



Kids First Five Hiring Mantras: Part 3 of 5

Part 1 of this series spoke to the first and foundational Hiring Mantra, hire the character, train the skill. Part 2 was about Hiring Mantra #2: we shall go short staffed before we go poorly staffed. Those first two mantras as well as the remaining three came about one at a time as a result of some significant pain our company experienced because of poor hiring. Not liking pain, we stopped, reflected, identified where we went wrong and captured a principle, a 'mantra' to 'save us from ourselves' in the future.

Mantra #3: Hire and promote from within. Jim Collin's bestseller, *Good to Great*, is a study of Fortune 500 companies that experienced 15 years of mediocrity followed by 15 years of greatness (there were 11 of 500 companies that fit that criterion). The book sought to find out what commonality there was among these 11 businesses that had somehow defeated odds and inertia and went from good to great. Among many enlightening lessons, he learned that the great companies hired their CEO from outside the company only 4.76% of the time (2 of 42 times) while the other (more average) companies did so 28.9-30.77% of the time. Incidentally, the two 'outsider' CEO's were both hired by the same company and it would be difficult to call that particular company 'great' at this writing.

You should find it interesting to note that over 50% of the folks Kids First Sports Center hires for entry level teaching jobs come from 'within' our client base. In our 30 years, some of the best teachers we have ever had were moms or dads of our students or the students themselves. Clients make perfectly logical candidates. We come to

know their character over a period of months, perhaps years, rather than try to assess this over a 20 minute interview. After that much time we can know with virtual certainty if a person is loyal, reliable and has a serving nature. Caution: hopefully you have read part 1 and 2 of this series but I feel compelled to stress this next point anyway. We do not hire a particular client because s/he is a 'convenient' option—we hire a client because s/he has proven to be a great person who fits our vision of what business is all about!

What about promotions to management positions? I get very nervous whenever Kids First has a need for a Department Leader (DL) and I must go 'outside' to hire. I have done it but I don't like to. In the last 12 months I have hired four new DLs and each and every one was a promotion from within. In fact, in eight years, only three have been 'outsiders' and none of them were in the last four years. A final word of caution--one cannot implement this mantra in a vacuum. It would be foolish to think a business could be successful 'hiring from within' without also placing a high value on leadership training. Part of Kids First's Core Strategy is to 'Develop Leaders.' At Kids First, people development is not something 'tacked on'—it is our business!

Make it a great month,

Jeff Metzger
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President, GymClub Owners Boot Camp
President, Kids First Sports Center



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