

Profile Strategies

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EMPLOYER'S ADVANTAGE

NEWSLETTER

From Jim Sirbasku:

America's Best Companies and How They Do It

Case Study: *PXT and Productivity: Matching Dollars to Good Sense*

Product Focus:

Essentials for the Productivity Toolkit

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*World-Class Salespeople**

Success Story:

99% Success at VHI Healthcare



From Jim Sirbasku's Desk America's Best Companies and How They Do It

Organizations that are flourishing in this economy must have it easy, right? You know which ones they are. Their products and/or services are always in demand. If economic downturns have touched them, it is not apparent to the outside world. In fact, they are the envy of the rest of the world and have many people asking, "Can we start selling what they are selling?" The most important question is not *what* are they selling, but *how* are they succeeding.

We have answers for you right here, taken from Profiles research. What we have learned from studying hundreds of America's best companies and conducting interviews with their top leaders is that productive people play a large part in making these organizations go. These companies make the job look easy because their management of people is part of a well executed plan.

Our survey included more than 1,600 publicly traded U.S. companies and helped reveal the practices that enable them to out-produce their colleagues down the street or across the country. Here are five common traits of America's best organizations:

1. Their cultures are driven by performance, and this performance is the result of an understanding shared by the company's top leaders. Leaders not only understand the current culture, but they know what the company will look and feel like, and how it will operate, next year and in 10 years. They work as a team and have the skills, tools and experience to bring in only the people who will best fit their culture. They have the courage to reject even highly qualified workers who are not a good match to the culture.

2. Top managers are highly effective. The managers of top U.S. companies are not only personally successful, but they also ensure that the individuals for whom they take responsibility are successful too. The effectiveness of these managers flows from natural talent, and it requires them to communicate, lead others, adapt quickly to change, skillfully build personal relationships, manage tasks with efficiency, take action that gets results, and develop others as well as themselves.

Top companies know what it takes to select, train and retain top managers.

3. High-performance companies accomplish more work with fewer people because they know exactly what everyone does at work. This requires that managers have a clear view of their mission and that they never get off track on other tasks. Highly effective companies scrutinize each request for new positions. They expect more from every employee, asking them to arrive at work on time or early. Quitting time is dictated by the completion of the work, not by the hands of the clock. If someone is doing work that is ancillary to the most important tasks, effective leaders look at ways to streamline it.

As reluctant as leaders of these top organizations are to create new positions, they are eager to invest in technology and training if it means more efficient use of people and less job creation. Running lean and mean turns them into flexible work athletes who can easily handle special projects, seasonal high demands, unplanned worker absences, and other surprises. They are cross trained to do more than one job. When new people come on board, selection and training processes ensure they are productive from the start.

(continued)

"The productivity of a work group seems to depend on how the group members see their own goals in relation to the goals of the organization."

– Ken Blanchard, speaker and management consultant

4. They achieve goals at the employee level, which translates to results at the organizational level. With objectives and goals clearly defined, and performance measures aligned to match, employees focus on what matters most. The employee selection process is designed to bring in employees who best fit the job, match the team, and are compatible with their managers. If lack of skill leads to reduced performance, the organization provides training to close the gap.

Companies whose employees are reaching their goals are more likely to be those that have invested in ergonomic furniture and other necessities that enhance employee comfort. They know that reducing injuries and increasing workplace comfort enhances worker satisfaction and productivity.

5. Top companies stress innovation. This doesn't mean they clamor for blockbuster ideas; they are more likely to encourage increased efficiency by fine-tuning products or processes. Small and continued growth is more realistic and less expensive than the

occasional "big idea" that turns heads for a short time.

But just as important, these companies encourage the exchange of ideas among employees, managers and top leaders with an open communication style that empowers everyone. And they act quickly on good ideas by putting them into action because they know that inaction is counterproductive.

If you want to know more about top-performing organizations, including which companies are included in our survey, visit www.americasmostproductive.com. You can download the full report and review other important information about what keeps an organization on top. Perhaps some of the ideas you find there will set you on your own path to a clear vision of what is possible.

*Jim Sirbasku, CEO
Profiles International*



"Should you find yourself in a chronically leaking boat, energy devoted to changing vessels is likely to be more productive than energy devoted to patching leaks." – Warren Buffett, investor

CASE STUDY: PXT and Productivity: Matching Dollars to Good Sense

When four sales associates out produce their colleagues by more than 2 to 1 in annual sales dollars, what do you do?

A medical device distribution organization dealt with this question by using sales figures to rate their top salespeople, and then by using the ProfileXT® to discover the traits of those people so that their success could spread to others.

Participants

The company's sales figures revealed widely varying levels of success. Reports showed that 4 of 10 sales associates averaged \$668,762 in annual sales. The other six averaged \$315,935 in annual sales. Leaders decided that the ProfileXT could aid in candidate screening, so they embarked on a study that would examine the relationship between sales associate performance and PXT scores.

All 10 medical device sales associates participated by completing the PXT while the organization's managers evaluated each associate's performance. The organization used the annual sales information to identify the top- and bottom- performing associates.

Job Match Pattern

Managers developed a Job Match Pattern for the sales associate position using the 10 associates' PXT scores.

This pattern now serves as the benchmark to which future candidates may be matched.

Using the sales data, Profiles helped the organization build a pattern to describe the traits of the top-performing associates. Next, the 10 associates were matched to the pattern. A review of the results showed that an overall Job Match Percent of 90 or greater was the best identifier of top- performing associates.

All 4 of the top-performing sales associates in the sample met or exceeded the 90% breakpoint. None of the bottom-performing associates scored 90% or better.

Summary

Equipped with the ability to better screen sales associate candidates, this medical device distribution organization could more than double its sales revenue simply by selecting the candidates who possess traits similar to those already successful in the position. The well-matched sales associate candidates are also more likely to enjoy success because each is a good fit to the position.

SUCCESS STORY: 99% Success at VHI Healthcare

Editor's Note: Both ProfileXT® and CheckPoint 360°™ give organizations a head start in identifying and hiring productive employees. Leaders at VHI Healthcare in Dublin discovered this when they used the two products in their occupational health and employee healthcare company, which provides services to more than 300 organizations in Ireland. Michael Owens, director of VHI Healthcare's human resources department, details what happened.

Q. How did you use ProfileXT and CheckPoint 360°?

A. In the 18 months following our implementation of The Profile, we used it in the process of hiring 141 people. All but one of these hiring decisions proved to be excellent. Our success rate in terms of identifying and hiring productive and retainable team members was 99.3%. The information provided by The Profile has played an essential part in our ability to hire new employees who immediately settle into their roles as productive team members.

The CheckPoint 360°™ Feedback System gained great credibility when we tested it with a team of 25 of our most senior managers. They universally accepted the process and responded positively to the quality and depth of information in the reports.

Q. In addition to your hiring success rate, can you give us a specific example of how ProfileXT helped you in the hiring process?

A. Our trainers told us immediately that those recruited with the aid of The Profile were much more trainable and took to their responsibilities much more quickly.

"The man who will use his skill and constructive imagination to see how much he can give for a dollar, instead of how little he can give for a dollar, is bound to succeed."

– Henry Ford, founder of Ford Motor Co.

Q. How do you intend to expand its use?

A. We are implementing programs to ensure that we make even more use of the Coaching, Training, and Succession Planning outputs of The Profile as we continue to manage and develop our people.

Q. What did your leaders find most helpful about CheckPoint 360°?

A. The manner in which it not only identified particular strengths or developmental needs for each of the participants, but also provided each of them with a personalized development plan.

Q. What are your plans for CheckPoint 360°?

A. We are now rolling it out to a much wider audience in our organization.

Q. How did these two products help you in terms of managing key people working for VHI Healthcare?

A. We are an organization that jealously guards its relations with our people—our key asset. Profiles and its products have gained tremendous credibility here.

America's Most Productive Companies are...

P	Particular and purposeful in hiring.
R	Rigorous in matching roles and responsibilities to goals.
O	Organized , with effective frontline managers.
D	Determined to recruit top performers.
U	Understanding of the importance of new technology.
C	Clear about goals.
T	Transparent in communicating with employees.
I	Innovative in improving and fine-tuning what they already do well.
V	Visionary about the future.
E	Energetic and encouraging.



“The productivity of work is not the responsibility of the worker but of the manager.”

– Peter Drucker, management consultant

PRODUCT FOCUS: Essentials for the Productivity Toolkit

Profiles' Productivity Toolkit is as important as your first aid kit. The scrapes and scratches of work life are easier to manage when you have these excellent assessments at the ready:

ProfileXT®

The PXT uses several scales to determine job fit, a key indicator of how well an employee will perform and how long he will stay on the job. **PXT** puts to work a Job Match Pattern that your organization develops by examining employees who are most and least successful in a specific position. Their scores provide benchmarks for new job candidates in the same position.

- Allows you to match the test taker's score on each scale item to a Job Match Pattern of scores for a specific position. The further the score falls outside of the pattern (high or low), the greater the negative impact on the Job Match Percent.
- Lets you find more top-performing candidates for a job.
- Helps you find more appropriate positions for those who are a poor fit for the job.

People who use the **PXT** as directed consistently report more productivity. And there are many ways to use it. For example, those who rely on **PXT** companywide have found it helpful for determining the best candidates for internal promotions.

Profiles Team Analysis™

The information in this analysis comes from data collected through the Profiles Performance Indicator™ and makes team building both challenging and rewarding. The team analysis system highlights the attributes of each team member, reveals group strengths and alerts the leader to potential problems. The information helps eliminate conflict, build cooperation, improve communication, and assure that the team achieves results.

Profiles WorkForce Compatibility™

PWC's strength lies in two key areas: what it measures and the information provided by those measurements. **PWC** examines **seven important characteristics** that define the relationship between the employee and the manager: self-assurance, self-reliance, conformity, optimism, decisiveness, objectivity, and approach to learning.

Once those characteristics are measured and analyzed for both boss and worker, each receives a report. The manager's report provides a detailed description of

the differences between the two on each characteristic, as well as a "best practice" working style for both the manager and the employee. A "Working Together" section gives ideas for managing the employee, and a "Next Steps" section offers detailed instructions on how to proceed. The employee's report shows the worker his or her similarities to—and differences from—the boss, and includes ideas for creating a smoother working relationship.

PWC helps both manager and employee communicate better, identify conflicts before they occur and successfully resolve problems.

CheckPoint 360°™

This useful assessment helps answer these questions:

- What strengths of this manager can I capitalize on?
- Which areas should my manager focus on developing?
- How can I provide guidance in this area?
- How do I effectively manage conflict?
- Do I have enough leaders in the pipeline to meet tomorrow's needs?

CheckPoint 360° employs 70 interview questions about specific management behaviors to give a complete picture of a manager's capabilities in areas such as communication, leadership, adaptability, relationship-building skills, task management, productivity, development of others, and self-development. Profiles' clients have used **CheckPoint 360°** to help them grow effective leaders, build their talent bench, guide leaders through career transitions, develop top talent, and use leadership development to enact key changes in the business.

SkillBuilder™

The **CheckPoint SkillBuilder Series** helps the good get better and the best stay at the top by emphasizing key characteristics of listening, processing information, communicating effectively, building relationships, thinking creatively, working as a team, and many other areas.

Profiles Performance Indicator™

This assessment helps us better understand how to motivate each employee successfully. There is no time for conflicts that stand in the way of smooth workflow. **PPI** is the key to moving employees beyond disagreement so that they can focus on the real work.

Ready to put these assessments to work in your organization? Call Profiles at (800) 406-0087.

Strategies for Winning: World-Class Salespeople*

Spotting the 20% Who Sell the 80%

Who would have predicted that Vilfredo Pareto's famous 80-20 rule, formulated more than 100 years ago, would still apply to sales organizations today?

Research consistently demonstrates that more than half of those in professional sales lack the basic attributes required for success in this difficult profession—attributes that world-class salespeople possess naturally, or develop through training or single-minded focus. Of the remaining half, 50% have the potential for success in some form of sales but are currently selling the wrong products or services. That leaves about 25% to sell about 80% of the world's products and services.

Enlightening, isn't it?

That's why it's important for you to be keenly aware of the attributes of world-class salespeople. If you can recognize them, you can hire more of them! You can also tell when salespeople on your team need training and support, and you'll have a good idea of how to help them.

Measure your salespeople by this list of the ten attributes shared by world-class salespeople:

1. They Possess an Irrepressibly Positive Attitude

All of their glasses are half full and every cloud they encounter has a silver lining. Knock them down nine times and they stand up the tenth. Without this iron optimism, a life in sales is a stressful and daunting existence. *Do your sales heroes live in a partly cloudy or partly sunny world?*

2. They Understand that Sales is a Numbers Game

They don't lose their cool when a call goes badly, a deal goes south, or a first contact ends in refusal—they simply focus more clearly on the next call. They know their hit rate from past experience. They know how often they'll have to take No! before they get one Yes! *Do your salespeople know the value of their calls?*

3. They Live to Prospect

World-class salespeople are prospecting all the time, especially when things are going well. They know that sales success depends directly upon continually filling their pipelines with well-qualified prospects. Prospecting is their obsession. They never stop. *Is prospecting 24/7/365 in your organization?*

4. They Are Totally Sales Driven

These people live for the chase that results in a closed deal; they are internally motivated to go to whatever lengths they must to win. They seem to have unceasing energy. Once they decide to act, nothing slows or stops them until they have succeeded. *Are your salespeople in top gear?*

5. They are Competitive

They don't like second place, and they're not good losers. Sure, they know they must act like good losers from time to time for social reasons. But deep down they need to win, and losses just strengthen their

resolve. They can't be kept in second place for long. *Is your team too good at losing?*

6. They are Obsessed with the Next Step

Everything they do is aimed at getting to the next step—the next level of commitment that will gradually instill in the customer the trust and confidence needed for a Yes! World-class salespeople think solely in terms of specifics such as where, when, how, and how much. Concepts like sometime, in the future, later, and whenever, are simply not in their vocabularies. The most successful salespeople at Profiles know that their success is inevitable, but they still drive to "accelerate the inevitable." *Are your salespeople driving their cases forward at least one step with every customer or prospect contact?*

7. They Know that They—and Their Products—are World Class

Quiet confidence oozes from top salespeople, and unbridled enthusiasm for the company—and its products and services—gushes from them at every meeting. No one is left untouched by the passion they exhibit when they talk about themselves, their companies, or their products and services. They evangelize. *Have your people been to the top of the mountain?*

8. They Qualify Hard Before Investing Time and Energy

World-class salespeople know that their time is too precious to waste on people who don't need what they provide. They understand their products and services inside and out, understand the needs they address, understand why their offerings are so much better than those of their competitors, and know enough about their prospective customers to rarely find themselves in front of someone who is not a genuine prospect. *Do your salespeople look before they leap?*

9. They Expect to Hear No!

Once they know they are in front of the right people, these champions are confident that they have considered every possible No! situation that might arise, and they understand how to address these objections in a way that builds the confidence and trust of their prospective customers. *Are your front people always ready to handle key objections?*

10. They Sell Through Customer Knowledge

Ask customers of world-class salespeople what sets them apart and they'll tell you, "They understand us." These people never stop trying to find out more information about their customers and their customers' needs. They know that the only way they can deliver sales is through partnership and problem solving. *How much do your salespeople know about their customers and prospects?*

You must look for these attributes when hiring salespeople. It sounds simple enough, but how do you objectively measure these attributes?

Effectively Spot the 20%

That's a challenge we faced when building our 800-strong worldwide sales force at Profiles, and we met it head on with the development of the Profiles Sales Indicator (PSI). The PSI analyzes your existing salespeople to produce a profile reflecting what it takes to be a successful salesperson in your organization. Using your prospective salesperson's responses to a 15-20-minute online survey, the PSI objectively analyzes the person for these attributes:

- Competitiveness
- Self-reliance
- Persistence
- Energy
- Sales Drive

By comparing these results with the profile of your most successful salespeople, PSI can predict on-the-job performance in these critical sales disciplines:

- Prospecting
- Closing Sales
- Call Reluctance
- Self-starting
- Teamwork
- Building and Maintaining Relationships
- Compensation Preference

All seven disciplines are essential to the success of the top performing 20% of salespeople responsible for 80% of all sales. The PSI's clear, readable reports can be used for selecting salespeople as well as for effectively managing and training existing salespeople so that they can reach the performance levels of your top performers. PSI worked so well for Profiles that we're certain it will work well for your organization, too. You can read more about it on the web at: www.personnelinsights.com.

Take action today to move all of your team into the 20% zone, and watch your sales soar.

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"The simple act of paying positive attention to people has a great deal to do with productivity."

– Thomas J. Peters, management consultant