

Pre-Employment Assessment Case Study: KEOGHS Law firm

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Frances Cross, HRD,
Keoghs.

More Information



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Keoghs is one of the UK's leading law firms, dedicated to providing its clients with innovative, focused and practical legal solutions. Keoghs is known for being one of the country's leading insurance specialists dealing with motor, employers' and public liability claims, with further specialisms in fraud, disease and professional indemnity. It has also developed solutions for businesses in all areas of corporate transactions, employment work, commercial property, intellectual property and private client work. For its clients, being approachable and flexible in providing cost-effective legal services is very important.

Being approachable is more than a characteristic of the partners and staff at Keoghs: it is a deliberately cultivated business strength. Based in Bolton and Coventry, the firm has 28 partners and more than 400 staff. The company prides itself on how it continuously invests in its workforce to ensure they are trained and remunerated for the high standards of work expected of them.

Keoghs actively encourages its people to seize development opportunities and take responsibility for their own career progression whilst giving maximum support to make sure it happens. Therefore, the recruitment process is key in finding the right candidates to fit into its culture and approach: it is not just about the quality of education and experience that an applicant has.

In the past, the selection process was a matter of an interview and then a test based on shared values but this proved to be ineffective.

As Frances Cross, HR Director explains: "We wanted a tool that would improve our hiring process and so we looked at good practice elsewhere, spoke to other law firms and evaluated a number of products. We liked what we saw in SavvyRecruiter as a system and Effectivate as a provider."

Jobs are now profiled in a more systematic way. Using SavvyRecruiter means that each job can be given a specific profile and then Keoghs can identify an applicant's suitability. Keoghs deployed the system in Autumn 2005, and have since improved the profiles by looking at existing employees' results – SavvyRecruiter has a strong role to play in internal development too, and one that Keoghs hopes to exploit. The revised profiles have given Keoghs even greater confidence in the system, and they recently upgraded their SavvyRecruiter licence to have it run on their internal

network. It is now accessible from both their Bolton headquarters and a sister office in Coventry.

"Candidates enjoy taking the test, it's just a matter of them sitting at a monitor and



going through the online multimedia test," says Cross. They get tested in a number of different attributes that form part of the job profile. "Examinees can take a short break between modules, and so far all the feedback has been very positive," Cross adds.

Results are beginning to influence recruitment decisions. Cross comments, "Sometimes the test results simply affirm what we have already deduced about a candidate: for example if someone interviews well, it's not surprising to find they have scored well on the presence/persuasiveness test. One of the additional things we have noticed however, is that we have also identified things we may have otherwise missed before. An important extra benefit for example is the ability to know how well a candidate will fit into our company culture.

"We have also used the system for internal promotions and are sure that at an early stage, SavvyRecruiter will identify the team leaders of the future." Cross is very enthusiastic about these tests as she considers them refreshingly different, non-threatening, enjoyable to do and professional.

In addition there has been a minimum of training necessary to install and use the software, and the resulting reports are both clear and relevant. "We haven't yet fully assessed the return on our investment, but I firmly believe this is the most accurate psychometric tool that I have come across and it certainly does influence who we recruit."