specific set of circumstances.

Why Interviews Fail

- Interviewers are not trained
- Selection decisions are made too quickly
- Decisions are based on personal preferences or style
- Too much emphasis is placed on education and technical skills and not enough on soft skills

Right From The Headlines!

- Ira S. Wolfe, President of Poised for the Future Company, (Success Performance Solutions) received the 2000 President's Award from TTI International. Ira also received the award in 1996 and 1999.
- Front Page News! The cover story of Business Monday (February 5, 2000) featured North Star Marketing's mentoring and coaching program. Leah Davis, North Star's Vice President of Client Services, is a graduate of our Academy, sponsored by the Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce. Leah encouraged North Star's President and founder, Kae Groshong to offer the program to all their employees. We kicked off the program in January and training will continue throughout 2001
- Business 2 Business, Lancaster's newest business publication, is featuring Ira as a contributing writer. The January 2001 issue included *The Perfect Storm*. February's issue included *The Eye of the Storm*. A new series about hiring and managing the best sales people will begin with the March 2001 issue.

For copies of the Business 2 Business or Business Monday, contact us at (717) 656-4632 or visit our website at www.super-solutions.com under "In the News".

- From Williamsport to Calgary. The Perfect Storm hits the road. Ira has been invited to keynote a luncheon at the Club 400 in Calgary. The event is sponsored by The Clements Group. He will also address the Lycoming Manufacturers Workforce Council in April and the VHA (Hospitals) Pennsylvania Annual Board Planning Forum.
- The September 2000 workforce survey conducted by Success Performance Solutions on behalf of the Lancaster County Chamber of Commerce was featured in the January 2001 issue of Training and Development. Success Performance Solutions will repeat the survey during the March 2001 job fair.

Getting Older

- From now until 2004, the pool of male workers age 55-64 will grow by 43 percent.
- The pool of female workers age 55-64 will grow by 63 percent.
- The percentage of the population that is in the workforce will grow by 0.1 percent annually.

AARP

Teacher Exodus

In 1999, the U.S. Department of Education estimated that 765,000 of the nation's public school teachers—nearly 30 percent of the total—would retire within 10 years.

A Kroc of an idea

In 1954, Ray Kroc had a vision: a McDonald's at every corner. The typical American now eats three hamburgers and four orders of french fries each week. Thirty years ago Americans spent \$6 billion annually on fast food. In 2000, they spent over \$110 billion, more than on higher education, personal computers, or new cars.

U.S. News & World Report
January 22, 2001

The Lonely Tooth Fairy

The majority of Americans 65 years and older had not teeth in the mid-1950's. Today, 46.3 of adults 70 years of age or older have an average of 20.5 teeth.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Hidden Costs of Turnover.

The average turnover in all U.S. industries is 15 percent.

- Bank tellers: 50 percent
 - Retail: 100 percent
 - Fast Food: 120 percent
- Sibson & Co.

Employers are not looking at the complete picture. They're not thinking about the soft costs, and that really eats them alive."

Jane Lommel, Hudson Institute

Women's Work

- More than 70 million new jobs were added nationwide between 1964 and 1999, more than double the 1964 figure.
- 42 million were for women
- 28 million for men

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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Can you guess which organization this is?

A high-profile company that has a little more than 500 employees and has the following statistics:

- 29 have been accused of spousal abuse
- 7 have been arrested for fraud
- 19 have been accused of writing bad checks
- 117 have directly or indirectly bankrupted at least 2 businesses
- 3 have done time for assault
- 71 cannot get a credit card due to bad credit
- 14 have been arrested on drug-related charges
- 8 have been arrested for shoplifting
- 21 are currently defendants in lawsuits
- 84 have been arrested for drunk driving in the last year

Give up yet?

It's the 535 members of the United States Congress.