

THE TENNESSEAN

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James Fields:

Human resources, corporate culture is crucial in technology

With the Nashville Technology Council reporting more than 830 technology job listings in Middle Tennessee, it's an understatement to say that the competition for tech talent locally and regionally is incredibly strong.

It's a seller's market for technology professionals, and it can be exhausting to find candidates who have first-rate technical skills and are also a good personality fit for your company.

We've been hiring and vetting top IT talent for more than 10 years, and we've found that in the battle for IT talent, the importance of great human resources and corporate culture cannot be understated.

It's easy to claim technical expertise on a resume.

When it comes to hiring technical employees, it takes someone of superior technical skill to assess the skills of others. Many human resources departments struggle with hiring qualified IT employees because they don't include technical evaluations or screenings in their vetting process.

If you don't systemize your



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hiring method to include multiple levels of technical testing and interviews that include highly skilled technical staffers, you're setting yourself up for a lackluster workforce. An organized and thorough process can ferret out the skills and experiences that a candidate must have to succeed in today's technology landscape. These include experience with multiple, if not all, operating systems, advanced problem-solving methodology, strong communication skills and the inclination to be lifelong learners.

The happy result of a stringent hiring process is that once hired, your employees can come to the office each day knowing that they get to work and collaborate with only the most talented and technical minds in their field.

If you wouldn't want to have a beer with them, don't hire them.

It's your job to ensure that each prospective candidate who walks through your doors not only fits, but also contributes to the environment that makes your organization special.

If you've worked to create a strong culture built on a respect for employees, then your team members will find themselves in an environment that fulfills both their personal and professional needs.

Hire employees who will thrive in an ego-free environment and support other employees. This means you should think about your entire team while making hiring offers. If you're unsure about candidates who look great on paper, but just don't feel right, ask yourself if your team members would enjoy spending time with them socially. If the answer is no, they may not be the best fit for your corporate culture.

You can't put lipstick on a pig.

Perks are nice, but free coffee and discounted gym memberships

continued next page



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'HR & Corporate Culture': *continued*

will never cover up a business that doesn't put its employees first and foremost.

One of our core values as a company is to improve the lives of our team members and their families, and we factor this

principle into every long-term decision that we make — from branching into new services to finding new office space.

Creating a desirable workplace should be a primary driver behind your organization and something

that you continue to work on every day. With each obstacle, your organization should be guided by the tenet that you wanted to grow something special.



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