

Effective Talent Management: Making the Best Even Better

WHAT IS IT?

Effective talent management is the purposeful act of managing the various pools of talent within your organization to ensure that your company has a robust and continuous supply of the right people, in the right jobs, at the right time. The talent may be divided into specific groupings, such as new leaders, successors to senior leaders, key technical and sales roles and any other groups you feel are strategically important to your business.

IDENTIFY: PUT IT ON THE AGENDA.

The first step in talent management is to identify the strategic groups. Your senior management team must set aside time to do this at one of their regular meetings. There are no prescribed groupings – every organization must figure out what groups are strategically relevant to their business. One of my clients identifies high potential senior managers (people they see as moving into partnership roles) as a specific talent group. A second client identifies high potential women as a key grouping, while another client sets aside successors to top executive positions as a talent group.

THE DRAFT PICK: REAL DATA.

Now that you have your groups laid out, the next step is to identify the people who should be a part of those groups. Approach this process just like a pro-sports team would approach team member selection: examine all of the data you have on your players and engage in a rigorous debate about who should be in the groups. Be sure to involve all the members of your senior team in this process.

No sports team would consider naming an athlete to their team without the proper data on that player, and neither should you. If you don't have data on a potential member

of the group, get it! One of the benefits of this exercise is that your senior team will become intimately acquainted with the organization's talent.

The principal objective of these rowdy debates is to consider each person's potential future role in the organization and figure out the one or two things they need to do to obtain and excel at that role. Develop a skeleton coaching plan to address those one or two things. Consider using a simple and customized assessment tool built around those areas for each person. Assess the person again in three to six months. And again. Depending on the person's needs, and your organization's budget and culture, the tool can be as simple as an online survey or a series of short interviews.

Calling all senior leaders: It is imperative that there is senior level ownership of each person's coaching plan! Make sure that the talent is aligned with the best possible person to address his/her development needs - even if it means crossing organizational boundaries. Gasp.

AND PLEASE DON'T DROP THE DEVELOPMENT. YOU KNOW THEY'RE GOOD. HELP THEM BECOME EVEN BETTER.

Most organizations identify and assess talent effectively, but few move to the development stage. Without the development component your talent may not reach full potential.

I remember the day I made the Canadian National Synchronized Swimming Team for the first time. I ran through the pool locker-room cheering and shouting at the top of my lungs, feeling validated, and experiencing a huge boost in self-belief. My technical skills had been evaluated, analyzed, compared against the skills of other Canadian swimmers, and deemed strong enough for Canada's top team. So they thought I was good. But the national coach also knew that I could be better, and would need to be better to be competitive at the next level - the international stage. The coach didn't just push all of us through a standardized training camp where every team member followed the identical prescribed regimen. Rather, she designed for each team member a customized training program aimed at achieving our team performance goals, while fine-tuning our individual strengths and addressing our unique development needs. As we improved and developed, she worked with us to reassess our skills and adjust the plan.



IT'S NOT A ONE-TIME FIX.

For a coaching plan to be most effective, it requires appropriate management. Be sure to meet again as a leadership group (perhaps twice a year) to review each individual's progress, make adjustments to the coaching plans, and reassign responsibilities, if required.

IT'S WORTH IT.

Good talent management increases the likelihood of your business' future success.

- Identify strategic groups
- Use data to identify people that fit into those groups
- Identify 1 – 2 key focuses for each person
- Develop coaching plan
- Match talent with best possible senior leadership person
- Manage the plans
- Meet again to review, adjust and reassign responsibility
- Watch as your talent leads the organization into a successful future

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Learn more about Claire and IMPACT's services on our website: www.impactconsultinginc.com