

Talent Management

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ABSTRACT

Talent management as a mission critical process that ensures organizations have the quantity and quality of people in place to meet their current and future business priorities. The process covers all key aspects of an employee's life cycle selection, development, and performance management. Talent management is about getting the right people in the right jobs doing the right things. This requires predicting how employees will act in the future and getting them to act differently from how they acted in the past. Neither of these is easy. This paper provides principles of effective Talent Management. These truths can be thought of as principles for successful talent management and will significantly improve the effectiveness of any talent management initiative.

INTRODUCTION TO TALENT MANAGEMENT

The field of talent management covers a range of HR functions focusing on attracting, retaining, managing, and developing high quality workforces. It includes performance management, staffing, compensation, learning management, employee development, and succession planning. The growing interest in talent management is primarily a result of increasing recognition of the impact talent management practices have on business growth and profitability and the role talent management plays for dealing with the shortage of skilled labor in the workforce. The end goal of talent management initiatives is to help get the right people in the right jobs doing the right things to make a business succeed. This goal may sound straightforward, but it is often extremely difficult to achieve. Why? Because to be successful talent management processes must effectively predict and change the day-to-day behavior of individual employees. Predicting and influencing human behavior is difficult. Companies must constantly return to these 10 principles when designing and evaluating talent management methods or risk creating talent management systems that may work on paper, but won't work with people.

Business results are driven by factors within and outside of the control of the organization. Factors outside the control of the organization include things like competitor activity, economic market conditions, or government legislation. Factors within the control of the organization include things like business strategy, organizational structure, or workplace policies. One factor that companies can influence that has a major impact on business results is the behavior of their employees. Aligning employee behaviors with a company's business needs is the basic goal of talent management. Talent management practices, whether focused on staffing, compensation, performance management, or career development all share the same goal of aligning employee behaviors to support the company's business strategies and objectives. But talent management practices do not impact employee behavior directly. Employee behaviors are determined primarily by enduring attributes of the employees themselves (e.g., beliefs, knowledge, attitudes, abilities, skills and motivation). These attributes are shaped by individual differences between employees related to their personality, ability, and values, as well as aspects of their work environment such as incentives, resources, and co-workers. This is where talent management comes in to play. What talent management programs do is encourage the hiring of certain kinds of employees and the creation of certain kinds of work environments. If done correctly, these programs increase the likelihood of employees displaying on-the-job behaviors that drive business results.

PRINCIPLES FOR EFFECTIVE TALENT MANAGEMENT

Talent management broadly refers to strategic HR programs designed to maximize workforce productivity. The field of talent management covers a range of HR functions focusing on attracting, retaining, managing, and developing high quality workforces. It includes performance management, staffing, compensation, learning management, employee development, and succession planning. The growing interest in talent management is primarily a result of increasing recognition of the impact talent management practices have on business growth and profitability and the role talent management plays for dealing with the shortage of skilled labor in the workforce. The end goal of talent management initiatives is to help get the right people in the right jobs doing the right things to make a business succeed. This goal

may sound straightforward, but it is often extremely difficult to achieve. Because to be successful talent management processes must effectively predict and change the day-to-day behavior of individual employees. Predicting and influencing human behavior is difficult. Ten of the principles that should be considered when developing any form of talent management system are roughly listed in order of importance as Core Principles: The ROAD to workforce productivity and Principles for World Class Talent Management.

1. Respect for Employees: The easiest way to ensure employees feel respected is to make sure managers regularly talk with them about their jobs and what the company could do to help them achieve their goals.

2. Clarity of Objectives: Clarifying objectives requires clearly defining and communicating the goals employees are expected to achieve in their jobs. One of the most effective ways to maximize workforce productivity is to tell employees exactly what it is you want them to do (Locke & Latham, 2002). There are many ways to establish and communicate goals. One technique is to use —cascading goals software that allows organizational leaders to set strategic objectives and then communicate these to people throughout the organization.

3. Increase in Awareness: Learning from experience cannot occur unless employees understand how their behaviors are affecting their performance. This requires providing performance feedback that increases employee awareness of what they need to change and why it is important. Providing performance feedback is one of the most critical and most difficult elements of talent management. It is about giving employees information that both increases their awareness of what they need to change and increases their confidence in their ability to change. Feedback is not simply a matter of telling people how to improve their performance. It must inspire them to become more effective.

4. Develop an integrated, proactive talent management strategy in the organisation: View employer of choice status as an outcome of coherent corporate culture rather ad-hoc programs. These 4 principles are particularly critical. They are necessary to create any sustainable change in employee behaviour. To emphasize their criticality, these four principles have been given the acronym ROAD (Respect, Objectives, Awareness, Dialogue) because they represent the ROAD for creating a fully productive workforce. These four principles establish the foundation for effective talent management.

5. Do Maintain Accountability: Talent management processes that maintain accountability improve workforce productivity in two major ways. First, they align employee behaviors with business goals by creating connections between what people do on the job and what they receive from the company. Companies can take advantage of this basic truth by ensuring that people see clear connections between what they do on the job and the rewards they receive from the company. This requires establishing, communicating, and following processes that directly link employee performance to pay, job opportunities, promotions, and other employment decisions. Maintaining accountability also increases employee commitment toward the company by creating an organizational culture that is perceived to be more fair and equitable. Companies often build reward systems primarily around a few specific business objectives while ignoring other important aspects of the job.

6. Should measure business impact: Companies need to measure outcomes whether in production, sales or talent management that affect business success. A large, global pharmaceutical company recently analyzed its talent management program for measurable impact. The firm assigned a group of mid- and low-senior-level managers to review all 14 of its talent management processes and the different data elements collected. If the managers could not tie a process to its tangible impact on business performance, they eliminate the program. Those programs that could be tied to business performance were then massively simplified. Across the organization, the company went from having 14 separate programs to just three simpler processes. Shifting to this measurement-driven approach is fundamental to ensuring that talent management makes a real difference in the organization.

7. Building adaptable skills. Prepare future leadership for any situation: The trend to build adaptable skills has been in the works for some time, but the reasons behind the trend have been greatly solidified by the current financial crisis. For decades, talent searches focused on generic leadership skills: driving results, overcoming adversity and demonstrating superior communication abilities. During the recession, companies quickly learned that almost everyone could communicate. More important, while communication skills might help employees be more effective in their job.

8. Simplify the performance management: There is an obvious connection between getting day-to-day performance right and driving better company results critically important in today's economic environment. What's more, goal setting and performance management are the two most direct ways for management to communicate with employees about objectives. Performance management also helps clarify an employee's role, while focusing employee development on competencies that determine the organization's success. Finally, by linking reward outcomes to individual performance, effective performance management allows employers to realize their philosophy surrounding pay for performance.

9. Support to People at Different Phases of Career Growth: This starts with career exploration that typically occurs when people are in the early to mid twenties. This phase is characterized by moving through a series of positions to find

the type of job or company that best suits the person's talents and interests. The next phase is focused on career advancement. Employees in this phase put considerable energy into developing specialized skills and moving to positions of increasing responsibility. When employees enter their 30's and 40's their focus often shifts to one of career stabilization as they take on commitments outside of work associated with raising a family or becoming more involved in their communities. Employees in this phase are still interested in advancement, but may be reluctant to pursue opportunities that require making major changes to their lives outside of work. Many employees then move into more of a mentoring phase of their career. Employees in this phase are more interested in leveraging their accumulated knowledge and experience as opposed to advancing to positions of increasing responsibility. The final phase is one where employees increasingly transition their focus away from work to other interests outside of the workplace. Employees may not want to retire completely, but they are no longer willing or interested in jobs that prevent them from engaging in other life pursuits.

10. Evaluation of Potential and Experience is must: The goal of talent management practices such as staffing and succession planning is to predict what employees will do in the future if placed in certain positions. There are two basic ways to do this. One is to measure people's past accomplishments and performance and use this to predict their future performance. This approach is based on the fact that one of the best predictors of future behavior is past behavior in similar Situations. Another way to predict future performance is to use psychometrically designed assessments that measure underlying attributes related to various personality and ability traits. When appropriately designed and applied, these assessments are often the single most accurate predictors of future employee performance.

Key components of a highly effective talent management process include:

1. A clear understanding of the organization's current and future business strategies.
2. Identification of the key gaps between the talent in place and the talent required to drive business success.
3. A sound talent management plan designed to close the talent gaps. It should also be integrated with strategic and business plans.
4. Accurate hiring and promotion decisions.
5. Connection of individual and team goals to corporate goals, and providing clear expectations and feedback to manage performance.
6. Development of talent to enhance performance in current positions as well as readiness for transition to the next level.
7. A focus not just on the talent strategy itself, but the elements required for successful execution.
8. Business impact and workforce effectiveness measurement during and after implementation.

CONCLUSION

For talent management, the fundamentals are the 10 things listed. If you create processes that reinforce and support these fundamental principles then you will see a steady and lasting improvement in workforce productivity. Companies that master talent management will be well-positioned for long-term growth in workforce performance for years to come. It is management therefore not HR, who should feel responsible for ensuring that the company defines clear job roles outlining necessary skill levels and competencies for each and determine the appropriate incentives, rewards and compensation by which success will be measured. In many leading organizations, management establishes the necessary parameters which ensure that the organization has the right person with the right skills in the right job at the right time to reach strategic goals at all levels.

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