

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS SCREENING AS A TOOL FOR POST- OFFER EVALUATION

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Dictionary of Occupational Titles Work Classifications

Sedentary Work: 10# of force occasionally;
negligible force frequently (mostly sitting)

Light Work: 20# of force occasionally; up to 10# of
force frequently; negligible force constantly

Medium Work: 20-50# of force occasionally; 10-25#
of force frequently; up to 10# of force constantly

Heavy Work: 50-100# of force occasionally; 25-50#
of force frequently; 10-20# of force constantly

Very Heavy Work: >100# of force occasionally, >50#
of force frequently; >20# of force constantly

What you want/need to know is, "can this prospective employee safely perform the functions of the job I am offering?"

Interviewing in the present era of ADA is totally different than it used to be when you could ask anything you desired to know.

Obtaining good employees for the job in question starts with the interview process

You must educate yourself in what you CAN and CANNOT ask during the interview to obtain the desired information

Interview Techniques

You must avoid questions that could leave you open to discrimination lawsuits (no matter how innocent the questions seem)

Do not violate the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1991; the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967; the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1991

Questions must address job requirements

Steer clear of direct questions related to age, race, national origin, marital status, dependents, sexual orientation, sick days, birthplace, citizenship, arrests, state of health

Interviewing recommendations

Start with a formalized list of questions and do not deviate from the script

Allow the employee to talk after open-ended questions but do not lead them into personal areas

Describe the job demands in detail so they can comment on their ability to perform

Make objective written notes and keep them on file for at least a year

If the question is not directly related to the job, don't ask it

Health & Physical Abilities Questions

Do you smoke or drink? In the past, have you been disciplined for violating company policies forbidding the use of alcohol or tobacco products?

Do you take drugs? Do you use illegal drugs?

How tall are you? Are you able to reach items on a shelf that is five feet tall?

How much do you weigh? Are you able to lift boxes weighing up to 50 pounds?

How many sick days did you take last year?
How many days of work did you miss last year?

Do you have any disabilities? Are you able to perform the specific duties of this position?

Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? Are you able to perform the essential functions of this job with or without reasonable accommodations?

Have you sought treatment for stress, anxiety or depression? How well can you handle stress?

After a job has been tendered

Pre-employment drug screen is recommended

Obtain relevant medical results: Hepatitis A, B, C antibodies, HIV antibodies, Rubella titer, TB screening, urine nicotine

Provide essential vaccinations per job need: Hepatitis A,B, MMR, Td or Tdap, Meningoccal

Physiologic testing: pulmonary functions testing, ECG, baseline audiograms

Special equipment: fit testing for masks, respirators, SCBA

The Post-offer Physical Exam

Health care provider can now legally obtain relevant medical, surgical and disability benefit history

Thorough physical exam: deformities and congenital defects, surgical scars, movement patterns, prostheses, breath sounds, heart sounds, peripheral vascular bruits, hernias, skin conditions, nicotine staining of fingers, teeth or nose hairs, odors, joint instabilities, weakness, sensory abnormalities, etc.

- Job Function Matching: comparison of functional demands of the job with functional capacity/ability of the applicant
- Job Function Analysis: assess physical demands that make up essential functions of a given job
- Job Function Description: a document defining the essential functions for a given job
- Job Function Testing: test replicating the physical demands of the essential functions for each job
- Overall purpose: match applicant to essential functions of the job

Benefits of Essential Functions Testing

- Injury Prevention
- Modified/Early Return to Work after injury
- Post offer testing, Annual testing and Transitional Position Testing
- Fitness for Duty after injury or illness
- Catalyst to implement ergonomic recommendations, employee education and conditioning programs

Essential Functions Screening

Health care provider "clears" applicant for EFS and sets biophysical parameters for safety

Experienced PT or OT matches EFS to the job description

Screening performed in standardized fashion with continuous supervision

Standards are met for consistent and optimal effort

Detailed objective data is kept on file

Health care provider reviews and approves applicant for the job based upon objective results

Deficiencies are noted and job offer modified for "reasonable accommodation" or rescinded if not modifiable per the needs of the employer

Applicant is counseled by HR or provider and given the opportunity to ask questions regarding mismatch of function to job requirements

Lowering Workers' Compensation Costs

Hospital vs non-hospital services

Choice of provider network

Medical management intervention (pre-certification and 2nd opinion programs)

Prescription drugs (generic substitutions)

Chiropractic utilization

Treatment guidelines

Medical fee schedules and bill reviews

Employer choice of providers
Employee involvement in cost-containment
Measuring outcomes (meaningful data focusing on indirect or variable and direct or fixed costs)
Education and training of employees

QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION
