



CASE STUDY:
HYATT

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Randy Goldberg
Vice President of Talent Management
Hyatt Hotels & Resorts
North America Operations



Management-Level Selection and Development Tools From Assess Systems™ Help Hyatt Raise the Bar on Hospitality

Hyatt® is a leading global hospitality company with a heritage of making guests feel more than welcome. Thousands of members of the Hyatt family in more than 45 countries strive to make a difference in the lives of the guests they encounter every day by providing authentic hospitality. The company’s subsidiaries manage, franchise, own and develop hotels and resorts under the Hyatt, Park Hyatt®, Andaz®, Grand Hyatt®, Hyatt Regency®, Hyatt Place® and Hyatt House™ brand names.

Aware that leadership alignment with corporate goals is essential for ongoing success, Hyatt set out to implement a system to select and develop managers who are aligned with the company’s vision and service-oriented culture.

The Need for Objective Assessments for Hiring and Developing Leaders

For years, Hyatt had leveraged hourly-level assessments for employee selection with great results. When Hyatt determined it needed to make enhancements to the way its managers were developed, the company identified an opportunity to improve upon its existing relationship-based selection methods. Expectations for individuals in leadership positions within the company were defined, but Hyatt needed to establish a way to evaluate candidates for manager roles that was unbiased and informed.

With 80 percent of managerial openings filled internally, candidate selection was often based on word-of-mouth and internal referrals. Applicants included more than 12,000 external candidates each year from the company’s college recruitment program plus the pool of strong hourly associates and associate managers. Due to this high volume, Hyatt’s recruiters needed an objective way to prioritize selection and gain insight into innate characteristics and capabilities that were not always proven due to lack of experience.

The company also wanted to proactively implement high-quality development, driven by objective evaluations and self-motivation. “We want to be known as a company for great leaders,” said Randy Goldberg, vice president of talent management for Hyatt. “We needed to start putting the tools in place at the early stages of employment that help our associates realize their leadership potential.”

Solution ► Customized Tool for Informed Selection and Development

Hyatt sought management-level assessments that would deliver results similar to the hourly employee assessments provided by **Assess Systems**. These had previously measured customer-



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facing positions like front desk agent, bell attendant, concierge and food server. “We’ve seen better retention, better engagement scores and higher customer scores year over year,” said Randy. “There hasn’t been a single year that we haven’t seen better results in those measures.”

Assess Systems soon received a go-ahead from Hyatt and began customizing the professional-level assessments in the company’s flagship product **Assess**. The **Assess Systems** team conducted job observations, analyses, testing and a thorough validation study for each of three distinct manager roles. The resulting assessments were validated for Hyatt, complete with a culture-fit element.

Two assessment reports now move managerial candidates smoothly from selection to development. The first report provides selection scoring, recommendations and interview probe questions. The questions save time because interviewers only target what could potentially be an issue for an applicant.

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The second report, generated after hiring, is for development. This report indicates where the new hire falls on the scoring range for each competency and suggests activities and resources for improvement.

Self-Directed Development Supported by Managers

The new employee and his or her manager review the development report and put together a development plan. “This is really benefiting our associates’ individual development goals. We don’t apply the same training to every person,” said Randy. “We are focused on creating and supporting an ongoing development plan, not something that starts and stops.”

Hyatt’s human resources (HR) directors have gained confidence in the assessments and the resulting development process. Employees use the reports to work on competencies with the support of their managers. “All this is primarily self-directed,” Randy said. “Employees need to drive their own development.”

The assessments have been so impactful that Hyatt is leveraging them in its post-performance review process and considers them to be part of Hyatt’s succession planning.

“I think the HR team is excited about the development part of this tool,” Randy said. “Our HR teams are incredibly busy and work hard. It’s been a challenge to try to figure out how to develop each person from a leadership competency perspective. The development piece of the tool has made it that much easier.”

Improved Leadership Alignment That Makes a Good Thing Better

Hyatt already has evidence of the assessments’ positive impact. Customer service scores have improved even further. Hyatt’s focus

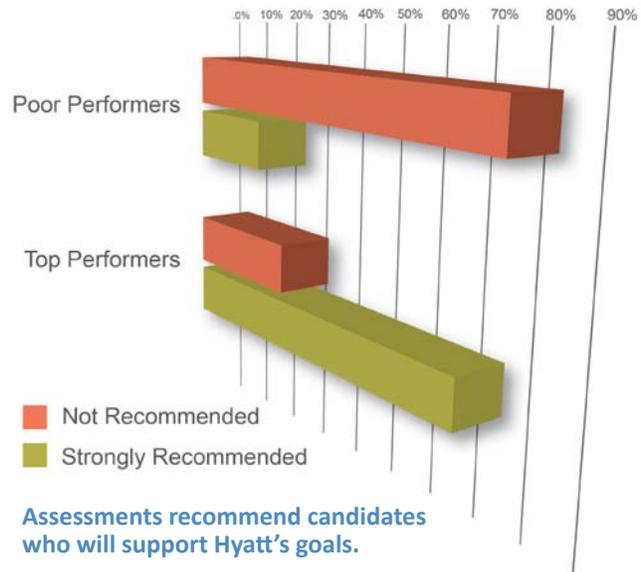
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on engagement has also yielded results. “We continued to see an improvement in engagement scores last year, and we believe much of that is because many of our competencies are around leadership and managing people well,” Randy stated. “We think the assessments are helping us select people who better support those engagement goals.” In fact, managers Hyatt identified as displaying positive people competencies are 2.5 times more likely to be strongly recommended by the assessments.



Glassdoorsm anonymous online reviews placed Hyatt in the ranks of the Top 50 Best Places to Work in 2013. In addition, Randy receives a great deal of anecdotal evidence of the assessments’ value. “Managers have shared feedback about the accuracy of the assessment. Those who have utilized the development tool have said, ‘I saw this in my assessment, and I added suggestions to my development plan. Not only have I seen a difference, but my manager has seen it.’”

In the future, Hyatt plans to increase awareness by giving internal managers access to assessments from Hyatt’s online development planning tool. Although a manager can take an assessment any time without applying for a position, easy access to assessments will allow development to become even more self-directed by doing away with the current need to contact HR for assessments and letting employees take the initiative.

Hyatt continues to be pleased with the business relationship with **Assess Systems**. Randy voiced his appreciation for the team’s flexibility and willingness to empower Hyatt by implementing new ideas. “The assessments are tweaked in a way that’s tuned in to what Hyatt needs, and I think that’s what sets **Assess Systems** apart,” he said. “The people there always do a good job of working with us to get the result we want. They’re very easy to work with, and they understand our business.”



Assess Systems is an innovative SaaS and consulting company providing talent selection and people development solutions to organizations worldwide. Focusing on person-job-organization fit, our assessment-based solutions help our clients attract, select, develop and promote talent resulting in improved business outcomes. For more than 25 years, **Assess Systems** has assessed millions of people in a broad spectrum of industries and positions spanning 42 countries and supporting 16 languages. Our solutions include: selection process design; competency modeling; entry-level assessments; competency-based professional, management and sales assessments; hiring manager interview guides and e-learning; leadership development programs; 360° feedback; succession planning; executive assessment and executive coaching.



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