

April 24, 2015

Avoid disappointment in lateral hirings

On the Job



By Nancy Mackevich Glazer

Nancy Mackevich Glazer is the manager of Legal Launch LLC, a company whose goal is to connect lawyers and legal employers.

Whether to lighten the workload or to strengthen your firm's bench, growing the firm demonstrates and confirms your success. As good as expansion may feel, you need to do it right. To avoid a letdown about a new hire, you must first put a process in place that uses *objective* criteria to measure a candidates' attributes.

Lateral hiring results in disappointment when hiring decisions are made emotionally and quickly. And they often are. Confident in business and adept at reading people, most lawyers will make hiring decisions from their gut — within minutes.

William Henderson and Christopher Zorn, thought leaders about the legal market, advocate hiring with "a structured process that gathers and analyzes truly reliable and relevant data." They suggest creating a simple checklist — like a pilot does before take off.

The key to successful lateral hiring is creating this objective process to methodically analyze candidates' legal experience, professional skills and cultural fit. Avoiding knee-jerk hiring decisions can help pave the runway for a lateral hire's takeoff, cruising altitude and successful landing.