# CASE STUDY

## REDUCING TURNOVER WITH STEP ONE SURVEY II®

Human Resources Staffing Industry

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GREAT PEOPLE MANAGEMENT

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# Step One Survey II®

## How Profiles' SOSII Dropped Turnover at Three Organizations

### AT A GLANCE

SOSII gives managers a structured, objective system to obtain better information, identify the best candidates, and conduct better interviews. Further, it helps organizations reduce hiring risk in a rapid yet careful and cost-effective manner.

Three organizations faced unchecked turnover that affected entire workforces. Open positions in these organizations required other workers to carry more of the load; some workers shut down or quit from the stress. Customer service was affected, as workers' ability to process orders decreased and newly hired workers were pressed into service with minimum training.

Here is a look at how leaders realized a significant drop in turnover after using Profiles Step One Survey II®:

### Case study 1:

A commercial janitorial service with high-profile clients like banks and other commercial buildings saw staffing requirements grow with its success. The problem was both a blessing and a curse. The service needed more workers, but finding the right workers who would not be out the door after a short period of time was a challenge.

Supervisors turned to Profiles' SOS II assessment as a pre-screening instrument. After 18 months, the service's staffing level had increased by 4 percent. Simultaneously, the number of assessments required to screen new hires dropped by 67 percent.

- **Reason for the assessment decrease:** Reduced turnover, leading to fewer job interviews and a decreasing need for pumping in new hires to maintain staffing levels.
- **Result for the organization:** Employee retention, resulting in better training.
- **Benefits for the organization's customers:** Quality work provided by reliable employees.

### Case study 2:

A small professional staffing agency needed quality workers for medical and dental office placements. Its challenge was a 17 percent worker failure rate, which was damaging to its reputation and daunting to the budget, as hiring costs spiraled. Leaders turned to SOS II and monitored its effects. After four months of screening applicants with the assessment, it noted that worker failures were reduced to 6 percent.

- **Benefit of using the assessment:** An estimated $198,000 savings, using the cost of $3,000 for each worker (66) who did not fail. Cost of using SOS II, including staff time to administer and score the assessment: $12,000 a year.

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The company needed more people immediately, so it relaxed its hiring criteria. The problem was a common one – reduced supervision in the face of great success.

## Case study 3:

A manufacturer realized explosive growth in demand for its products. It was already using SOS II, but it needed more people immediately, so it relaxed its hiring criteria. The problem was a common one – reduced supervision in the face of great success.

Before loosening its hiring criteria, the manufacturer started using SOS II when it noted that 51 percent of its workers failed to complete even six calendar months of employment with the company. After using the assessment and deciding not to hire candidates who scored a 3 or less, leaders reduced turnover to 29 percent – even when hiring 53 percent of all candidates.

Then, hiring standards relaxed as the manufacturer needed more employees. Hiring managers looked at what was happening, and decided to add a professional recruiter to the HR staff. As 78 percent of applicants were hired, the six-month failure rate grew to 49 percent. After the recruiter came in, 174 applicants were hired and 76 failed the six-month test – a failure rate of 44 percent, while the percentage of applicants hired dropped only by 2.

After the recruiter had been on the job only a month, turnover dropped. Only 38 percent of the people she hired left early; meanwhile, the percentage of applicants she hired went up to 81.

- **Result of using the assessment:** The data spanned three years and several methods of operating, including a large drop in turnover after the organization started using SOS II and before it relaxed hiring standards. Even though turnover increased in the face of looser hiring standards, three years of data in different hiring situations show a consistent relationship between systematic use of SOS II scores and successful hiring.

## What the Step One Survey II® can do

The assessment is scientifically designed to evaluate, early in the candidate-selection process, a job applicant's work-related attitudes in four areas: integrity, substance abuse, reliability, and work ethic. SOS II gives managers a structured, objective system to obtain better

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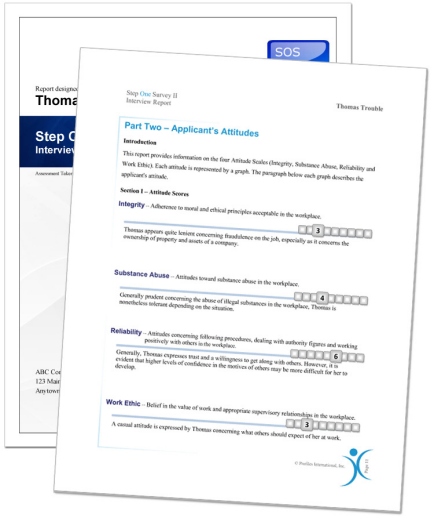


information, identify the best candidates, and conduct better interviews. Further, it helps organizations reduce hiring risk in a rapid yet careful and cost-effective manner.

Answers to SOS II questions can reveal how a prospective candidate looks at such behaviors as unauthorized use of the Internet; using company email for personal communications; disclosing private computer data; theft of office supplies and other company property; clocking in or out for other employees; discussing confidential information and/or trade secrets to outsiders; shoplifting or inventory shrinkage; carelessness on the job; unexcused absences; tardiness; drug use; mediocre performance; fraud; and job-hopping.

Conversely, it encourages "an honest day's work for a full day's pay" by modeling, through its questions, the positive employee behaviors of promptness, confidentiality, employee loyalty and increased productivity.

Reports from the assessment go to the hiring manager, who sees a score based on the applicant's responses to the four questions about integrity, substance abuse, reliability and work ethic. The report provides the managers with suggested interview questions to clarify areas of concern. SOS II takes an applicant about 20 minutes to complete. He can finish it online or by using pencil and paper. Managers are able to see the scored results immediately, which means the SOS II can be easily incorporated into the hiring process.

## What Step One Survey II® clients say

Says one leader: "Step One Survey II® ensures that all our managers are following the same hiring procedure. I like the fact that the questions are provided in a specific format. We also found that using this tool is a much better judge of honesty or integrity than when our managers rely on gut instinct."

From the general manager of the janitorial service described above: "Thanks for all your help in our hiring process. It has made a tremendous difference in quality, reliability and customer satisfaction. We have received numerous comments from customers regarding the quality of individuals we hire for their sites."

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