



Briefing Paper

Creating a Talented Workplace

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Getting the best out of your organisation's talent has never been more important, but doing it can be a complex process.

It requires the attraction, identification and assessment of talent to bring the right people into the organisation, the right development opportunities to manage, reward and recognise talent appropriately, and the promotion of talent at the right time.

Once on board, organisations need to work harder to make the best use of their talent - to grow, nurture and retain them. The employee of today will not hesitate to move organisations to progress, they expect more from their employer but they will also give more back to an organisation which engages with and develops them.

Creating a talented workplace is not just about the leaders of tomorrow, it is about identifying, developing and retaining talent at every level, to create a world-class, efficient workplace where each and every employee can work together at their optimum capability.

Coordinating all of these elements to work together in harmony takes a talented workplace in itself.

What is talent and how can you manage it?

An organisation consists of a diverse group of people whose knowledge, skills, experience, motivations and abilities are deployed in order to make the organisation work as effectively as possible.

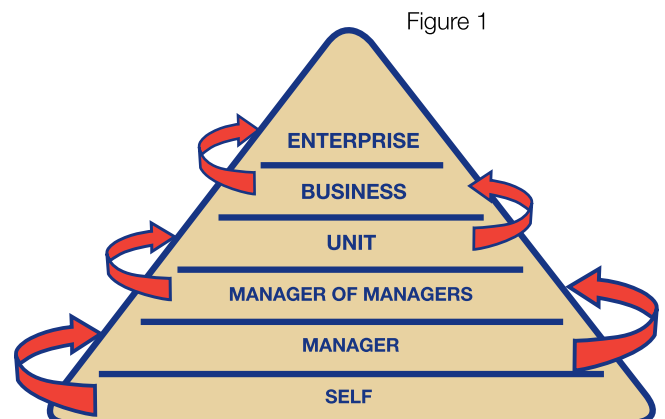
Maximum performance and efficiencies can be realised when organisations effectively consider the importance that attracting, selecting, deploying and utilising the right talent in the right places plays in their business strategy.

Having the right individuals (or talent) in the right roles enables organisations of people to work together in the most effective way possible. However, where individuals demonstrate gaps in the required skill sets for their role they can have a significant, detrimental effect on those around them - negatively impacting performance, morale and productivity of the individual, team and organisation.

Six Stages of Leadership

As an individual progresses through the Six Stages of Leadership (see figure 1) from Self Leadership (no direct reports) through to Enterprise Leadership (CEO) he/she must have the relevant skills, knowledge, motivation, ability and potential in order to be successful.

At each stage an individual will face numerous transition challenges where they will be required to gain more experience and learning and develop their skills in order to be successful at that stage and continue to progress.



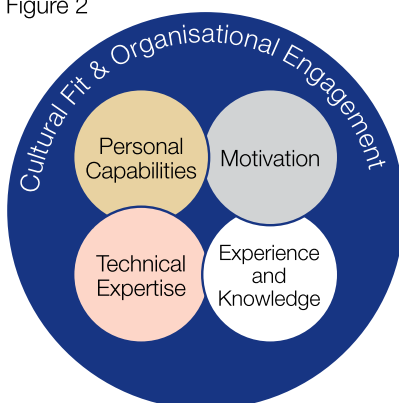
Talent and Potential Identification

The right talent in the right role

It is imperative that organisations understand what talent and potential looks like within their organisation. An in-depth understanding of what talent, potential and leadership looks like at different levels within an organisation delivers a far more accurate calibration of talent and potential than applying a generic model throughout an organisation.

Getting the right talent for the right role in the right organisation requires an in-depth understanding of many factors. A talented individual in one organisation is not necessarily a talented individual in another. Thus it is essential to understand what this looks like for each organisation and to assess the right combination of Personal Capabilities, Motivation, Technical Expertise, Experience and Knowledge, within the context of cultural fit and organisational engagement.

Figure 2



All of these factors may look quite different across different roles, levels and organisations. Understanding what this looks like is important to ensuring that an organisation is able to identify the right talent for success, both externally and internally.

It is also important for organisations to have a clear idea of not only where individuals are currently best suited, but also their future potential for moving within the organisation.

Moreover, talent management should not be looked at in isolation from the wider organisation system. Playing to an individual's strengths and therefore making sure that the individual is in the right role in the right organisation again is imperative. Talent needs to be looked at from an organisational perspective as well as an individual perspective.

What are all of the strengths you need to make the organisation a success? One person alone should not be expected to possess a complete 'wish-list' of skills to be an effective leader, nor do they necessarily need them. It is important to look at the team and organisational composition to answer the question 'Do we have the composition of skills and strengths required to make us a successful organisation?' rather than 'do all of our people have all of the skills needed to make us a successful organisation?'

Organisations need to integrally link expectations for their talent with the challenges that face them. Any identification and management of talent and potential should be considered in relation to:

- Business Strategy and Objectives
- People Strategy and Objectives
- Related Organisational Systems e.g.
 - People and Performance Management
 - Talent Management & Succession Planning
 - Reward and Recognition
 - Organisational Communication
- Organisational Diversity
- Organisational Culture and Values

An organisation needs fully integrated systems of people and processes all which need to work effectively for the organisation to be a success. By making sure that all of these systems are correctly aligned and ensuring that you have the right people with the right strengths will mean you are on the road to success.

Talent and Potential Identification

How to identify talent and potential

There are different ways to identify talent and potential, even within the same organisation. For individuals identified as 'Talent/ High Flyers' (typically middle management) through to more Senior and Executive levels, two key approaches are often used to explore the potential to progress and the best fit within the organisation.

1-2-1 Talent and Leadership Profiling

Typically used when:

- assessing talent external to the organisation for a particular role
- assessing internal talent when an individual needs to be assessed quickly for a given role

In order to achieve an in-depth psychological understanding of the individual, a number of psychological tools and techniques are also used:

Psychological Interviews

- Exploring personality, motivation, capability, career, experience, derailers, ability and potential

Psychometrics

- Exploring aspects of personality, motivation, derailers, ability and potential

720° Feedback

- Exploring perceived reputation, capability, motivation, derailers, ability and potential

Bespoke Talent and Leadership Centres

Typically used when:

- assessing internal talent or talent pools within the organisation
- providing an assessment and comparison of the internal talent pools to determine the focus of development opportunities

In-depth psychological profiling to build a comprehensive picture of an individual and provide a detailed report on his/her:

- areas of strength
- areas of development or potential 'exposure'
- possible role and career derailers
- role / career motivations and aspirations
- types of environments and roles most suited to

Development and sculpting of talent

As individuals progress through an organisation they will experience 'transition challenges' moving from one role and level to the next. It is important to understand these transition challenges and have the appropriate support programmes and processes in place in order to overcome them.

Many individuals want to progress through an organisation as quickly as they can. If they are a 'high flyer' they will typically be ambitious and restless in their pursuit of promotion. Often, organisations that recognise such strong talent will promote these individuals very quickly through the ranks, either through a fear of losing them to a competitor or because they feel that the individual is ready for bigger challenges and roles.

However, in order to maximise each individual's potential they need to be nurtured appropriately.

They need to have gained enough experience at each level in an organisation to operate effectively and to have gained a thorough understanding of what skills an individual operating at that level needs. This will ensure that they are able to give appropriate support to their direct reports once they are promoted.

In order for an organisation to work effectively, a leader must have a good understanding and experience of the pressures and challenges faced by the levels below and what they need in order to make the organisation a success.

In order to develop and sculpt talent appropriately, individuals need:

- Stretching targets, objectives, challenges and experiences at each level in the organisation
- Enough time to consolidate those experiences before they are ready to move to the next level.
- Focused support such as coaching, mentoring and skills training to enable them to complete their role effectively
- Effective line management where they are given the time and support required to be successful
- Regular feedback on their performance
- Opportunities to gain self-awareness of their strengths and areas of weakness or development
- Opportunities to address their areas of weakness through developing their own skills or utilising others to off-set their own weaknesses
- Reward and recognition for their talent and contribution to the organisation

Talent Management Systems

For an organisation to be effective it needs to establish a coherent talent management system. This not only ensures that talent is developed, promoted and retained, but that it is used in the right parts of the organisation to deliver success.

Effective talent management systems enable an organisation to:



Retaining Talent

Retaining talent is a big issue. The people in an organisation are often its only true differentiator or USP. Retaining that differentiator is therefore critical.

Retention of talent involves establishing a 2-way, reciprocal relationship between organisation and individual. The more that an individual feels 'organisational engagement' with their employer, the more the organisation is likely to get from that individual. Moreover, if an individual feels they are getting the support they need from an organisation and that it is being transparent and upfront about what it can offer then he/she will be more likely to remain engaged and stay within the organisation.

Research conducted by Reed Consulting on over 4,000 employees showed that the main reason people leave an organisation is because of dissatisfaction with the development opportunities they are afforded. If the organisation cannot provide the required opportunities the talented individual is far more likely to leave in search of these opportunities elsewhere.

Another much cited reason for leaving an organisation is the relationship with line managers. Typically, the line manager is seen as the person with the keys to helping that individual develop and gain experience and opportunities for growth. Should the individual feel that their line manager is not sufficiently focused on this then he/she may feel

that they have hit a ceiling and that the only way to break through the ceiling is to move to another part of the business or to another organisation entirely.

Shared understanding

Fundamentally, there needs to be a shared understanding between what the individual expects from the organisation and what the organisation expects from the individual. An individual needs to make good on their ability to provide their services to the organisation and the organisation needs to make good on its ability to provide support, development and progression. However, this is a fluid contract and should there be changes in either side's ability to meet the other's expectations these need to be stated explicitly and immediately. Neither should promise things that they cannot deliver or that could be affected by factors that are outside of their control. An up front and honest contract between both parties is required and these should be reviewed regularly in 1-2-1s with a line manager.

Reed Consulting designs and implements strategies to acquire, evaluate and develop talent for organisations of all sizes, across multiple sectors.

Delivered either as an end-to-end, total recruitment solution or on a modular basis, Reed Consulting's services include innovative attraction, recruitment, assessment and pre-employment checking services, to development, reward and retention consultancy and support programmes to manage the outplacement and transitions process.

Reed Consulting's Assessment, Development & Talent consultants are experienced Occupational Psychologists and HR professionals who work to understand clients' strategic aspirations, culture, brand, challenges and expectations across a range of industries and sectors. With an approach that is underpinned by the principles of work psychology and human and organisational behaviour and all consultants adhere to the standards of the British Psychological Society (BPS) and the Chartered Institute of Personal Development (CIPD) to determine the most pertinent and innovative solutions for client's requirements. Reed Consulting enables clients to achieve maximum levels of performance, motivation and loyalty from their people - with measurable results, from the trainee at entry point through to the executive board.

