



The Human Dimension

THE LEADER WITHIN

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"We help both people and productivity flourish by developing a positive culture of shared leadership."

We find improved performance is the reward for your investing in people.

The emphasis in THE LEADER WITHIN is on the changes and growth we make within ourselves, as leadership is basically a personal growth experience over time.

'For things to change first I must change.'

How to be an employer of choice:

During this year members of our team have had a number of conversations with senior managers about the challenges of finding and retaining 'good' people.

This newsletter is bringing those ideas and strategies together in one place for you to recall when next you are pondering what exactly you have to do to get and retain the best people.

While it is not possible to retain everyone forever, there are things which you can do to increase the likelihood of you standing out as the employer of choice when they are asking whether or not you have any vacancies coming up!.

When someone who is performing well leaves, it creates a flow-on effect where the work left doesn't get done at all, or others have to add the extra responsibilities to their own already over crowded priorities. To have to replace someone in middle management costs you around \$75,000 each time - so it has many consequences for you and the team members left to pick up the pieces.

So here is where you put your focus ...

1. Instil a Performance Mindset.

This is a deeply held belief that having high calibre people in the most value creating roles and maintaining a strong pool of talent are the highest priorities to you achieving your mission.

This mindset must be reinforced with accountability for performance at all levels. A rigorous and candid review process which incorporates an outline of individual strengths and weaknesses is essential to identify high and low performers, as is spending time on shaping specific actions to address issues around under-performers. This latter task is often avoided or overlooked. Big mistake!

2. Establish the Compelling Reason.

This is the reason why a talented person would want to work for your company or organisation. It is really important that everyone can talk about why this is such a great place to work and be basically covering similar ground. I sometimes wonder if managers hear what people really think of their workplace and of the managers in particular. These are not always pleasant, let alone positive, comments.

There are four areas which you need to focus on to make the 'compelling reason' abundantly clear.

a. Create a great place to work. This means everyone is genuinely cared about and in turn, staff genuinely care about the enterprise and it's mission. Trust and open communication are the fabric of each interaction. Each person is motivated by a sense of shared values and aspirations. You can glean that each person has enormous pride in being associated with the success and each person's contribution to it.

b. Great leaders really do treat people with respect and trust and honour the intelligence within. They know their people and understand their dreams. They are able to find the balance between giving people independence to accomplish great things and providing the guidance or even the guidelines to help them do it. Great leaders build the capacity to achieve results, knowing that they do this by unleashing the talents and work ethic of their people.

c. It is a great job. Essentially people have to like what they do and the people they do it with. A great job is demanding and stretching and full of content that the individual finds interesting and important. Much of the feeling about a job is the result of being valued for one's unique talents.

d. Attractive remuneration. Money is important although not the main motivator. The salary represents recognition and fairness. Talented people expect their contributions to be acknowledged and their compensation to reflect their impact.

3. Be Astute in Looking for New Talent.

Develop a keen sense of who you are looking for and what you have to offer them against your competitors.

Be able to speak about the attraction of working with you and ensure everyone already on your team is talking about the benefits too. Often it is the informal

networks in which your existing staff operate which is potential fertile recruiting ground for those looking for the next challenge!

4. Develop People.

Every enterprise leaves a tremendous amount of human potential untapped because its people are inadequately developed. Effectively conceived stretch jobs, coupled with informal feedback, coaching and mentoring, are enormous developmental levers.

5. Ensure there is Room to Grow.

You probably are aware of the cost of suffering underperformance. Managers who are under performing are unable to attract great people, do not develop the people below them, block opportunities for those around them, undermine the morale of the group they lead and ultimately cause better performers to leave. Dealing effectively with a particular manager's poor performance sends the right message and allows others to grow and shine, because you signal that you value high potential and performance.

Call to Action:

By now you would be getting the message that a lot of your job is about people and not just the tasks. You're right! Simply helping high potential people feel connected and vital to the future can be a powerful retention strategy in itself.

Let them know they are wanted (and not just say so, when they tell you they are being head hunted)!

Perhaps you could set up a strategy group to identify and provide action steps your managers could implement to recruit and retain the best people.

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