



Stanford eCorner

Hiring: What Attributes Do You Look For?

Larry Page, *Google*; Eric Schmidt, *Google*

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The first aspect Google considers when hiring is evaluating the applicant's capability of simply doing the job. Next, they look for people who can think outside the box, but still work within Google culture. Third, communication skills are critical for any employee, even engineers. Overall, co-founder Larry Page and CEO Eric Schmidt have found that if someone is exceptional at something, it is usually a good indicator that they are exceptional at everything.



Transcript

The first and the most obvious thing is that you have to be capable of doing the job and doing it well. You also need to be capable of thinking outside the box. But an equally important thing is that you have to be able to work within the culture. We had numerous candidates who have been in the really, really smart and really, really arrogant side who were clearly people we didn't want to spend a lot of time with because they were just too hard to deal with. And I would say looking at the way Larry selects, Larry selects for everything I just describe including this culture fit and he's also looking for people who can think very creatively. I think other things probably we look at are communication skills even for engineers which is not always a trade people attract for. We like to have some cultural diversity even in non-sharing so we do go out of our way to recruit people who are a little bit different. I think of the airport test pretty important. It shows that -- just think about whether you got stuck in an airport with this person in a long layover on a business trip, would you be happy or sad about it? It turns out that as best as I can tell the reason Larry and Sergei hired Wayne my compatriot from Sun was he happens to be a world class astrophysicist, the fact that he might be a good VP of Engineering may or may not have been important. But sometimes...

People skills. It was. Good. It was not clear to me at the time. What was interesting was that hiring people who are exceptional at something is usually a pretty good predictor of their being exceptional everything. I don't know about you, all of you but my experiences, people who are great at sports or great at speaking or great at lobbying or great at advocacy are pretty high performing people. And those are the kind of people who have broader interests and have a bigger impact and you tend to select for them and that should apply. I think Larry's point is that applies even to the people who sit in their cube and don't come out except on Sundays.