



Chapter 10 Case Study for Discussion

Use this case study as a discussion prompter with your teams or students.

In 1999, the Singleton Brothers established a trucking company located in central KY that served the tri-state area of KY, TN, and WV. Over the years, the company grew to serve the southeast, to finally the entire country. As the service area grew, so did the number of employees to over 300. The brothers had established an internal promotion policy and until the last few years, had been very pleased with their ability to judge leadership potential. They had always felt their observations and “gut-instincts” about those who had strong leadership potential had been very accurate and was the best approach. However, their approach had recently seemed to slip. The last few leaders were not so great in their new leadership roles, and employees whom the new leaders supervised were raising valid complaints and even leaving the company. Turnover had significantly increased, costing time and money. The brothers decided it was time to invest in an assessment to help them determine leadership potential.

The brothers decided that each should research, talk to their business contacts, and identify three assessments based on cost, accuracy, and ease of use. They shared what they learned about their top three choices and together decided on the assessment they would purchase. The assessment chosen was the lowest cost, but still reported fairly high accuracy, and was easy to use without time needed for training. Also, because it was one of the newest tools on the market the brothers felt it was on trend with the latest analytics. The brothers felt that although it was maybe not the choice with the most measures, it would be effective in combination with their observations and judgment. They were excited to implement the assessment.

When it came time to use the new assessment, they tried it out on Kate, who had been with the company for over five years and exhibited what the brothers felt was excellent leadership potential. She was responsible, related very well with others, consistently met her work goals, and was very professional. She was perfect for the regional director position. It took Kate an hour to take the assessment and afterwards, she seemed dejected and upset. The brothers chalked it up to exam fatigue. To their disappointment, Kate’s results showed she was not leadership material and they wondered how they could have been so wrong.

Questions to Consider

1. Was the brother’s approach to selecting an assessment appropriate, why, or why not?
2. Did they implement the use of the assessment effectively, why, or why not? If not, what should they have done differently?
3. Should they have hired an external expert to assist with the assessment? If so, at what point should the expert have been consulted?



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4. What should the brothers do about Kate? Should they talk to her about the assessment to determine why she seemed “dejected” and “upset” after taking it? Should they offer her the leadership role anyway?