

How to Develop Your Leadership Pipeline

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In every company's growth, there comes a time when a company needs new and highly qualified leaders to take their company to the next level of success. At this moment in each company's growth, HR Directors have two options: develop leaders from within the company or hire new leaders from outside the company.

Typically across every industry people are promoted to managerial and leadership positions because they have excelled in their technical expertise. While technical expertise is one criterion for managing others, it does not meet the more demanding skills of motivating and managing others, creating teams, self-discipline, and empowering others to achieve results. These are leadership skill sets that need to be cultivated to maintain a leadership pipeline.

Developing potential leaders from within the company has many benefits that should be considered.



Developing your leaders internally will help create loyalty among employees as well as increase retention and morale.

Potential leaders are already known for their work ethic, familiar with the company procedures and culture and have valuable experience behind them. In addition, developing leaders from within often increases employee retention, dedication and morale which

save HR Directors and the company time and money.

In order to develop the right leaders from within, HR Directors need to know how to select the right person for the leadership role. They must be familiar with how to identify the leadership competencies, traits and skills needed for the position, assess each candidate's leadership potential and create a development program that includes training and coaching.

EXAMPLE 1: IDENTIFY LEADERSHIP TRAITS NEEDED FOR THE POSITION

TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE SKILLS	WEIGHT	PEOPLE-ORIENTED SKILLS	WEIGHT
Technical	2.5	Inspires and motivates high work ethic	2.5
Able to transfer knowledge	6.5	Has mutual respect from fellow workers	2.5
Familiar with office procedures	1.0	Team-savvy	2.5
		Positive role model	2.5

1. IDENTIFY LEADERSHIP TRAITS NEEDED FOR THE POSITION

List all the leadership competencies and characteristics needed to take the company to next level and accomplish the strategic goals created in the annual strategic plan. This may include personality, skills (technical and people-oriented), expertise and experience. Feel free to weigh the importance of each.

2. IDENTIFYING BEHAVIORS THAT ACHIEVE RESULTS

Breakdown these competencies and characteristics into behaviors that achieve those results. The chart to the left shows an example of what you might do.

3. SELECTING THE RIGHT PERSON WITH THE POTENTIAL TO LEAD

- Assess each candidate as a potential leader against those required competencies, characteristics and behaviors. Rating each of the previous traits on a 1-10 scale may help.
- Multiply their scale times the weight of their characteristic.
- Decide which person matches most of the needed areas to grow the company and fit into the desired leadership role.
- Interview each of the top candidates and ask their personal goals for their own professional development.
- Utilize behavioral interview techniques to assess how they have dealt with areas of conflict in the past.
- Choose the candidate who has the same goals as the available leadership position and who matches the required criteria.

4. ON BOARDING: DEVELOPING AND TRAINING THE SELECTED LEADER

Often the selected leader will need to be trained and developed until they are ready to assume their new role as a leader.

EXAMPLE 2: IDENTIFYING BEHAVIORS THAT ACHIEVE RESULTS

COMPETENCY	BEHAVIOR
Inspiring Innovative Ideas	1. Enthusiastically supports creativity 2. Facilitates brainstorming exercise 3. Encourages non-traditional thinking
Self-Discipline	1. Is organized 2. Self-motivated 3. Completes tasks on time 4. Results oriented
Inspires and Motivates	1. Helps others achieve recognition 2. Sets standards of performance
Team-Savvy	1. Shares limelight with the team 2. Encourages collaboration
People Skills	1. Communication 2. Positive attitude
Self-Management	1. Integrity 2. Organization 3. Trustworthy 4. Disciplined

- If the prospect does not match all the required areas, list 3-5 areas for growth.
- Create training modules and coaching that target the acquisition of those skills and behaviors.
- Coach leaders on how to amend and change their behaviors, skills and characteristics.
- Find someone who can both train and coach your leaders if you cannot do either.
- For each area of growth, create specific achievements that indicate that they have developed those skills. For example, a measured benchmark of success usually insures a higher probability of achieving a goal. Be sure to include an estimate of time for each benchmark.

When it comes time for your company to grow and for you to fill that leadership vacuum, remember to follow these steps in order to bring your company and its leaders to the next level of success. Developing your leaders internally will help create loyalty among employees as well as increase retention and morale. Your new leaders will already be familiar with the company's procedures and culture. Once given the proper training and guidance, your new leaders will be ready to bring your company through its growth period. ■

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