**Media Release**

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Dr Ken Byrne

Corporate Psychologist

0419 182 227

[kbaiofp@gmail.com](mailto:kbaiofp@gmail.com)

www.drkenbyrne.com

**Another Public Hiring Mistake**

**It Could Have Easily Been Prevented**

**Melbourne, Victoria**: According to recent news reports, the Victorian Liberal media director, Lee Anderson, recently quit after less than a week in the job. Reportedly he clashed with the newly appointed Nick McGowan, the temporary Chief of Staff. One anonymous source is quoted as saying "*It was clear early on that they weren't going to work well together*".

This highlights the problem of hiring any new staff member without the team being involved. Noted Corporate Psychologist Dr Ken Byrne, author of a new book on hiring, Seeing Behind the Candidate’s Mask Before You Hire, says this is a common phenomenon. The example at hand happens to come from politics but it happens everywhere.

Commonly, candidates are interviewed by senior management or the human resources team, and then offered a job. The people they will work with, or those they will manage, are never consulted. Byrne says "*This is a grave mistake. Senior management might make the hiring decision, but the team this person joins will have to live with this person every day. If you want to know if a candidate will fit your culture, then you must get the team involved in helping make the hiring decision.”*

*When you're hiring someone new, you want the answers to three questions:*

* *Can this person produce the results that are required?*
* *Will this person fit in with, and compliment, our team?*
* *Will this role fit in with the candidate's life*?

**If you want to know if this person will fit in with a team, then ask them.** Get them involved in meeting the candidate and spending time with them. Give each person one area to explore, and invite the candidate to ask lots of questions of them.

Byrne recounted an example from his own practice. "*I was ready to invite someone to join us. My usual practice was to have the candidate meet the existing team. Our staff were told to tell this person the best and worst parts of working here. They were each given one area to explore with the candidate. A person who I thought would be great was universally turned down by everyone. Without this step, I could have made the same mistake*.”

There were more warning signs.

According to the press, Anderson lived in Tasmania, and planned to work remotely. His reason for leaving was that he "wanted to spend more time with his family".

While all in favor of working from home, at least some of the time, this was three months out from an election. “*You would want the media director immediately available, ready to react at a moment’s notice*” observed Dr Byrne. “*I’m not sure this was the time to have a key person working off site for any of the time.”*

Hiring the right person is notoriously difficult. You are trying to predict the future (always a challenging task), anticipating how this person will deal with any number of unknown challenges. As a corporate psychologist with over forty years’ experience, Byrne has closely observed hundreds of hiring mistakes in three different countries.

Unfortunately, most executives have never had any formal training in hiring. It’s just assumed that they know how to do this.

“*The people you hire will powerfully affect your career success*” says Dr Byrne. “*Just consider the time spent, and the extra stress, when you hire someone who doesn’t fit your team*.”

It doesn’t have to be this way.

Dr Byrne’s book, Seeing Behind the Job Appliant’s Mask Before You Hire: Secrets of a Corporate Psychologist is designed to help people hire the right person the first time, and avoid the pain of bringing on the wrong person. The book is easily available from Amazon.com.au.

**Contact Information**

**Dr Ken Byrne**

**0419-182-227**

[**kbaiofp@gmail.com**](mailto:kbaiofp@gmail.com)

[**www.drkenbyrne.com**](http://www.drkenbyrne.com)

**About Dr Ken Byrne**

For the last 40+ years Ken has specialized in serving as a second opinion to clients making a hiring or promotion decision. In Australia his advice has been sought by the ANZ Bank, Coles-Myer, The Walt Disney Company, Tattersalls, Optus, Telecom, Wrest Point Casino and a host of businesses in the SME market. For over twenty-five years he consulted to many Australian police departments and a range of other public safety agencies.