

Diving Into the Deep End of the Internal Talent Pool

One of the key issues facing businesses today is bench strength. Although, the overall number of people entering the workforce is increasing, most of those people are entry-level. As many experienced workers reach retirement age, companies are forced to look to their internal talent pool to fill leadership roles. So, how do you make sure that your organization has the bench strength it needs to succeed, now and in the future?



1) Identify and define the corporate competencies essential to organizational success.

It is imperative that organizations know what sets them apart from their competition. What makes your organization different? Maybe you provide great customer service, have extensive product knowledge, or provide industry expertise.

Once you identify the qualities that make the organization unique, it is time to identify the underlying competencies. Competencies are a set of behaviors that encompasses skills, knowledge, abilities, and personal attributes that are critical to successful work accomplishment. What behaviors are required for success in leadership roles? What behaviors are required by employees in each area of your organization? Determine what skills are necessary today, and what skills will be necessary in the future in order for employees and the organization to be successful.

Then go a step further, and define what each competency means to the organization. For competencies to be true differentiators, you need to customize them to express your organization's corporate values. Be as specific as you can in your definitions; if you use generic competencies and generic descriptions, you will end up with generic results.

2) Assess and develop your employee's competencies.

The one valuable asset that every organization has in common is its employees. In order for organizations to hire effectively, they need to identify internal talent and determine what kind of talent they need. Organizations that conduct disciplined, meritocratic assessments of performance and potential are better prepared to make good personnel decisions. Employees need to embody the values or behaviors that support an organization's success. So how do you establish differentiating competencies in your workforce?

Organizations need to assess each employee's ability to perform organizational and job specific competencies. Assessing employees helps to determine how well an individual fits specific jobs within the organization. It also helps pinpoint performance gaps and allows organizations to establish development strategies for each level of the organization. Once development plans are in place, you should follow-up to ensure that the development activities are, in fact, improving employee performance.

At this point in the process all of your hard work of identifying and defining competencies pays off. You have clear definitions of each competency and can use those definitions to effectively communicate organizational priorities and values to your employees. The definitions can also be used to help identify or create learning activities that truly develop the desired values or behaviors in your workforce.

Competency assessments paired with developmental activities will provide you with information on how your organization is performing overall. It will also diagnose performance and skill gaps by department, division, or in the entire organization. Analyzing and utilizing the scientific data from assessments will provide key insight into your bench strength.

3) Identify and retain high potential employees

High potential employees are the ones that excel at the competencies that you develop and show potential for assuming more responsibility within the organization. It is crucial that the organization identify these employees sooner than later. If they are valuable to your organization, then they could also be valuable to your competition and may be sought out for other positions.

So, how do you find these high potential employees? Organizations can get a pretty good idea of who these employees are with performance appraisals, but using a separate talent assessment process will not only determine high potential employees, it can also assess their risk of leaving.

Once these employees are identified, organizations need to implement measures to ensure employee retention. Compensation increases and development opportunities are common

ways organizations attempt to retain high potential employees, but every person is motivated in a different way. Organizations need to use assessment results to create unique retention plans for each employee; make sure you focus on what motivates and engages each person.

Developing bench strength within your organization is about developing groups of employees, not just individuals. By identifying the core, differentiating competencies and then developing those behaviors through your entire workforce you will ensure that you have the bench strength needed to compete and succeed.

Source: Profiles International

<http://www.profilesinternational.com>

<http://blog.profilesvietnam.com/en/blog/bid/194818>

How important do you think bench strength is to an organization? What are some other ways that organizations can increase their bench strength?



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