

What a Talent Management-focused Organization Does

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A Talent Management-focused organization practices disciplines that encourage greater employee engagement, resulting in positive effects on revenue and growth. These disciplines are enabled through technologies that are integrated, leveraging functionality that extends the products' capabilities and utility to the organization. The disciplines a Talent Management-focused organization practices include:

- Development and maintenance of a competency model for pivotal roles.
- Workforce Strategy and Planning that focuses on critical competencies and skills of workers the organization employs – full time equivalents, contractors, consultants, temps, and outsourcing.
- Recruiting, sourcing, and placing the right workers into roles.
- Compensation and Rewards programs encourage discretionary effort.
- Learning and Development programs that focus on increasing proficiency levels.
- Performance Management programs that focus on continuous development of the individual's competencies and skills.
- Succession Management discipline that tracks bench strength for pivotal roles.
- A "mineable" Social Networking and Collaboration environment that enables workers to connect and share ideas.
- A dynamic review of metrics and analytics across all of these disciplines that are continually updated to reflect changing business conditions.

Start by knowing who is best suited to be successful in pivotal roles

The company employs a formal Workforce Planning strategy to determine which jobs are best suited for different types of workers – full time equivalents, temps, contractors, consultants, and outsourced. All sourcing options are considered. Gaps are identified between the competencies and skills that exist in workers "on site" and those that are needed to drive revenue and growth. The company knows this because it maintains "worker profiles" that identify these competencies and skills and what proficiency levels these workers have achieved in them. Their information systems track all workers, not just full time equivalents.

Leverage internal resources first – encourage career growth

A critical position needs to be filled. It is critical because it is "pivotal", directly contributing to driving revenue and growth for the company. Other positions are important, but this one is more so because it falls into the status of "rain maker". The company "fills" the position by first employing a Recruiting program/discipline to look to see what internal talent it has with the requisite competencies and skills to be successful in that role. It can do this because their Succession Management program/discipline tracks key positions, knows who currently occupies them, assesses the risk of losing these people (and rewards them appropriately to keep them), and knows what their "bench strength" is (candidates who can move into that role now, and in the near future).

Embrace Social Networking and Collaboration Environments

Internal recruiting is enhanced because the company has deployed, and encourages the use of its Social Networking and Collaboration environment. Employees have been using these tools to share knowledge with each other through Blogs, Wikis, and Instant Messaging. They collaborate on ideas, and create profiles and “communities of interest” so that others of like minds can get together. The company encourages this because it enables the organization to capture this “intellectual capital” and keep it within the organization. It rewards employees for coming up with good ideas that extends the company’s market share, or enables it to enter new markets.

The organization sees these environments as just extensions of the tools it provides to workers and governs their use just as they govern workers’ behavior today – workers are required to sign confidentiality agreements that protect the company’s interests. Otherwise, they are escorted out the door and wished a happy life elsewhere. Exit interviews are considered a waste of time.

If internal recruiting is successful, the company saves a lot of time and money moving a “known quantity” into an important role, and their Succession Management program/discipline fills the open position accordingly, and the one below, and the one below.....

Senior management encourages internal movement because it is smart and saves money. The message to objecting managers afraid of “poaching” – get over it and make sure you are developing your talent to move up and around the organization.

And yes, a good Succession Management discipline DOES take into consideration the CEO’s and other senior leaders “gut” feelings about their subordinates and who is in their personal rolodexes. But, if that internal talent has not yet achieved the appropriate proficiency in competencies and skills, then the company’s Recruiting program/discipline can mine appropriate talent within their industry, using the latest in Social Networking and Media tools, including LinkedIn, Facebook, and others. And, the company generously supports its employee referral program.

Pivotal and other important roles should have requisite competencies and skills defined for them. Formal job analysis, supported by an effective Compensation Management program/discipline enables this.

Dump the Annual Performance Review in favor of “Continuous Performance Reviews”

An effective Performance Management program/discipline assesses a person’s proficiency levels achieved against those competencies and skills. It enables the employee and manager to identify development programs and other learning opportunities that the employee should be exposed to in order to increase their proficiency levels.

Development plans and learning opportunities are enabled by the company’s Learning Management program/discipline which tracks these learning opportunities – course material, job rotation, and project assignments. Completion of learning and project assignments and course material increase the worker’s proficiency level.



Performance evaluations are critical, but are NOT regarded as a once-a-year exercise. In fact, the company does not do annual performance reviews at all. Managers are required to know the course material and learning opportunities that are tied to his employee's job progression and immediate promotional opportunities. The manager is required to learn about and identify at least two jobs each employee could be a candidate for outside his immediate area of responsibility and collaborate with talent leaders to ensure such information is captured into the Succession Management program/discipline. Then, managers and workers are required to meet at least quarterly to assess achievement of development plans and ensure they are directly associated with organizational and personal development goals.

Continually re-assess with meaningful metrics and analytics

Through a continuous evaluation of metrics and analytics, the company identifies measures for each of these programs and re-assesses their effectiveness, updating the measures to reflect the changing needs of the business.