

American Woodmark: Vision Driven and Values Based

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American Woodmark is the largest independent cabinet manufacturer in the US, with approximately 11% market share and 5,000 employees in its nine manufacturing locations, builder centers, and corporate offices throughout the country. The company started in 1950 as Raygold, and was purchased by Boise Cascade in the late 70s, separated from Boise Cascade in 1980 and went public in 1986. With only three CEOs since 1980, their core principal of “vision driven and values based” guides everything the company does.

Jim Keane, the Manufacturing Recruiting Manager for American Woodmark, has over 25 years with the company. Starting in the plant, Jim has also held roles as a training supervisor and HR manager. Today he manages the company’s recruitment efforts as the company seeks out top managerial talent.

In support of those efforts, American Woodmark brought Wonderlic assessments on board in 2008. At the time, the company was using an I/O Psychologist to conduct individual assessments. While the results were helpful and the company was able to frequently make appropriate hiring decisions, it was very time consuming and expensive, adding two to three weeks to the hiring process, as well as incurring significant travel expenses. In addition, this assessment process was performed near the end of the hiring process versus on the front-end.

“We were finding out on the back-end what we should have been finding out on the front-end,” says Jim. “By then we had spent a lot of time and money, only to often identify a hiring issue late in the game.”

Not only did the late-period testing affect the company and the candidate, but it also had an impact on the outside recruiters they worked with. “The sooner it becomes apparent that a candidate is not a good fit, the faster the recruiter can move on to finding someone else to fill that role,” Jim tells us.

Enter Wonderlic.

By adding the Wonderlic Personnel Test in the online pretest version (WPT-Q) and proctored full length version Wonderlic Personnel Test (WPT-R) to assess cognitive ability, as well as the Wonderlic Comprehensive Personality Profile® (CPP®) and Wonderlic Personal Characteristics Inventory® (PCI) to measure personality, Jim and his team now have the needed insight on salaried candidates much earlier in the hiring process.

“The results of these assessments help provide the information we need to ask better questions during the interview,” says Jim. “We are looking for people who are a good fit and have the ability to be promotable, which all works together to improve retention.”

The managers at American Woodmark are also very impressed with what the assessment results do for them. “Our managers often say that the assessment results “nailed them,” that is exactly how they are to work with. Having a better understanding of a new employee from day one helps to improve how they manage people.”

Jim is extremely optimistic about the further recruiting successes for American Woodmark.

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