

TOEIC® Test Success Story

China Southern Airlines

China Southern Airlines (CSA), along with many other leading international airline companies, uses the TOEIC® test to accurately assess its employees' English proficiency. This ensures that employees holding positions in key international communication departments meet the present and future requirements for international operations. The test determines whether new recruits possess the English skills needed to enhance CSA's preparation for international operations.

CSA operates the most transport aircraft in China, has the densest aviation network and flies the most passengers annually. A key Sky Team Alliance (STA) member, CSA operates more than 340 cargo and passenger aircraft. With Guangzhou and Beijing as the centers, strong network routes serve all of China, span the rest of Asia and reach 841 destinations with connections in 162 countries and regions. In June 2008, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) ranked CSA fourth in the world and first in Asia in the category of annual passenger volume. In addition, the company is the only domestic airline to be ranked among the World's Top Ten Passenger Airline Companies.

THE CHALLENGE

In implementing its international development strategies, joining the STA was significant in marking the company's success. STA is one of the best-known global airline unions, with members including Mexicana Airlines, Air France, Air Italy, Czech Airlines, Delta Airlines, Northwest Airlines, Russian Airlines, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and Korean Air. Since joining the STA, CSA has been guided by STA standards and its own needs, and has taken relevant measures in the areas of network strategy, operations and service in its efforts to integrate into the international operational system.

In order to smoothly integrate into the STA's platform of communication, service and operations, recruiting and training employees capable of international communication has become a new challenge for HR management. In addition to helping employees improve their English communication capabilities, HR workers need an effective and quantifiable English testing standard to make better decisions for overseas assignments, employee performance evaluations and promotions to help facilitate business decision making and achieve sustainable development.

Throughout the years, CSA has adopted various English tests, including IELTS, the national professional qualification test, and the civil aviation aircrew and ICAO aviation English proficiency tests. However, these tests were unable to meet CSA's testing needs. It was imperative for CSA to adopt a unified English testing system that was in accordance with international standards and practices.

THE SOLUTION

CSA conducted a long-term comprehensive investigation on different English proficiency tests. The HR department surveyed many airline companies and learned that the TOEIC test was Korean Air's designated English test and that it produced desirable results. In addition, through regular contact with Taiwanese airline companies, CSA discovered that they also use the TOEIC test as a unified standard, which assisted them in maintaining high English proficiency among their employees.

After more than two years of research and analysis, CSA decided to use the TOEIC test, the world's most popular English proficiency test for the workplace, as its internal English proficiency test. CSA's Marketing Committee, Passenger Airline Department, and Ground Support Department require the highest English-language skills, so CSA began administering the TOEIC test in these departments based on HR decisions regarding test results.

In 2008, CSA administered the TOEIC test in its campus recruitment program. The company arranged for job candidates to take the TOEIC test. Those who had already taken the TOEIC test and got scores that indicated a certain level of proficiency could directly proceed to the interview stage. The program aimed to recruit nearly 500 employees applying for seven types of positions, including cargo, passenger, ground support, administration and communications.

THE RESULTS

CSA believes that using the TOEIC test will not only help evaluate prospective employees' English proficiency in a comprehensive and systematic manner, but will also help the company gain insight into the company's internal English-language skill levels. CSA is now able to compare itself with foreign airlines and assess whether employees working specific posts meet international standards, which will assist CSA with international operations.

Accurately assessing employees' English-language skills has enabled CSA to make HR arrangements efficiently with staffing, personnel allocation, overseas assignments and recruitment. This ensures smooth communication with other entities and a unified high standard for its services.

CSA is very pleased with the TOEIC test's flexible and efficient door-to-door service that has allowed CSA to accommodate different departments and crew team schedules. Receiving rapid TOEIC score results has also facilitated HR tasks.

CSA believes that the TOEIC test will effectively improve its employees' English-language skills, providing a solid foundation for its international operations.

Learn more about the TOEIC test and how it can help you find the most qualified candidates:

Visit: www.ets.org/toEIC

Call: 1-609-771-7170 (USA)

E-mail: globalforum@ets.org



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