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# Stay Ahead of the Game With Adaptive Workers



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Technology and society are in a constant state of change. Not only do they change, they change rapidly. And changes in those aspects of life have a direct bearing on your business and its success.

Why? Because people drive change. They create it — or impede it. When it comes to your business, you need to ensure you're staffed with creators and drivers. To do that, you need to learn how to hire adaptive workers.

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### What's an Adaptive Worker?

Adaptive workers are simply those who adapt. As [Forbes](#) and [Success](#) highlight, they have traits that allow your business not merely to change with the marketplace but to stay ahead. These workers:

- Are resourceful experimenters who think ahead
- See opportunities where others see failure
- Are curious and stay current in their fields
- Have open minds
- Don't whine, blame or have a need for fame

It's these characteristics that'll drive adaptable people to innovate and create new processes, procedures and products.

### How Do You Recruit for Adaptive Characteristics?

First, stop relying on generational myths like those outlined by the [American Management Association](#). Otherwise you'll find yourself overrun with Gen Xers, who are supposedly the most adaptable employees. Instead, tweak your recruiting practices. First change your perspective, and then change your questions.

For example, rapid job changing used to be the hallmark of baby boomers who wanted to make more money faster in the 1980s. Now, millennials have taken up the fast-moving mantle. When you see a candidate who's changed positions three times in the past five years, background check experts at [InfoMart](#) advise you to not assume that the candidate is flighty, but rather to consider how their work history might demonstrate their adaptability. The candidate's value is in their diversity of knowledge and experience in cross-training.

Similarly, if a candidate comes in with several years' experience in a single role or organization, instead of assuming they're stuck in their ways, look for clues to how they've changed within those boundaries.

### **What Do You Ask to Uncover Adaptability?**

The most important aspect of learning how to hire adaptive workers is to practice asking more [effective interview questions](#).

Think about the characteristics that define someone as adaptive and create questions around those. For example, adaptive workers are resourceful and like to experiment or tinker. What does that tell you? It tells you that when faced with a problem, adaptive workers can be flexible if their first solution doesn't work. They prepare alternative solutions. So, a good question might be:

- *Say you make a sales pitch to a client and she doesn't accept it? What do you do?*

Perhaps you want your candidate to discuss how they'd go about offering up alternative pitches.

Adaptive workers also see opportunities where others see failure. They have open minds. That tells you they accept surprises

without getting stressed or becoming uncomfortable. A good question might be:

- *Say you're doing your work and I come to you with an urgent project that's going to throw you off schedule. How do you handle the situation?*

You may want your candidate to say that they'd notify the person they're currently doing a job for about the new project, request a new deadline and then get the specifics on what you need done by your deadline.

At the end of the day, shifting your understanding of your **workforce and your recruiting strategies** is all about being adaptive yourself. Without modeling the perspective you want your employees to embody, you risk remaining stuck where you are.

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