



American Airlines Leverages Candidate Assessments from Assess Systems™ Integrated with Taleo Applicant Tracking

CASE STUDY: AMERICAN AIRLINES

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Tiffany Schildge
Manager of Talent Services
American Airlines

One of the largest airlines in the world, American Airlines has more than 1,000 aircraft in its American, American Eagle® and AmericanConnection® airlines combined fleets. American Airlines offers more than 4,000 flights each day, serving 250 cities across more than 40 countries. In addition to its impressive size, the company works toward global collaboration among airlines as one of the founding members of oneworld® Alliance.

American Airlines' progressive stance is not only reflected in its cooperative efforts with other airlines, but also in its approach to its employees. Quality people are a critical asset in any business—particularly this one.

Challenge ►

Time Consuming Interview Process for High-Volume Hiring

In 2007, American Airlines began an initiative to refine its recruitment process and outsource it to IBM™. Dramatic changes in interview processes for front-line employees were in order. For years, American Airlines had struggled with time-consuming phone interviews to screen candidates. The process required certifying recruiters for individual phone interviews, which took 30 to 45 minutes per candidate. Additional time was needed to interpret and evaluate the results. A recruiter could do 10 interviews a day at most.

“It was very subjective, and it was also very time-intensive,” explained Tiffany Schildge, manager of Talent Services for American Airlines. “We had six or eight certified people, and when we were in high hiring times, interviewing and interpreting results was all they'd do.”

Solution ►

Integrated Assessments for Hourly and Managers Positions

Taleo® Web-based applicant-tracking technology was part of the system outsourced to IBM, so American Airlines sought assessment vendors who could integrate with Taleo. Having provided services for American Airlines in prior years, **Assess Systems**—a Taleo Passport™ Certified Partner—was chosen above the other vendors who were considered.

“We had used **Assess Systems** in the past and had great success. It was their abilities, their service. They were local, which played a huge part in it,” Tiffany said. “They gave a great, great presentation. They just ‘wowed’ us. They knew the struggles we



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IBM Project Manager



faced and the nuances of an airline. You wouldn't know they were a smaller company because everything we asked they could answer.”

The IBM project manager was also impressed. “**Assess Systems** was very professional and came to the sales presentation very client-specific prepared,” he said. “**Assess Systems** was very good at listening to the client and responding perfectly.”

Assess Systems came on board in early July of 2007. IBM and American Airlines planned a concurrent go-live for the applicant-tracking system and **Assess Systems**' integrated assessments. The launch date dictated a very tight three-month implementation timeframe.

Pre-Launch Emergency: Assessments to the Rescue

Assess Systems got to work immediately, evaluating the airline's culture, visiting airports, listening in on reservations calls and doing job observations. The goal: determining high-performance characteristics for eight different job roles. However, American Airlines had started a hiring initiative of 1,000 hourly positions—a challenge if the old telephone screening process was used. Tiffany brought an urgent request to **Assess Systems** to immediately begin using online assessments for those candidates—before the assessments were integrated into the Taleo system.

Assess Systems was able to quickly implement standard assessments based on decades of research in service-oriented roles. “**Assess Systems** was so accommodating,” said Tiffany. She was very happy with the short-term emergency assessments. “Our organization said they got better people.”

Integrated Assessment Process Running in Less Than Three Months

Assess Systems recommended **Select**[™], job-specific assessments for non-exempt employees, and **Assess**[™], competency-based assessments for line supervisors. Under a tight deadline, **Assess Systems** was able to complete its analyses and onsite research, customize the assessments for American Airlines and prepare the technology for the integration in a short period of time. A smooth and extremely rapid implementation led to the successful on-time launch. “This was by far the best experience I have ever had with an assessment vendor,” stated the IBM project manager.

Result ► Higher- Quality Candidates, Cost Savings, No-Hassle Customization

Assess Systems' seamless integration with Taleo yields Web-based, instant results in real time. “I love the integration and the fact that hiring managers can see the results themselves and don't have to rely on anyone to provide that information to them,” Tiffany said. “The feedback I get is that we are getting better-quality candidates who do better in the training sessions, and we get candidates a lot quicker than in the past.” She also noted that consistency of hire has improved across locations.

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The time savings has translated into cost savings for American Airlines. “Financially, I can’t put a dollar amount to it, but it has saved us a lot of money,” Tiffany indicated.

Assess Systems closely monitors applicant screen-out rates, assessment drop-off rates and adverse impact. When **Assess Systems** suggested raising the threshold to improve the screen-out rate, Tiffany agreed. “They provided me data and a recommendation,” she said. “They made that process very easy.” **Assess Systems’** flexibility and responsiveness enable the airline to continuously improve selection. “They’re a great group to work with—very, very responsive and able to answer all my questions,” said Tiffany, who is pleased with this ongoing business relationship. “They always make me feel important.”



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