

# Case Study:

## Tierra del Sol Foundation

### DeGarmo's Customized Assessment Provides Unique Yardstick to Measure Applicants

Headquarters: Sunland-Tujunga, California

#### Industry: Non-Profit Agency

The Tierra del Sol Foundation, established in 1971, helps people overcome cognitive, physical, emotional or behavioral challenges resulting from developmental disabilities. Tierra is a recognized leader in developing innovative, accredited services that enable adults with developmental disabilities to realize their greatest human potential, and offers variety of educational opportunities for individuals to discover and share their talents and abilities with the community and their family. Tierra enables individuals with disabilities to establish meaningful and productive lives and to contribute to the economic, cultural and civic vitality of their communities by helping men and women with developmental disabilities contribute to society through community volunteerism, creative artistic expression, and gainful employment.

#### The Challenge

As a non-profit social services organization, Tierra del Sol Foundation has a number of positions that are unique to the organization and needed the ability to customize assessments to meet the needs of particular positions. According to Kevin Panet, Human Resources Manager, "We were facing high turnover, especially with involuntary terminations, and it was often said that, 'the employee was just not a good fit for the organization'."

The goal for DeGarmo was to leverage assessment technology to enhance the talent profiling process in an efficient and effective manner to meet the unique needs of Tierra del Sol Foundation.

#### Assessment Strategy & Key Differentiators

"It was very helpful to find a validated, cost effective tool that we could customize for our organization" said Panet. Based on their needs, DeGarmo recommended a customizable **work style assessment** to measure person-job fit to help screen out high turnover risk job applicants. This assessment platform is one of the most dynamic and sophisticated candidate profiling systems on the market. Through the use of an innovative competency weighting system, the system can evaluate an applicant's alignment with critical requirements for any job.

Applicants who successfully passed the assessment would then be eligible for a dynamic interview where questions are determined based on the candidate's assessment performance. According to Panet, "the Interview guide option has been very helpful for managers to keep their interviews focused and consistent."



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**Kevin R. Panet Human Resources Manager**

Tierra representatives cited several features of DeGarmo's platform as key differentiators that were innovative and unique, specifically noting, "The assessment is very easy to use. We appreciate the easy on-line access, as well as the subscription-based service ... and the methodology for creating assessments for positions was quick and effective."

### **Profile Build**

The design of any well-constructed and legally-defensible talent assessment solution begins with a job analysis-based profile build. DeGarmo's platform offers customization driven by subject matter experts (SMEs) who independently rate the importance of key job behaviors to successful job performance. DeGarmo's process is designed to understand the drivers of success (and failure) at the behavioral level, based on actual job requirements. Representatives from DeGarmo worked with Tierra del Sol to create talent profiles for a number of different roles in the organization.

DeGarmo and Tierra representatives also worked cooperatively to ensure that profiles established based on standard occupational data for more "common" positions met the specific role requirements of Tierra del Sol's organization.

### **Assessment Administration & Outcomes**

Tierra del Sol Foundation has experienced great success with the DeGarmo platform. According to Panet, "During the first full year of using the DPI assessment, we saw our involuntary terminations decrease by over 70%. In a rising economy, when we expected our turnover to increase, it actually decreased by 5.6%. This saved us money on recruiting costs, training costs, and dramatically decreased our exposure to litigation from unhappy employees who were not a good fit for our organization." according to Panet "Our managers are hiring better, our employees are staying on the job longer, and they are happier in their work."

Implementing a new talent assessment process in a unique organization can be challenging – especially when hiring decisions were typically made much more subjectively. According to Panet, "Our managers are paying much more attention to the hiring and selection process... the results help us better understand the applicants".

It is important to note that while DeGarmo's work style assessment was used by Tierra del Sol Foundation primarily for hiring, it also has applications for leadership development. Tierra del Sol utilized this additional feature and specifically noted "this has helped us to provide on-going coaching to our new managers.

*Working with the DeGarmo has always been a wonderful experience. I appreciate their outstanding customer service, the ease of use of their products, and the very positive results that we have achieved, thanks to their help."*

### **What is DeGarmo?**

DeGarmo is a recruitment, assessment and consulting organization that has provided services globally for more than 20 years. DeGarmo helps organizations identify the best talent in less time through recruitment optimization, superior assessments, and predictive analytics. Our solutions provide the talent intelligence you need to make better selection decisions, support effective coaching, and drive the development of your people.

With talent insights from DeGarmo, you can more effectively build talent pipelines and support the long-term growth of your business.