

Hiring Leaders, Not Resumes:

Executive Screenings for Long-Term Success

The Situation

When Mike Kowal, owner of Custom Bilt Metals, realized he needed to hire a CFO along with 6–10 senior sales leaders, the stakes were high. These were not just hires—they were foundational to the company's next phase of growth.

Having previously undergone an executive assessment himself from Robyn Porterfield, co-founder of Rose + Porterfield, Kowal turned to her for assistance.

"There are some positions you can just hire for, but for executives, sales, marketing, and HR, it's much harder to assess competency," said Kowal. "I knew how thorough Robyn's process was, so I knew I needed to bring her in."



The Challenges

With a PhD in engineering, Kowal relied on data—and the data was clear: "People are bad at interviewing. There's low predictability between how someone interviews and how they actually perform."

At the same time, multiple key roles needed to be filled quickly—but correctly.

"I wanted them filled—but with the right people so we could move forward strategically. This wasn't something that could be done with a recruiter and a few interviews."

The Solution

Rose & Porterfield implemented a rigorous screening process with candidates designed to go far beyond resumes and interviews. This included specialized assessments, full-day, in-depth conversations, and an evaluation of strategic thinking, problem-solving, adaptability, and leadership styles.

The focus wasn't just on skills—but on how candidates think, lead, and fit within the organization.

Because of prior work with Kowal, the Rose & Porterfield team could also assess alignment with his leadership style—adding another layer of precision.

The Results:



The outcome delivered both immediate impact and lasting value. The company was able to make high-impact leadership hires who showed a strong alignment in competency, culture, and leadership ability. In addition, these hires stayed at the organization for 5 years or longer—unheard of when high turnover across industries is the norm.

These hires didn't just fill roles—they elevated the organization's ability to execute and lead through change.

"We didn't just hire people who could do the job—we hired leaders who could think, adapt, and grow with the company," said Kowal. "That's made a measurable difference in how we operate and scale."

Plus, throughout the process, the company created clear benchmarks for future hiring success around personality, competency, and more.

According to Kowal, "By investing in rigorous, data-informed assessments, Custom Bilt Metals not only improved hiring accuracy, but created a scalable framework for long-term organizational success."

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