



# MY FOUR “C”S OF HIRING

Identifying tech talent

# Background

- Graduated from small Christian School and Bible College
  - Work ethic pounded into us
  - Taught to be idealistic and think about moral compass
- Masters from Kent State University
- Joined telecom in 1996 as tech support – 9 years later CEO
- C-level executive for 18 years
- I've done amazing things; as well as, crashed and burned!

# CEO – Things I Have to Do

- Corporate vision
- Corporate strategy
- Community relations
- Business development
- Human resources
- Product development
- Regulatory compliance
- Financial performance
- Much, much, more



# Scariest Thing I Do?

Why?

- People Can Pretend...for a while
- People Change
- Life Changes People – Hire a 20-year-old
  - Romantic relationships
  - Apartment/home
  - Marriage
  - Children
  - Parents
  - Medical issues

# The Goal of 4 C's

- Hiring -- “It’s Ultimately a Crapshoot” -- Joel Prine
- Quickly filter out damaged goods
- Have core template for our team
- Avoid time “de-programming” new hires
- “Fly by gauges” rather than “feel” in interviews
- “Investable” talent pipeline – leadership/succession

# The Role of Talent

Mike Brown



2006-2010

LeBron James



2011-2014

Erik Spoelstra



2014-2018

# C #1 = Character

Think of drafting a pro athlete:

- Freak athlete
- Specialized skills for that sport
- Resume at best 15% of evaluation
- Buy people – teach skills; I can teach anything, but can't fix broken people
- I guard talented employees and customers from bad apples

# My Required Character Traits:

- Punctuality – respecting the time of others
- Flexibility – unselfish adaptation of focus
- Initiative – doing what needs done without instruction
- Humility – focused on the needs of others not my rights
- Meekness – no emotional reaction to reactions
- Discipline – commitment over want
- Creativity – finding alternatives to dead-ends
- Courage – boldness in the face of risk and fear



# Interviewing for Character

- Decide on your core character/professionalism traits
- Questions to screen without telegraphing
- My Favorites:
  - Punctuality – talent vs. on time
  - Humility – greatest failure
  - Flexibility – changing tasks
  - Creativity – finding a new way

# C #2 = Curiosity

- Tech is abstract – tough to learn by discipline alone
- For burning questions, we remember the answers
- We'll dig for answers around the clock, on and off it
- Cultivates the mind for seeds of information

# C #3 = Courteous

- Sincere “Please” and “Thank you” mean a lot in the workplace
- Takes the work out of verbal engagement
- Rude people confuse nice people – unnecessary self-reflection  
(Betty White’s “Off Their Rockers”)



# C #4 = Communication

- Do they understand the questions – yes/no vs. essay?
- Concise sentences?
- Volley clean and on cadence?
- Improve their rhythm throughout the interview?
- Reflect effort in listening/answering?
- Only oxygen to carbon dioxide?

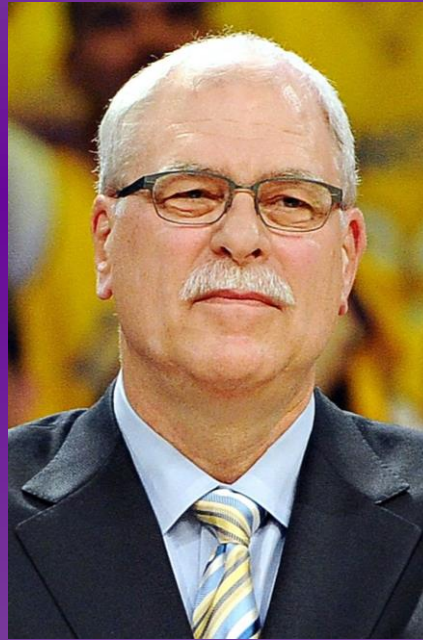
# What about you?

Talent development depends upon sound leadership:

Michael Jordan



Phil Jackson



Kobe Bryant



# Random “Know-it-all” Extras

- Throw new hires into the deep end day 1 – let them learn to swim
- Delegate constantly – test your best talent and grow your business
- Never put someone in leadership who does not already lead or whom people do not already follow
- Elevate employees who are sold-out to the mission
- Find a big goal and build internal peer pressure around attainment of it – that will handle most HR issues for you
- Compensation offer – go backward to go forward

# Again – Just my Thoughts

Thanks!

Questions?