



Episode 13 Show Notes: Research-Based Talent Acquisition

Dr. Steven Lindner Provides Insights to Research that Improves Hiring

Decisions. In this episode, Dr. Steven Lindner shares important insights of interest to HR professionals concerned with talent acquisition and leadership development. From his work in the field of talent acquisition and assessment, Dr. Lindner reveals what research has uncovered on how candidates are selected for interviews, the impact of employment gaps in a resume, and how to mitigate them. He will also share key success factors in hiring and discuss the benefits of instituting leadership development programs.

Dr. Steven Lindner is the Executive Partner of [The WorkPlace Group®](#), a leading "think-tank" provider of talent acquisition and recruitment process outsourcing services helping employers find, screen, assess and onboard best talent. He is an expert in talent acquisition, assessment and hiring and earned his Ph.D. in Industrial / Organizational Psychology from Stevens Institute of Technology. Dr. Lindner is a frequent presenter at important industry conferences and will be presenting at the HR Southwest Conference next month. He is often quoted on recruiting and job search issues in media, such as the Associated Press, New York Times, Wall St. Journal, *USA Today*, *Forbes*, CNBC, Inc. and Fox Business, among others. He is a regular columnist on hiring and recruitment issues for the [New York Daily News](#).

Key Learnings from This Episode

- **Steven Lindner's career journey.** Dr. Lindner opens with insights from his personal career journey. He acknowledges that it has led him from a somewhat unplanned path into talent acquisition and assessment – his passion today. He discusses how he has applied his industrial and organizational psychology background and love of behavioral research to the challenges of assisting employers with hiring people for jobs in which they are best suited.
- **How candidates are selected for interviews: Research study background.** Hiring is a risk averse activity. Is there a predictable pattern to how candidates are selected for interviews? To answer this question, The WorkPlace Group examined 200 randomly selected resumes (all qualified) collaboratively with Frostburg University from a huge universe of over 3,000 qualified resumes.



These resumes were coded against 19 distinct characteristics to determine who would be selected for an interview. The sample selected had an average of ten years of work experience.

- **How candidates are selected for interviews: Research study results.**

“Resume characteristics that influence interview decisions”

Three resume factors significantly predicted who was going to get an interview:

- **Education level** - Having a college degree or being enrolled in a college degree program significantly influenced who was interviewed.
- **Work experience** – More than 10 years of work experience in the same or similar job had diminishing returns for college degree holders. For non-degree holders, the more job experience, the better.
- **Success / performance indicator.** A composite measure termed “scholarship index,” meaning that the candidate shows scholarship, a desire to be successful and improve him/herself.

- **Employment Gaps Moderate Relationships Among Resume Factors Predicting Interview Decisions.**

Gaps can be very damaging in the eyes of the hiring manager.

- The study revealed that the perfect candidate had no employment gaps greater than 30 days. A qualified resume without employment gaps had almost an 80% chance based on probability alone to get the interview.
- A small gap of 30 days or more decreased a candidate’s chance of being invited to a job interview.
- Two or more gaps, the probability of being invited to an interview fell by almost 60%



- **Addressing Employment Gaps.** It’s important that gaps are explained. Being silent about, or trying to hide employment gaps is the worst thing a candidate can do because it allows the hiring manager to fill those gaps with his/her own

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stories. If the gaps are intentional and you consciously took time off, be up front about that. If unintentional, start the job search immediately. During your job search, keep your skills active. Volunteer at a non-profit organization; apply your skills by getting involved in a charity; demonstrate leadership skills. Network within your industry -- go to professional meetings, participate in ongoing training as these are all indicators of success. Put this experience on your resume and be up front about it during the interview.

- **Success indicators for hiring managers:**

- Enrollment in a college degree program
- Having or working on job relevant certifications
- Fluency in multiple languages
- Being a member of a professional association
- Having peer reviewed publications, patents, professional presentations
- For those entering the workforce (Honor society membership)

- **Case study: Improving the success profile for hiring future leaders.** Steven discusses how he helped a well-known organization shift the success profile of the graduates being hired for their leadership development program. A program recruiting graduates mostly from prestigious, extremely competitive universities. Steven's organization discovered that when they changed the program's measurement duration to 18 months (instead of 12), performance evaluations hadn't changed, but job tenures had. Individuals performed well every year – it just so happened to be different individuals each year. This revealed a retention problem. Further analysis showed that individuals who were at the top of their class in their degree programs, but from less competitive universities performed equally well and had a greater long-term commitment to the employer.



“Do something to show you are keeping yourself current. Go to professional meetings, conferences, training... these are all indicators of success.”
– Steven Lindner



Recommended Reading and References from this Episode

- [NY Daily News articles by Dr. Steven Lindner](#)
- [Thought Leadership Articles from The WorkPlace Group](#)
- [Backwards is Forwards: Missing the True ROI of College Recruitment](#)
- [Want to land an interview? Job expert tells 3 things your résumé should say](#)
- [Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology](#)
- [Society for Human Resource Management](#)

To Follow Steven Lindner

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Dr. Lindner's Question to HR Studio Podcast Group

[What is the biggest talent acquisition & assessment challenge you have?](#)



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