

## CRITICAL JOB SKILLS ARE VITAL IN A RECESSION

Have you heard the expression ‘All hands on deck’? A deck hand was a sailor. When rough seas struck and the ship was in danger of sinking all hands needed to work together as a team for the safety of the crew and the ship. Now was the time to demonstrate the right skills.

A recent example is the US Airways flight 1549 that went down in New York’s Hudson River. The pilot, Captain Chesley “Sully” Sullenberger III acted decisively and employed the right skills to save all 155 lives on board. In addition, each crew member’s job skills contributed to the ‘miracle on the Hudson’. These critical skills will be identified, studied and reinforced in other flight crews.

*Today’s current economic situation is an opportunity for honing and sharpening skills.*

Companies cannot afford to have a single person disengaged, non-productive, focusing on the wrong things or employing the wrong skills.

### Exercise:

Think about a critical position in your organization. Pick the 7 most important skills for that position. Next prioritize those skills. Now give this list to another employee, have them do the same and then compare the lists.

23 CORE SKILLS		
Accountability for others	Empathetic Outlook	Planning and Organization
Conceptual Thinking	Flexibility	Problem Solving
Conflict Management	Goal Achievement	Resiliency
Continuous Learning	Influencing Others	Results Orientation
Customer Focus	Interpersonal Skills	Self Management
Decision Making	Leading Others	Self Starting Ability
Developing Others	Objective Listening	Teamwork
Diplomacy and Tact	Personal Accountability	

The seven skills will be different as well as the priorities. Individual perspective based on preferences, personality and life experience will determine the order. A better way to identify the right skills for a position is to benchmark the job through an assessment process. You will then have an unbiased list of core skills that are needed for job performance.

If you were able to ask the *job* what skills are required for success, what would *it* say? Allowing the job to talk produces the right personal skills, behaviors and values.

I have watched executive teams go through an awakening of sorts when they are taken through the job benchmarking process. Job clarity is gained immediately and the right skills can now be strengthened. Identifying the specific skills a job requires creates targeted coaching opportunities. It also optimizes the grooming of employees when engaged in succession planning. Mentoring on the right skills leads to higher performance and job satisfaction. This in turn results in higher morale; retention and bottom line profitability.

Just as the pilot of US Airways flight 1549 made the right decisions, leaders need to make sure that everyone in their organization understands the skills their jobs are calling for right now.

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