

Business Leadership

Unit #4: Human Resources - Hiring Case

HUMAN RESOURCES: Toyota Canada Inc.

The Toyota corporation is synonymous with quality and innovation. Its vision is to put customers first and provide excellent vehicles and services. Its worldwide operations span 170 countries.

Toyota Canada Inc. is responsible for sales of Toyota and Lexus vehicles, including a light truck division. The head office is located in Toronto with divisions in Vancouver, Halifax, Montreal, and Calgary. There are over 260 dealerships throughout Canada and one production facility in Cambridge, Ontario. The company's other business area is Toyota Financial Services, which provides credit and financing for customers and dealers.

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada (TMMC)

Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada is the production facility in Cambridge, Ontario. It assembles the Corolla, the Matrix, and the Lexus RX 330. Engines for the Corolla and Matrix are also produced there. In 2008, production expanded to include the RAV4. The current plant is 280,000 m² or the size of approximately 70 football fields.

The plant is run under the philosophy of the Toyota Way, which is made up of two pillars: continuous improvement and respect for people. The continuous improvement pillar encompasses the areas of challenge, combining creativity and courage to form a long-term vision; kaizen, the striving for evolutionary improvement; and genchu genbutsu, which when translated means "go and see", or the practice of determining the problem and actively seeking its solution. The respect for people pillar includes respect, that is taking responsibility for individual actions and building mutual trust, and teamwork, or personal and professional growth through collective action. These pillars demonstrate that Toyota is continuously improving, and that it deeply respects the efforts of individuals and teams.

TMMC recruits potential employees using an online service. Applicants can find available positions by accessing the Toyota Canada website and viewing a list of potential jobs. The postings include a job description, required qualifications, key competencies, as well as experience and additional skills that are necessary. When applying online, the first time a candidate applies for a job they must fill out an online application as well as provide a resumé and a current email address. Returning applicants need only use their password and user identification.

Orientation takes place at the TMMC Training Centre. This five-day program teaches the important production-system values of Toyota. Team members use drilling practice to improve physical acuity in the areas of hand-eye coordination, speed, and accuracy. Team members also work on their computer skills, learn necessary skills and practise in the shops where they will be working after the orientation. An afternoon is also spent in the Corolla Park Fitness Centre. This facility has a full-size gymnasium, weight room, squash courts, games room, Internet Café, and other amenities, and the services are free for all staff. The Centre was given to the TMMC division by the company as a reward when it received its first J.D. Powers Gold Plant Award.

TMMC provides a comprehensive and extensive training program for its employees. Training takes place on the job and in a classroom. Employees can improve technical skills through courses in arc welding and crane operation, among other things. Team members interested in upgrading can take on-site courses in team leading, first-aid, and the Toyota production system. TMMC will also pay for employees to take courses at accredited Canadian universities or colleges. The programs do not even have to be work related.

TMMC's Expansion Plans

Toyota is expanding its operations in Canada. In the fall of 2008, it opened a new plant in Woodstock that produces RAV4 sport utility vehicles. The plant will employ 1,700 production workers, along with 250 maintenance and administrative workers. The plant posted for the production positions in September 2006 and received 45,000 applications for the \$30 per hour jobs. The applicants were only able to apply online, and the posting was open for only a few weeks. The company is looking for applicants with a high school diploma. Each selected applicant will be put through an initial computer assessment, a day-long labour simulation, and an interview. New employees might end up working at the new plant in Woodstock, or at the existing one in Cambridge. One of the reasons cited by Toyota for selecting the Woodstock location is that Ontario workers are less expensive to train. The workforce is highly skilled and will take less effort to train than those in other countries.

1. Create five interview questions that Toyota might use when hiring a team leader.
2. The following three people have applied for a position at the new plant. State the strengths and weaknesses of each candidate. Which one would you hire? Why?

Candidate #1: Jessica Saleh

- 22 years of age
- High school diploma
- One year of community college diploma in engineering technology.
- Summer jobs at a leadership camp - camp counselor for teens.
- 1 year co-op experience at college - working at the Toyota Plant.
- Interests: Soccer, basketball and computer programming

Candidate #2: James Tideski

- 45 years of age
- 20 years of experience in production at another automaker
- Laid off from previous job six months ago
- Wants to work at the Cambridge plant only
- Team leader for 2 years
- Volunteering at the Humane Society
- Interests: Guitar

Candidate #3: John Smith

- 37 years of age
- 8 years experience as a licensed mechanic
- College diploma in Automotive Services
- Volunteer fire fighter
- Interests: Race Car Driving