This is a must-have guide for all professionals interested in implementing actionable workforce analytics and planning.

The Human Capital Metrics Handbook includes over 600 human capital metrics and 100 critical and best-in-class metrics.

It is easy to use and will show you how to review, measure, and analyze:

- Cost, Revenue, and Profit Optimization
- Recruiting and Hiring
- Leadership and Development
- Productivity and Performance
- Compensation and Benefits
- HR and Centre of Excellence
- Mobility and Career Development
- Turnover and Retention
There is no better time to meet the challenges and opportunities in your business than right now. For a complimentary subscription, visit drakeintl.com.
Workforce Analytics — Speaking the Language of Numbers

Our world seems to be in a constant state of uncertainty, no matter where you look. In business, as well, there are always unknowns and questions: Will we make our projections? If not, why not? Are we measuring our mission-critical turnover? Who is leaving, and how much is it costing us? On a day-to-day basis, questions need to be asked and answers given.

If you want to grow strategically and be profitable, you need to ask the right questions, develop the right processes, and measure the outcomes. Just as other divisions in an organization support their daily decisions with quantitative analysis, so too must HR. A company’s workforce is, after all, its competitive advantage. By using workforce analytics, companies can improve decision making about workforce challenges through detailed data analysis. HR leaders must therefore build strong HR analytics capabilities within their departments and think like a business.

Since 1951, Drake International has been assisting organizations solve their business challenges through a wide range of consultative and talent solutions. Drake Synergizer is a highly visual, cloud-based analytics solution that allows you to leverage critical organizational data to provide the very best in predictive and value-driven analytics for your workforce management. It helps HR and organizational leaders effectively calculate the ROI on their human capital investments to make better well-informed HR decisions.

Another way Drake is helping solve business challenges is with our new Former Military Division. According to a survey of 91,000 employers in the UK, over two-thirds of employers had difficulty filling vacancies due to skill shortages. Former military personnel represent a huge, untapped, and often overlooked talent pool for companies experiencing talent shortages. Drake’s Former Military Division is recruiting and placing former military service men and women throughout the UK.

If you want to grow strategically and be profitable, you need to ask the right questions, develop the right processes, and measure the outcomes. Just as other divisions in an organization support their daily decisions with quantitative analysis, so too must HR. A company’s workforce is, after all, its competitive advantage. By using workforce analytics, companies can improve decision making about workforce challenges through detailed data analysis. HR leaders must therefore build strong HR analytics capabilities within their departments and think like a business.
Under the direction of Marc Wicks MBE (former NATO HQ SACT Command Senior Enlisted Leader and Royal Marines Commando, Corps Regimental Sergeant Major) and Mitch Turner (former Royal Marines Commando), the division is working diligently to match organizations that need to hire with the right talent. I encourage you to read more about our service and how we can help you and your organization with your skills and talent shortages on page 14 of this issue.

Even with the people on board with the skills you need, you still face many challenges to effectively manage a workforce and build a high-performance organization. Dr. Bart Sayle and Nick Hawker’s article on this topic starting on page 40 is a very interesting and informative read. They write that a survey conducted by the Institute for Corporate Productivity asked 1,369 respondents about a series of organizational characteristics associated with high performance and found that “generally speaking, high-performance organizations are superior to their low-performance counterparts in seven areas.” Read the article to find out what these areas are.

A key challenge for all organizations is that four generations are in the workforce. An article, Leading the Four Generations at Work, by the American Management Association states: “With the variety of multi-generational employees in today’s workplace, companies can no longer abide by traditional rules of leadership and management. Organizations can achieve real strategic advantage by embracing the diversity among generations to create a flexible work environment that values all people and keeps them productive, regardless of age.”

When it comes to workforce generations, the millennial generation (born after 1980) is the first one born into the digital world, specifically the Internet and social media. Speaker and author Bruce Tulgan writes that his company, Rainmaker Thinking, has been “focused like a laser beam on the second-wave millennials (born 1990–2000) who are now flooding into the workforce.” His article, “The Real Keys to Managing Millennials” on page 28, states that millennials “want leaders who take them seriously and set them up for success.” Tulgan provides leaders with the keys to driving millennials’ engagement, performance, and retention.

And speaking of engagement, “Engaged employees who feel personally connected to an organization, are more productive, are less likely to seek alternative employment, and act as champions for their company,” according to a Dale Carnegie Training white paper. “Disengaged employees are 2.5 times more likely than engaged employees to change jobs for as little as a 5% pay increase.” Why is one person invested in their work and another less engaged? Read about all the variables in this informative article on page 44.

As the world of work becomes increasingly global, virtual teams are now a large part of the workforce landscape. However, managers of virtual teams can be plagued by multiple issues — technical, time zones, communication styles, and more. On page 24, the Corporate Education Group shares its “Top 6 Best Practices for Managing Virtual Teams” that project managers can start implementing.

I will close on the subject of high-performance organizations that I spoke about earlier. At the end of the day, whether it is millennials, virtual teams, or anyone else in your workforce, a high-performance organization has the right people on board. Period. It is only fitting then that our “Focus On” section is all about “Getting the Right People by Laying the Groundwork.” This in-depth hiring primer is a beneficial read for managers and hiring staff in small, medium, and large organizations. It covers all the important steps you need to think about as you begin and continue your hiring journey.

High-performance organizations are the role models of the organizational world. They hire the best, they motivate, and they work hard to ensure they engage to retain and reduce turnover. HR leaders in these organizations recognize the critical impact workforce analytics has in their talent decisions by measuring everything they do. With workforce analytics, they speak the language of numbers.
Ideas to Get the Most from Your People

In spite of amazing technological advances, the work of an organization is accomplished by people. People interface with the customer, make the product, deliver the service, plan and coordinate how work gets done, improve processes and systems, ensure quality standards, and return a profit. Technology has provided us with better tools and made us far more efficient and productive; but it is still people who do the work of an organization and are ultimately responsible for its success.

The business world recognizes the importance of human resources. Most companies claim, somewhere in their mission statements and values, that their employees are important. And yet most companies fail to use the intelligence and creative talents of their people. In practice, managers view their job as controlling rather than empowering their workers. They view them as “costs” or “tools” rather than capable, responsible human beings. As a result, in many companies, large and small, people are vastly underused.

A number of years ago, I sat in the cafeteria of a successful company and talked informally with an employee I’ll call Washington, a person with a good work ethic and high standards of personal integrity. I wanted to gain insight into the work climate and attitudes of people doing the core work of the organization, so I asked, “How productive is the average employee? To what extent do they work at their capability on an average day?”

He replied that most people put out somewhere between 50 and 60% effort. I was astounded. “So that means that, if people really cared and were truly committed, they could almost double their average daily production?”

“Yes,” he replied. “Most employees do as little as possible. If a manager or visitor is nearby on the floor, they work harder, but most of them don’t really care about the job they are doing.”

Research supports Washington’s observations. Yankelovich and Immerwahr reported in the Public Agenda Report on Restoring America’s Competitive Vitality that fewer than one in four employees (23%) say they work at their full potential. Forty-four percent report that they do the minimum possible and only work hard enough to keep their jobs. And three in four say they could be significantly more effective in their jobs.

Most of us don’t need hard data to understand that many companies don’t get the most from their people. We observe it regularly. Are the people you manage/supervise committed to give their best?

Do you know of people who have “retired in place” and do the minimum possible rather than give their best day’s work? Have you ever witnessed people who even undermine the performance of the organization through their indifference, negativism, or even wilful acts of sabotage?

People want to succeed. The vast majority want to feel good about themselves and their work. They want to make a difference to the company and to the lives of their customers. And they have enormous capacity to do so when fully engaged and committed to their work.

The challenge of leadership is to create a culture in which everyone cares and contributes to the business, rather than just show up or do the minimum required. We need to find ways to allow people to use their intelligence and creativity to make decisions, solve problems, and contribute to the overall success of the business. Can you imagine what would happen if every employee worked at their full potential? Every business leader should be asking how to motivate their people to do their best because they want to rather than because they have to.

There are no quick fixes or simple formulas for creating a culture that unleashes the capability of people. It sometimes requires intervention in a number of dimensions of organizational life — challenging management philosophy and practices, communicating and aligning everyone to the business
strategy, improving processes and systems, providing training in social and business skills, and so on.

Seven recommendations

1. **Share information generously:** Employees can’t be fully engaged in their work if they’re in the dark or lack vital information. I have a checklist of around 20 questions that I believe every employee should understand to feel like partners in the business. These have to do with the strategy and direction of the company, competitive landscape, feedback from customers, their personal or department performance, what is happening in other parts of the company. The more people know, the more valued and respected they feel and the better they’re going to perform.

2. **Address performance problems directly:** Nothing demoralizes a staff more than a co-worker who doesn’t care or do their share of the work. Such people drag down everyone around them. It is critical that managers learn to confront these problems directly and hold people accountable. Too often we ignore and let these problems fester and become toxic to the entire department. I’ve seen amazing turnarounds in a department or team when their managers developed the mindset and skills to be “firm but fair” in their treatment of employees.

3. **Empower employees by encouraging them to solve problems:** Problems should be resolved at the lowest level possible in the organization. Leaders must provide the information, training, and resources so this can happen. But solving problems when and where they occur engages people and creates a culture in which people know they make a difference.

4. **Provide training and development:** The best companies invest time and money in training their employees, knowing that the investment will be returned many times over in not only a more capable but also more loyal workforce. This training not only is technical but also includes business and social skills.

5. **Share responsibility widely:** There are many functions traditionally done by managers that staff/team members can take on, or at least be involved in, including setting goals, planning and scheduling, communicating with other departments, trouble-shooting problems, tracking performance. This doesn’t mean that leaders give up control of these areas. They remain involved by setting boundaries, providing training, monitoring how things are going, and so on. But the more variety and responsibility people have in their jobs, the happier they are.

6. **Listen:** This is one of the most important skills leaders can develop. Employees have opinions and feelings which need to be expressed and heard in a safe relationship. If they can’t express their negative opinions and feelings, they’ll act them out in subtle, destructive ways. Listening takes time, but it also builds trust and ensures that you’re dealing with real issues and getting to the root of problems.

7. **Think “we”:** The best leaders involve people. It’s not “I have a problem,” but “We have a problem.” Not “What can I do?” but “What can we do?” Not “My success” but “Our success.” They create a sense of shared ownership in everything that’s going on. This doesn’t mean that every decision is made by consensus. But it does mean that people will perform better when they are involved in aspects of the business that affect them.

Most organizational resources depreciate in value over time. Technology and software aren’t worth as much in a year as when first purchased. But employees are different. They have the potential to add greater value to the company the longer they’re employed. And one of the most important roles of leaders is to create a climate in which their employees thrive. Implementing these seven ideas will help you create that climate in your organization.

Place your finger on the pulse of employee engagement in your organization with a Drake Employee Engagement Survey. Find out what is causing turnover; is driving morale; and if the culture is still on track. It’s an easy way to get quantitative data on employee attitudes that drive performance and prevent turnover before it happens.

To learn more, visit us online at drakeintl.com or contact the Talent Management Solutions Team at:

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solutions@drakeintl.co.uk
Laying the groundwork is critical if you want to hire the right people, and hiring new employees needs to be rooted in a larger staffing plan that is connected to your organization’s strategic plan. For a vacant position, this is a good time to assess if the job still helps your organization serve its purpose and achieve its mission.

Ask these key questions when developing your overall staffing plan:

- What are the critical positions or roles that need to be filled now, and in the future? What are the tasks our organization needs done?
- What is our organization’s culture? What characteristics should we look for in potential new staff to assess cultural fit?
- What positions requiring little or no experience would be good to attract young and/or inexperienced candidates to our organization?
- Is it possible to fill positions through an assignment or secondment from another organization?
- Are the roles suitable for permanent, temporary, full-time, part-time, or some other form of employee?

Up-to-date and clear policies on recruitment, workplace health and safety, and training and development clarify what management and employees expect of each other and are also a great source of information for a new employee.

Hiring new employees needs to be rooted in a larger staffing plan that is connected to your organization’s strategic plan.
Conduct a job analysis

What if your organization does not have job descriptions, or your job descriptions are out of date? Start with a job analysis. Systematically collect information to help you fully understand and describe the duties and responsibilities of a position as well as the knowledge, skills, and abilities required to do the job. You want a complete picture of the position, what is actually done and how, so that a job description can be prepared.

The types of information are specific to each organization; however, you generally need:

- summary of duties
- details of most common duties
- supervisory responsibilities
- educational requirements
- special qualifications
- experience
- equipment/tools used
- frequency of supervision
- others the employee must be in contact with
- authority for decision making
- responsibility for records/reports/files
- working conditions
- physical demands of the job
- mental demands of the job

Create a job description

A job description is a basic and important HR management tool that can increase individual and organizational effectiveness. For employees, a good job description helps them understand their duties and responsibilities and how their position contributes to the mission, goals, and objectives of the organization.

For the organization, good job descriptions ensure that the work carried out by staff is aligned with its mission. They also help management clearly identify the most appropriate employee for new duties as well as realigning workloads.

Job descriptions are the basis of most other HR management practices — selection, training, and performance management. They are also used in the screening process as a guide in preparing interview questions and hiring criteria.

For employees already on board, job descriptions can identify areas where they do not adequately meet the qualifications of the position and therefore need training.

In matters of compensation, job descriptions help develop a consistent salary structure, monitor performance, and help an organization defend its decision if an employee is terminated for poor performance.

Develop selection criteria for the position

Once you have established the vacancy, defined the position through a job analysis, and prepared the job description, you can now identify how you will select candidates. Start by developing the selection criteria for the position to screen resumes and select the best person for the job. Make sure your criteria are clear and measurable to help avoid bias so that interviewers can objectively evaluate a candidate’s suitability for the job. Consider these:

- knowledge, skills, qualifications, and experience essential for a new employee to be able to perform the duties of the position
- attributes the new employee must have to ensure they fit the culture of your organization
- if the criteria are specific, measurable, and job-related
- if the criteria are in compliance with country human rights legislation

Recruit efficiently

Assess where you are most likely to find your ideal candidate. Be innovative and prepared to consider several methods to attract the best person for the job. Consider the time frames to fill the positions and the size of the candidate pool you need.

For a general unspecialized position, you will have a higher probability of finding a suitable candidate from a smaller pool, so recruit in a way that keeps the number of applications reasonable.

For a very senior or highly skilled position, you will likely need to reach out to the widest possible pool to get the best candidate.

Develop the job posting

Think of the job posting as an advertisement. You want to attract the right type of person to your organization and provide an accurate and honest view of the position. The job posting piques people’s interest in...
the role, while encouraging them to self-assess whether they have the required qualifications and are the right fit for the position.

A job posting has three key sections:

1. **Information about the organization:** This helps the candidate understand the mission of your organization, the culture, and what it’s like to work there. It should include:
   - a brief description of the organization
   - why your organization is a good place to work
   - what it’s like to work there (e.g., casual, flexible, team environment, etc.)
   - opportunities for development and career progression

2. **Information about the role:** This gives a sense of what the role entails and provides enough information about the minimum qualifications to allow readers to self-assess whether they meet the position requirements and therefore minimize the number of unsuitable applications.

3. **Information about the application process:** This section advises candidates:
   - where to get more information (typically your website)
   - how to apply (e.g., email, mail, online) and contact details
   - whether special requirements exist (e.g., language testing or criminal record check)
   - the application deadline
   - a statement that you appreciate all applications but will contact only those candidates selected for an interview

Attract candidates

When thinking about features of the job or your organization that will attract candidates, consider:

- the career path for this position — opportunities to grow and develop new skills
- the culture of your workplace (e.g., a fun atmosphere, opportunity to work with experts, flexible work, social events), information you can gather by asking current employees what they most enjoy about working for your organization

While you want to paint an attractive picture of your organization and the position, overselling can lead to problems, including candidates not accepting an offer or, worse, leaving after only a few months in the position. Be sure to be realistic in your description.

Most candidates will search for positions electronically on your website or online job boards. To strengthen the candidate response, ensure your job posting considers the following:

- Pay careful attention to the job title: This is the first thing job seekers will see — and often the only thing unless they are interested enough to click through for further information. Use familiar job titles and ensure they give a sense of what the job entails (e.g., “Manager of Financial Services” instead of just “Manager”)
- Use key words: Job boards and candidates will use key words to pull your position up in a search, so describe the position with words and phrases commonly associated with this type of role
- Write for the web: When viewing job postings online, readers typically skim rather than review each word. Make the most important points stand out by highlighting, using headings for each section (e.g., About the Organization, About the Job, How to Apply), and use bulleted lists

Select and hire

The selection process for all positions usually include interviewing those on the shortlist followed by a reference check. Techniques used during the interview phase to help selection include work samples, written tests, in-basket exercises (to test your candidates’ skills in action), oral presentation, and behavioural, personality, or aptitude tests. After making a conditional offer, you may want a criminal record check and driver’s record check. Note that written consent is required before requesting records checks.

Engaging other people in a selection process can be very helpful. When you invite panel members to participate, let them know how much time it will take and what their role will be. Their contribution can include:

- helping to develop selection criteria
- screening resumés
- preparing interview questions
- participating in interviews
- assessing each candidate against the selection criteria
- providing input about the final selection

**Good Practice:**

A good recruitment plan includes a mix of recruitment strategies, such as: internal recruitment; employee referrals; advertisements; Internet recruiting; internships/field placements/co-op placements; recruitment agencies/executive search firms; unsolicited resumés; career fairs and outreach programs; networking and liaison.
Good Practice:

When working with a selection panel:
- Give panel members copies of the candidates’ resumés and any other information they provided.
- Prepare for interviews by clarifying which panel member will ask each question.
- Share all materials that relate to the hiring process (e.g., announcement and job description, selection criteria, template for assessing candidates).

Prepare for the interviews

Prepare a list of questions to ask during the interview. Use a variety of approaches to get different kinds of information, tailoring questions to open up a topic for conversation or to confirm information.

When you call job applicants on the shortlist to set up an interview, tell them the salary range for the position if this was not in the job posting. Then ask them if they would like to proceed to an interview given the salary you have to offer. This way you avoid interviewing people who later refuse a job offer on the basis of salary.

Conduct the interviews

Choose an appropriate environment for the interviews and ensure you will not be interrupted. If you are interviewing internal candidates, consider doing it off-site.

Think of the interview as a business conversation. Make sure you use the same interview format and setting for every candidate and that interview appointments are the same length.

Welcome the candidate and give them an overview of the interview process. Ask your questions; then sit back and listen.

Ideally, you should talk no more than 20% of the time. Use follow-up questions to have the candidate expand on their answers. Comment on what the candidate says to let them know you are interested and to encourage discussion. Consider using an interview rating guide to evaluate the answers given by each person that you interview.

Conclude the interview by thanking the candidate and explaining the next steps. Ask for their permission to contact references.

Check references of final candidates

Checking references carefully and thoroughly is one way to avoid hiring the wrong person. Talking to people will allow you to probe issues deeply enough to get a fuller sense of the candidate’s values, nature, approach to work, and how they interact with others. Telephone interviews are the best way to get more depth about the candidate’s character and background.

Reference checks are a last opportunity to verify information the candidate has provided, validate their personal suitability, and explore any areas of concern. Talk to references before you make an offer. Let the candidate know you will be doing this. Be sure to find out if there is anyone the candidate would prefer you not speak to (e.g., current boss or current colleagues).

Ask for insights into the candidate’s character, examples of good work they have done, and areas that need development. Keep the conversation casual but professional, and you are likely to get more information. Record the reference’s responses. Remember that any notes you take when talking to a reference must comply with human rights legislation. Potential candidates may have the right to see what references have said about them, so keep accurate notes.

At the beginning of your conversation, explain to the reference the importance of the position you are hiring for and tell them you appreciate their honesty. At the end, thank them for their time and help.

Make your decision and review it

Rate final candidates against each other to identify the best one based on skills, worker characteristics, and organizational fit. Review all your notes and write up your decision. It is important to:
- keep all of your recruitment and selection materials on file for at least two years
- make sure your decision is non-discriminatory, complies with applicable laws and your hiring policies, and is based on sound judgment
- discuss the decision with colleagues or others who participated in the interviews and/or other stages of the hiring process

Make the offer

Call the candidate to make an offer. Inform all other final candidates by phone of the outcome of the recruitment process; offer to give them constructive feedback on the interview.

Make sure to include a termination clause in the employment agreement. This creates contractual (agreed upon) terms that would otherwise be implied by law, such as the amount of reasonable notice, the employee’s entitlement to payment of benefits during the notice period, and the definition of “compensation” provided in lieu of notice (e.g., how variable pay will be addressed, such as bonuses and incentive pay). Depending on the country and its laws, a termination clause can protect the employer from liabilities, which could increase termination costs significantly. It also provides certainty to employees and can be referred to at a later date in the event of a dispute.

Onboard the new employee

Orientation, or onboarding, introduces new employees to the organization and their role. An effective orientation makes the employee feel comfortable, helping them to learn about their role and the organization’s policies, procedures, culture and values.
By taking the time to properly orient new hires, you increase that employee’s chances of success and retention, which saves the organization time and money in recruitment in the long run. These are some helpful orientation steps:

- Make introductions (e.g., new colleagues, a mentor or orientation buddy, managers)
- Give a tour of the workspace and other offices and facilities, including where to safely put belongings if not in their office; where to hang coat, store lunch; location of the washrooms; location of the photocopier, supplies, etc.
- Provide an organizational overview, including an organizational chart if available
- Review new employee’s job duties and responsibilities, including job description and expected outcomes; work to be accomplished in the first days/weeks; relevant reports and information needed for the job; how the job relates to other roles in the organization
- Review work expectations and schedule, including start and finish times, lunch time and breaks; probationary period; appropriate safety procedures
- Review HR and administration procedures, including necessary paperwork for pay and benefits; employee policies and procedures manual; travel and reimbursement processes; absences, leave, vacation; telephone and email protocol, Internet use policy
- Review health, fire, and safety procedures
- Review the performance management system, learning and development plans
- Explain the internal communication processes, including staff meetings

Moving beyond orientation basics

Many organizations have the nuts and bolts of a new employee orientation process in place, meaning the information is already available. But beyond the what, it is just as important to consider how to share this information, when to schedule addressing the different elements, and who needs to be involved to make for an engaging orientation process.

You want to create a thorough and, more importantly, effective new employee orientation process. If a process is already in place, review it based on this information:

1. Design a process, not an event: The orientation process will unfold over time, not just in one day. It supports the intense learning curve and lets new employees know there is ongoing support for their successful integration into the organization.

When planning the process, consider how and when you will schedule the activities and information sharing with the new employee, and pace it according to what information is vital and what will be more useful and relevant at a later date.

2. Make a good first impression: For many new employees, their first-day experience will be carried with them throughout their involvement with the organization. Consider the experience from the employee’s perspective, and try to make it fun, interesting, and as simple as possible. By engendering positive emotions from the beginning, you inspire the new employee to do great work and add value to your organization.

Often the best way for a new employee to learn about a new workplace is to meet and talk with the people who work there. Meetings with colleagues, volunteers, board members, and even clients can tell a new employee a lot about the organization.

3. Help new employees understand and build their network: To become a fully-functioning member of the team, employees need to know whom to call to get something done, understand who reports to whom, etc. For some new hires, an organizational chart with names, titles, and relationships is very helpful. A simple bulletin board with staff pictures, names, and positions may suffice.

4. Go beyond the HR basics to share the workplace culture and informal practices: An orientation process that covers only policies and procedures tells just a small part of the organization’s story. Orientation is supposed to answer such questions as: What is this organization really all about? What is it like to work here? How are things organized, and where do I fit in?

5. Make information accessible: Consider posting new employee orientation schedules, materials, benefits forms, and a FAQ about the organization on an intranet that new hires can access from a link in a welcome email before their first day on the job. Once they’ve settled into their new job, send a reminder email that certain materials are available online and encourage them to frequently visit the intranet for information.

6. Assign allies, buddies, and mentors from the start: Consider assigning a welcome mentor to each new hire so they can immediately get a feel for the personality of the organization and know who they can go to for information or guidance for those first weeks on the job.

You can also give each new employee a buddy co-worker to interact with them on a more informal basis, filling them in on company norms and values, all the unwritten expectations that are part of the culture, as well as facilitating introductions around the workplace.

People are the main resource that organizations have for delivering services. When organizations put sound HR practices in place, they are more likely to discover that employees feel satisfied and safe and will work to their full potential. And that means they are more likely to stay put.

Excerpt of the article, “Getting the Right People” reprint-ed with the permission of Community Foundations of Canada © hrcouncil.ca, all rights reserved.
Simply put:

The better the fit, the better the hire

87% of all job failures are a result of poor fit between an individual’s personality and the job.

Leadership and operating styles

Reasoning skills

Conflict-handling styles

Personality traits

Role within a team

Occupational preferences

Behavioural competencies

Drake’s P3 is a powerful psychometric assessment tool that clarifies personality profiles and individual capabilities.

Find out how you can use P3 to attract and hire the most talented individuals—people who are the right fit for your organization, not just the job.
For any organisation, hiring the right people with the right skills for the right position is key to performance and operational success. However, many countries worldwide face a chronic shortage of skilled workers.

The UK Commission on Employment and Skills surveyed 91,000 employers in the UK in 2015. The report catalogues chronic shortages of skilled workers and found that “over two-thirds of employers that had difficulty filling their vacancies solely as a result of skill shortages had experienced a direct financial impact through either loss of business to competitors, increased operating costs, or having to outsource work, or some combination of the three.”

Since 1951, Drake International has been intensely aware of the ever-changing business landscape around the world and the need to constantly innovate to assist companies with their talent requirements and strategies so they can grow their business.

With large numbers of military personnel transitioning to civilian life, Drake recognised a hidden pool of talent that is often overlooked and unused. In December 2015, Drake opened a specialist Former Military Division. Its objective is to help organisations source qualified staff from an untapped pool of talent and address recruitment shortages, while providing former military personnel with career and job opportunities.

Mitch Turner and Marc Wicks MBE, Former Royal Marines Commandos, are the National Recruitment Directors for this division.
“Personnel who leave military service have the skills to translate to virtually any career,” says Turner. “Yet moving to the conventional workforce can be challenging, and the job search preparation work and current marketing processes may be unfamiliar to them. Our Former Military Division is a strong recruitment bridge for transitioning military personnel and for organisations who need to fill positions with skilled people to keep their businesses functioning at the highest level.”

Wicks shared his perspective. “My military experience has provided me with a first-hand understanding of the talent and expertise that our transitioning military can offer organisations. From the most junior rank to the most senior general, they are all team players with diverse skill-sets, resiliency, adaptability, and a dedication to achieving the mission, whether at a tactical, operational, or strategic level. With a national skills shortage, recruitment officers need to focus on this important untapped talent pool.”

I didn’t know military personnel could do that job!

For most recruiters, former military personnel may not be top of mind when it comes to hiring. They often don’t understand how to interpret what skills a former military person actually has as they pertain to regular civilian conventions.

They are not accustomed to TLAs (three-letter abbreviations) or military job roles and titles. CVs may be placed at the bottom of the pile of applicants.

Table 1 shows the generic set-up of many military organisations, a type of branch structure. (Letter prefixes may vary depending on service or joint structure.) Although not exhaustive in detail, the branch structures do not differ from many of the larger civilian organisation set-ups. They all have departments responsible for personnel, operations, logistics, and so on. Most service personnel have valuable transferable skills that many companies are looking for and, in conjunction with the attributes and personal values mentioned, an ethos that is sometimes difficult to find or develop.

An impressive, untapped talent pool

Over the last 12 months in the UK alone, almost 16,000 skilled and experienced men and women have left service. This represents a huge, untapped talent pool for companies experiencing talent shortages and needing to hire.

Service leavers’ expertise is diverse, honed in many testing conditions and relevant to many prevalent industries, sectors, and businesses. These areas of expertise include engineering, logistics, cyber, administration, health and safety, catering, general management, security, project management, and policing. The people you may require are out there and currently looking for work.

No matter what their rank, they all aspire to be team players, who understand their personal role, where and how they contribute to the mission, and what success looks like.

Military higher-learning bursaries a real benefit for employers

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) Enhanced Learning Credits Scheme (ELC) promotes lifelong learning among members of the UK Armed Forces. The scheme provides financial support in the form of a single up-front payment in each of a maximum of three separate financial years. The degree of financial support depends on time served. Military personnel can tap into this bursary for up to five years after leaving service, an advantage for hiring companies.

The ELC funding is available only for pursuit of higher-level learning, courses that result in a nationally recognised qualification at Level Three or above on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) (England, Northern Ireland, and Wales), a Level Six or above on the Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF), or, if pursued overseas, an approved international equivalent qualification with an approved learning provider.

Table 1. Generic military organisation.

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<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>Responsible for personnel matters, including manning, discipline, welfare, and personnel services</td>
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<td>G2</td>
<td>Responsible for intelligence and security</td>
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<td>G3</td>
<td>Responsible for operations, including staff duties, exercise planning, training, operational requirements, combat development, and tactical doctrine</td>
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<td>Training</td>
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<td>G8</td>
<td>Resource management (finance and contracts)</td>
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<td>G9</td>
<td>CIMIC (civil affairs and co-operation with other agencies)</td>
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Table 1. Generic military organisation.
In summary, service leaver job placements, via Civilian Work Attachments, are an excellent way to bring military service personnel into your organisation for an assessment period at no cost.

Mission Command — a leadership edge

The military’s style of command is Mission Command, which, in the simplest terms, means that the commander provides authoritative direction using mission orders. It combines centralised intent with decentralised execution. It promotes freedom, speed of action, and initiative, within defined constraints. Subordinates are told what effect they are to achieve and the reason why it needs to be achieved. They then decide, within their delegated freedom of action, how best to achieve their missions.

If they need advice, they’ll ask, but otherwise, they will get on with the job until it is complete. Crucially, they will communicate, opening the door for constructive criticism, advice, and mid-course guidance. They will not be deterred if the plan requires reconfiguration to succeed.

As all organisations know, having strong leaders on board who can determine priorities and team players who will get the job done is essential to productivity and profitability. Those leaving military service have the experience and capabilities to lead and be team players — an asset to any organisation.

For Organisations/ Potential Employers

Drake’s Former Military Division will introduce you to a pool of former military personnel, who will work hard, remain loyal, be part of your team, and embrace your business. Our team provides a unique blend of former military personnel with experienced civilian recruitment professionals, enabling us to select and match candidates to specific requirements.

To assist in the selection process, candidates are encouraged to complete a Drake P3 science-based behavioural and personality profile. The report lets employers understand personal strengths, leadership and decision-making style, motivational needs, and stress levels — insights not usually learned through the application and interview process.

We recruit and place former military candidates throughout the UK for temporary, permanent, and consultancy opportunities.

Be part of the network of companies hiring former military personnel and help recognise their service to our country.

For Former Military Personnel

As a global recruitment company with a specialist Former Military Division, our goal is to endeavour to match former military personnel with the right opportunity in the UK.

Our Drake P3 evaluations provide you with important information to help you better understand your personality and motivational needs, occupational preferences, behavioural traits, and leadership style. This information is an asset through your search process.

Over the last 12 months in the UK alone, almost 16,000 skilled and experienced men and women have left service. This represents a huge, untapped talent pool for companies experiencing talent shortages and needing to hire.

There are specific entitlement requirements to claim ELC for those still serving and for service leavers, such as contributing 20% of the cost. More information can be found at www.enhancedlearningcredits.com/

It would be beneficial for recruiters to discuss these higher learning bursaries with any former military staff they interview as they may help offset an employer’s professional development training costs.

Trial job placements — a no-cost employer benefit

Those in the process of leaving the military are also able to complete work experience placements, known as Civilian Work Attachments or Trial Attachments, while still serving and therefore still being paid by the military. These can last from one day to several weeks, depending on the potential employer’s preferences. It enables the employer to find out about the benefits of employing ex-military personnel prior to making any commitments.

Such placements offer employers these significant benefits:

- The opportunity to assess ex-forces personnel as potential employees and to shortlist the most qualified individuals
- A cost- and risk-free trial hiring option — no salary costs and no obligation to offer future employment.

As all organisations know, having strong leaders on board who can determine priorities and team players who will get the job done is essential to productivity and profitability. Those leaving military service have the experience and capabilities to lead and be team players — an asset to any organisation.

Connect with us and a pool of untapped talent.

Contact either of our UK National Recruitment Directors, Former Military Division:

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Former NATO HQ SACT Command Senior Enlisted Leader and Royal Marines Commando, Corps Regimental Sergeant Major
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In its Global Human Capital Trends 2016 report, Deloitte remarked: “As technology makes data-driven HR decision-making a possibility, 77 percent of executives now rate people analytics as a key priority.” Interest in workforce analytics is accelerating rapidly as more companies acknowledge the vital importance of human talent and its link to productivity, profitability, and top organizational performance.

Research has shown that top-performing organizations are three times more likely to be sophisticated users of analytics in human capital management than lower-performing organizations. According to Forbes, more than 60% of companies are investing in Big Data and analytics tools to help advance the data-driven culture within their HR departments.

Workforce analytics is real-time data and not guesswork. With a data-driven view of the organization and its workforce, decision makers no longer have to rely on gut-feel or intuition.

More than 60% of companies are investing in Big Data and analytics tools to help advance the data-driven culture within their HR departments.

More and more businesses recognize the need for data in all aspects of HR. Dr. Jac Fitz-enz emphasizes the five most important things to measure: mission-critical turnover — who is leaving and what it is costing; the cost of staff to generate the organization’s revenue, learning and development costs; engagement and how it and other performance indicators are tied to productivity; and employees’ view of leadership.

Workforce analytics helps leaders understand the root cause of issues and what needs to be addressed: for example, why overtime is happening and how it can be stopped; where the talent gaps are; what particular skills and capabilities the organization needs to get the work done; what is causing absenteeism; and what percentage of the workforce has a defined career path. All of this can be directly informed by people analytics.

By applying workforce analytics, HR can generate the intelligence the business needs to manage the workforce to support the organization’s strategic goals.

HR has to be a strategic asset. It must provide management with insightful evidence to improve business performance. By applying workforce analytics, HR can generate the intelligence the business needs to manage the workforce to support the organization’s strategic goals.

A McKinsey study found that organizations that adopt data analytics generate 5 to 6% higher productivity and profitability. Yet, compared to such functions as finance and supply-chain management, organizations have been slower to apply the same rigor to workforce analytics as a critical asset and embedding it into the fabric of the company.

With a defined human capital strategy and advanced metrics to measure success, organizations can build a lean and highly productive workforce that is prepared to quickly outperform competitors. In the Society of Human Resource Management’s (SHRM) June 2016 report on the Use of Workforce Analytics for Competitive Advantage, Mark Schmit, PhD, SHRM-SCP, executive director of the SHRM Foundation commented, “Workforce analytics are transforming human capital strategy. That’s why it’s more important than ever for employers to understand how analytics and data will drive recruiting and hiring decisions.”

HR and other key divisions have the same corporate strategy — achieving a competitive advantage for the organization. Workforce analytics is a key decision-support mechanism leading to competitive advantage. Human judgment will always come into play. However, the decision-making process will be enhanced and sped up through the application of analytics to help ensure the right decisions are made. It enables a company to create new ways to compete based on how they organize and deploy their workforce.

Drake Synergizer Workforce Analytics leverages critical data within your company to provide the very best in predictive and value-driven analytics for your workforce management. Integrate data from all corners of your business in a user-friendly, easy-to-understand way. To learn more on how it can help you effectively calculate the ROI on your human capital investments and connect the critical data points throughout your company, contact the Drake Management Solutions Team.

Australia: 613 9245 0245
hrgsolutions@au.drakeintl.com

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Hong Kong: 852 2848 9288
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New Zealand: 0800 840 940
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HAVE DATA BUT LACK INSIGHTS?

BREAK THROUGH THE DATA AND GAIN POWERFUL INSIGHTS. DEVELOP ACTIONABLE OBJECTIVES THAT POSITIVELY IMPACT YOUR ORGANIZATION’S BOTTOM-LINE.

More than 60% of companies are now investing in Big Data* and analytics tools to help advance the data-driven culture within their Human Resource departments. Many organizations collect data about their workforce productivity and performance, but few know how to interpret and use that data to drive positive change and improve bottom-line results. Why not leverage our experience and the ability to draw from 650 Human Resource metrics to advance efficiencies across your business?

IT HAS BEEN PROVEN THAT ORGANIZATIONS THAT ADOPT DATA ANALYTICS GENERATE 5–6% HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY AND PROFITABILITY**.

HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THE FOLLOWING BOTTOM-LINE PREDICTORS?

- What is the ROI that our Human Resource division generates each year?
- Can we model our workforce to optimize cost, profit, and productivity?
- What are the predictive indicators of turnover, and which of our employees are at risk?
- From where do we derive our best talent, and which managers are true leaders?
- What is driving high employee turnover, and how much is it costing our business?
- How can we reduce absenteeism and balance permanent versus contract staff?
- What percentage of the workforce has a defined career path?

*Source: Forbes.com; ** Source: McKinsey

OVER 650 HUMAN RESOURCE METRICS, CREATING EFFICIENCIES ACROSS YOUR BUSINESS.
DATA-DRIVEN FORMULAS TO IMPROVE YOUR PROFITABILITY.

WITH A DEFINED HUMAN CAPITAL STRATEGY AND ADVANCED METRICS TO MEASURE SUCCESS, ORGANIZATIONS ARE ABLE TO BUILD A LEAN AND HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE WORKFORCE AND BE PREPARED TO QUICKLY OUTPERFORM COMPETITORS WHEN OPPORTUNITIES SURFACE.

CREATING A COMPELLING CASE FOR ANALYTICS BY DEMONSTRATING ROI CAN HELP YOU INFLUENCE KEY DECISION MAKERS TO CREATE THE NECESSARY BUDGET FOR THE RIGHT PEOPLE STRATEGIES.

DRAKE DASHBOARDS

People interpret graphics faster than numbers. Thanks to our patented interactive intelligence interface, your dashboard graphics will be dynamic, engaging, and, above all, easy to understand.

- DRAG-AND-DROP INTERFACE
- DATA BLENDING
- COMPLETE CUSTOMIZATION
- UNLIMITED DRILL DOWNS

DRAKE SYNERGIZER

Synergizer leverages critical data within your company to provide the very best in predictive and value-driven analytics for your workforce management. Integrate data from all corners of your business, including finance, business intelligence, human resources, and more, in a user-friendly, easy-to-understand way.

- YOUR DATA SECURITY
- FLEXIBLE DATA DRILL DOWN
- HUMAN CAPITAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
- TRUE PREDICTIVE CAPABILITIES
- ANALYTICS CONSULTING
- INTUITIVE SCENARIO MODELLING
Many firms use exit interviews to find out why employees are leaving their jobs. Unfortunately, asking an employee on their last day why they are leaving doesn’t provide useful information in time to prevent the turnover. A superior approach, which I’ve been recommending for over 20 years, is a stay interview, or pre-exit interview because it occurs before any hint that an employee is about to exit the firm. A stay interview helps you understand reasons why employees stay, so that those important factors can be reinforced.

Stay Interviews
An Essential Tool for Winning the War to Keep Your Employees

A stay interview is a periodic one-on-one, structured retention interview between a manager and a highly valued, at-risk-of-leaving employee that identifies and then reinforces the factors that drive an employee to stay. It also identifies and minimizes any triggers that might cause them to consider quitting.
BENEFITS OF WHY-DO-YOU-STAY INTERVIEWS

Some reasons why stay interviews have proven to be an effective retention tool over the years include:

- **They stimulate the employee:** Most employees are excited that the organization is concerned about their future and their manager took the time to consult with them.

- **They are personalized:** Unlike engagement surveys and many other retention tools that focus on what excites a large number of employees, this approach is customized to a single identifiable individual and their wants.

- **They are limited to key employees:** By having a stay discussion exclusively with your key employees who are at risk of leaving, you focus the manager’s effort and minimize the overall time that the manager must devote to retention.

- **They include actions:** Unlike exit interviews, which only identify problems, stay interviews encourage the parties to identify actions that can improve the employee experience and help eliminate any major frustrators or turnover triggers.

- **Employee emotions are lower:** The discussion occurs before the employee has made the decision to consider leaving. As a result, the emotions of the employee (and perhaps the manager) are lower.

- **The manager has less time pressure:** Because the employee is not actively interviewing for a job, there is less time pressure on the manager to immediately solve the identified retention issues.

- **They focus on the positive:** Most of the interview is focused on identifying and then reinforcing the positive factors that the employee enjoys about their job. Although some negative factors may be covered, they are not the primary focus of the interview.

- **They don’t require training:** Most managers can successfully conduct stay interviews without any formal training. A simple how-to tool kit is generally all a manager needs to successfully conduct these interviews.


◆ **They are inexpensive:** These informal interviews don’t require a budget. In most cases, an hour of a manager and an employee’s time are the only major costs.


◆ **Twenty stay interview questions to consider**

There is no standard set of questions that must be used in stay interviews. However, you want to limit the number so that you finish the interview within one hour. I have broken the type of questions into four categories.

A) **Introductory questions**

1) **Approaching the employee:**
I want you to know that both the firm and I appreciate your commitment and the great work you’ve been doing. If you have a few minutes, I would like to have an informal conversation with you to ensure that we fully understand the factors that make you loyal and keep you here and any possible actions we can take to bolster your job experience and keep you happy.

2) **Starting the interview:**
Thanks for taking the time to have this discussion. As you are a key employee, I want to informally ask some simple questions that can help me understand the factors that cause you to enjoy and stay in your current role. During the interview, I will ask a series of questions to identify any factor that could possibly frustrate you to the point where you might even begin to consider other job opportunities.

B) **Identifying what makes the employee want to stay**

3) **Positive stay factors:**
Tell me specifically what factors cause you to enjoy your current job and work situation — including people, job, rewards, job content, co-workers, and management — and contribute to your staying at our firm as long as you have. Help us identify the factors that make you more passionate, committed, and loyal to your team and the firm.

4) **Reasons you give to others:**
If you have ever been asked by a close friend or have been contacted by an external recruiter, can you tell me what reasons you gave them for wanting to stay at our firm?

5) **“Best work of your life” factors:**
Do you feel that you are currently doing the best work of your life? Can you list for me the factors that could contribute to you doing the best work for your life? (Note: This is the No. 1 key retention factor for top performers.)

6) **“Job impact” factors:**
Do you feel that your work makes a difference in the company and that externally it has a noticeable impact on customers and the world? Do you also feel that your co-workers think that you make a difference? (Note: This is the No. 2 key retention factor for top performers.)

7) **Fully used factors:**
Do you feel fully utilized in your current role? If so, can you identify the factors that make you feel this way? Are there other things we can do to more fully take advantage of your talents and interests?

8) **Are you listened to and valued:**
Do your colleagues and teammates listen to you, and do they value your ideas, inputs, and decisions? How can that area be improved?

C) **Identifying positive actions that might further increase the employee’s loyalty and commitment**

9) **Better managed:**
If you managed yourself, what would you do differently (to manage you), that I, as your current manager, don’t currently do?

10) **More positive elements and fewer less desirable ones:**
Can you make a list of the elements or motivation factors in your current role that you like best and that you would like more of? What factors would you miss most if you transferred to a completely different job?
What things do you really miss from your last job at the firm? Can you also make a list of the less desirable elements or frustrators in your current role that you would like to do less of? Do any frustration factors keep you up at night, enter your mind while driving to work, or cause you to dread having to come to work at all?

1) Dream job: If you were given the opportunity to redesign your current role, what key factors would you include in your dream job?

12) Where would you like to be: Can you help us understand your career progression expectations and where you would like to be in the organization two years from now?

13) Challenge factors: Can you list the most challenging but exciting aspects of your current job situation? Are there actions we can take to further challenge you?

14) Recognition: Can you highlight any recent recognition and acknowledgment you received that increased your commitment and loyalty? Are there actions we can take to further recognize you?

15) Exposure: Can you highlight any recent exposure to executives and decision makers you have experienced? Are there ways we can increase or improve that exposure?

16) Learning, growth, and leadership: Can you highlight your positive experiences in the area of learning, development, and growth? And are there ways we can increase that growth? Would you like to move into a leadership role, and, if so, what are your expectations, timetable, and concerns.

D) IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE TRIGGERS THAT MAY CAUSE THE EMPLOYEE TO CONSIDER LEAVING

Triggers are occurrences or events that drive loyal employees to at least begin considering looking for a new job.

17) Identify possible retention triggers: If you were to ever begin to consider leaving, can you tell me what kind of triggers or negative factors might cause this? Please include both job and company trigger factors.

18) Recent frustrators: Was there a time in the last 12 months when you were at least slightly frustrated or anxious about your current role? Can you list the frustration factor or factors that most contributed to that anxiety? Can you help me understand what eventually happened to lower that frustration level?

19) Others made you think: If you’ve had conversations with other employees who have considered leaving or who have actually left our firm, did any of the reasons they provided for leaving cause you to at least partially nod in agreement? If so, can you list those factors and tell me why you considered them at least partially justifiable as a reason for leaving?

20) Past triggers: What are the prime factors that caused you to leave your last two jobs? Are there factors from your previous jobs that you hope you will never have to experience at our firm?

FOUR STAY INTERVIEW FORMATS TO CONSIDER

If you know why an individual employee stays, you can reinforce those factors. And if you know far enough in advance what factors might cause them to leave, you can get a head start in ensuring those turnover causes never occur. If you have decided to try these interviews, these are four formats to consider, depending on your situation.

1. One-on-one interview with their manager: Have their manager ask the targeted employee questions during a face-to-face interview. Getting managers to talk to their own employees is such a powerful tool that this format beats the other options hands down. Skype and telephone interviews are also acceptable as close alternatives.

2. One-on-one interview with HR: If the employee’s manager is reluctant or part of the problem, an HR professional can conduct the interview. In some cases, because they are experienced interviewers, the results can actually be more accurate and insightful.

3. Questionnaires/surveys provided to current employees: Providing a sample of the targeted employees with an electronic survey or questionnaire that asks the same questions in item No. 1 above is an acceptable option. This approach may be required for remotely located or shift employees.

4. Focus group of targeted employees: Ask a small group of targeted employees in the same job family why they stay and what might cause them to leave. Remember not to overgeneralize with group-wide stay or turnover factors.

ADDITIONAL STAY INTERVIEW ISSUES AND ACTIONS

These are additional elements, issues, and key questions.

◆ When to approach the employee: Stay interviews should be scheduled periodically, generally once a year during a slack business period. It’s usually a good idea...
to interview all key employees around the same time so that you can implement common actions at the same time. Conducting them less frequently than every two years can be problematic in periods of high turnover. For new hires who naturally have a higher risk of leaving, conduct stay interviews at four and eight months.

- **Handling possible resistance:** If an employee has never participated in a stay interview, expect some level of anxiety and even resistance simply because they’re not accustomed to talking about their own motivators and frustrators. Typical issues you might encounter include: concern that you are questioning their loyalty or commitment; being uncomfortable discussing their personal feelings; not having sufficient time to prepare for the discussion; and the fact that the manager doing the interview may be a primary contributor to their frustrations.

- **Who to select for stay interviews:** Don’t cover every employee. Prioritize your employees based on your estimate of the negative financial business impact if they left and the probability that they might actually leave within the next 12 months.

- **What if the identified issues cannot be resolved:** In a small percentage of cases, these interviews will bring up some major problems and issues that can’t simply be easily resolved by their manager. In those cases, HR should be consulted. But if the issue cannot be resolved, a longer-term “replacement plan” as well as a shorter-term “backfill plan” will be needed in case the interview actually triggers the employee to leave.

- **Develop a stay interview tool kit:** HR must develop an effective stay interview approach that all managers can follow. The tool kit format gives managers choices, so that they can customize the approach to their own situation. The tool kit should include do’s and don’ts, frequently-asked questions and answers, a directory of help services, a list of possible stay questions to ask the employee, and, most important, a list of acceptable retention actions available to any manager for improving an employee’s job and for minimizing possible retention triggers.

- **Consider related retention actions:** Most organizations that find stay interviews to be highly effective should also consider implementing post-exit interviews months after an employee has left. These delayed interviews often reveal the real underlying reasons why key people left. They should also consider re-recruiting, where key employees are approached periodically with the goal of completely restructuring their job so that it becomes at least as exciting as any job that an external recruiter might be able to offer them.

**FINAL THOUGHTS**

The concept of stay interviews is simple: You must periodically work with key employees to increase the number of reasons why they stay and to minimize anything that frustrates them and that trigger their departure.

If you are a manager and you think that some actions may be unnecessary and you expect to win the war to keep your employees, you must forever bury the notion that the best employees will “naturally” stay at your firm without your having to periodically take major actions.

Employee retention is growing as an issue because we live in a world where the minute after a manager does something to anger or frustrate an employee, the employee can react negatively by instantly applying for a new job by simply pushing a single button on their smartphone. This stay interview approach is a combination of customer relationship management and market research approaches. And by using it, HR can move retention closer to becoming a more data-driven function.

The stay interview has proven to be easy to learn and highly effective. Almost any manager can dramatically reduce their turnover rate and save hundreds of thousands of dollars by implementing this simple and inexpensive tool.

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**DBR**

Used with the permission of Dr. John Sullivan, Professor of Management, San Francisco State University, author, and a thought leader on strategic talent management and human resource practice. His latest book, co-authored with Addie Sullivan, is Onboarding & Orientation Toolkit: Tools That Get New Employees and Transfers Productive Faster For more information, email johns@sfsu.edu or visit www.drjohnsullivan.com
“Hey don’t get it!” is universally sighed in frustration by project managers. “They” are the virtual team that must deliver the project, and what they “don’t get” is what is expected to be delivered, or when it is due, or the costs. The sense of urgency seems to be missing. So how do you, the project manager, get them to get it? The problem is that the universal project manager answer, “It depends”, applies here. It depends on the ability of the project manager to learn and implement best practices for virtual team project management, basically an extension of best project practices. They rely on the project manager’s ability to communicate how the team members will interact with each other.

**Use these two key tools**

Two key tools for a virtual team project manager will improve the understanding of the interactions and help set clear expectations:

1. **The communications management plan:** This outlines what communication needs to happen, who needs to be communicated with, how frequently, the intention of the communication, where it originates, nuances, and the communication medium. The plan is similar to the rules of a sports game: it does not contain play-by-play specifics or the outcome of the game (the project); it documents how the information and communication needs of stakeholders will be satisfied. If done well, the communications plan can be used for many projects and be adapted as needed.

2. **Team operating agreements:** These are similar to ground rules for meetings, yet they extend beyond a meeting to the duration of the project. These agreements can be stand-alone or developed as an extension of the communications management plan. More of a living document than the communications plan, they emphasize how to work together daily, resolve issues, report status, assign work, show up for meetings, timeliness, how to deal with holidays, conflict, and what to do if deadlines or meetings are missed. Operating agreements allow virtual team members to take off their virtual blindfolds and interact with each other more effectively and not just when an issue arises or during formal team meetings.

One way to keep team operating agreements as a living document is to begin every virtual team meeting by reviewing them and discussing adjustments. Questions to consider include: Which agreements are working well and why? Which ones are not working? Do we need some new agreements or adjust some existing ones? When used properly, the communications plan and team operating agreements will improve how the virtual team will interact. To be effective, they must become living documents that are understood, realistic, used, updated, and shared by all virtual team members.
Slow down to speed up

Slowing down to speed up, a best practice principle for virtual teams, is also a good principle for co-located teams, although most such teams figure out how to interact as they work through project issues. For virtual teams, slowing down to speed up becomes a best practice. Slowing down, in practical terms, means to take the time to set expectations, to focus, to create processes on how the team will interact, and to put the appropriate tools in place. Take time to learn what works at each site that helps or hinders the ability of the team to work together seamlessly. Do all team members have access to the same technology and tools? Do site-specific obstacles lower the project’s priority? What are the working hours, the norms, and cultural considerations that will present opportunities and challenges for the virtual team?

Document your findings. Then use the communications plan and team operating agreements to address how these can be worked through or can benefit the team. Most project managers already understand the importance of slowing down to speed up when it comes to changing management processes. It is clear that a process for project change should be in place before any changes occur, so that the focus is on the change itself and not on how the change is made. With a virtual team, the slowing down is focused more on interactions and handling site specifics. Slowing down and setting clear expectations for how the team will interact every day allows for a smoother and faster project execution.

Select appropriate technologies for team interactions

Technology is to the virtual team as presence is to the co-located team. For virtual teams, technology must be the communication medium. Technology that hides, clips, or drops words may cause projects to die or wither. The order of consideration for selecting a tool for team interaction should mimic presence as much as possible. Therefore, a high-quality real-time video that captures the entire space and allows for clear views and sound is best. The least desirable would be text that is not saved and cannot be verified that it was received.

The closer the selected tool for real-time team interactions mimics presence, the less potential for misunderstandings. Other criteria for selecting team communication tools are archiving, record keeping, budget, ease of use, and availability to all sites. The communications plan is equivalent to the rules of a game, the interactions, and how it will be played. Any specific and unique features of the tools that will be used also need to be included. The general rules of the game and the specific playing rules for the tools need to be decided up front, communicated, and documented early on.

Create a virtual personality and presence

“Out of sight, out of mind” is a natural human behaviour that works against the virtual team project manager. The project manager’s challenge is to be visible and present, yet not overly so. Creating a virtual personality and presence is a best practice for virtual project managers. Finding the right balance of how frequently to communicate is one aspect to creating a virtual personality. For example, if a project manager overly communicates, it may cause important information to get lost in the deluge and may convey a sense of micromanaging, or a lack of trust or confidence. If the project manager becomes invisible and is not heard from for weeks, it is easier for a virtual team member to interpret this as a lack of concern and to wonder about the importance of the project.

Selecting and knowing what virtual personality is desired and how to achieve it is the next step in creating a virtual project manager personality. It’s done in a conscious and proactive manner and sometimes is personally challenging. Taking and getting constructive feedback and committing a virtual personality and presence are best practices for virtual project management.

Be a great host

Working virtually means more time spent in interactions with team members. The amount of time spent planning for communications and communicating is at least double that for a co-located team. In addition to the formal meetings, the virtual project manager must find ways to mimic the informal and unplanned interactions that a co-located team has, like catching someone in the hall and chatting. Co-located teams inadvertently use these unplanned interactions as predecessors for solving problems and getting work done. While it may seem not possible to plan for the unplanned, it is possible to virtually create informal and unplanned ways that the team can interact on a regularly basis.

The project manager is like a host at the party, having some relationship with each guest. The project manager wants to create a safe and interesting virtual place where team members want to be and to interact.
A good host is interested in each guest, is curious, polite, and concerned for their guest’s comfort. A good host also knows when the guest wants to leave and get work done. The great host can ask good questions, is friendly, approachable, and fun.

Try these ways in which some virtual project managers have created informal gathering spots:

1. Make daily five-minute phone calls or video calls with each team member. Thirty minutes a day is all it takes to have a five-minute phone call with six team members. For larger teams, either every other day or connecting to key contacts is useful.

2. Create a virtual water cooler. Keep an online open communication, such as a chat room, open all the time for team members to just hang out. Declare “break times”, “lunch”, “game time”, “check-in time”, and so on.

3. Hold virtual office hours: Be online, have open phone lines, and be available at regular times, daily or weekly.

4. Create project challenges and competitions, the more relevant to the project the better. Make them educational, interesting, and fun.

5. Create a proactive professional relationship with each team member. You don’t have to be best friends or even like all the team members. You do have to understand who they are, what their career is about, and how they will be able to help with whatever project challenges may arise, now and in the future.

**Run effective virtual team meetings**

Virtual team meetings are a given and can’t be avoided. Experts in the US estimate that up to $37 billion a year is lost in productivity because of poor meetings. There are many tips and tools for running effective meetings, which mostly all apply virtually. With good basic meeting management, additional practices become important when running virtual team meetings. The virtual team meeting principle is to create, increase, and force engagement and interactions from all team members frequently.

These techniques will help in achieving more interaction and engagement in virtual team meetings:

- Avoid monologues — no more than three sentences before forcing an interaction
- Ask questions frequently
- Verify and validate that everyone heard you or another team member who is speaking
- Call on people by name, and get everyone to answer
- Use a virtual touch sheet to keep track of who spoke on what topic and when
- Write down long explanations and sent them out ahead of time
- Speak slowly, use short sentences, be concise, and avoid slang and cultural references
- Make the implicit explicit; describe and state what seems obvious; e.g., we will be closed on Monday for a holiday; a snowstorm may cause power outages this week

**Summary**

1. Develop and use a communications management plan and team operating agreements.
2. Slow down to speed up. Take the time upfront to understand all the environments and cultures you are working in.
3. Select appropriate technologies for team interactions.
4. Create a virtual personality and presence by exploring your strengths, weaknesses, and natural tendencies.
5. Be a great host. Create places where the team looks forward to and can meet for unplanned interactions.
6. Run effective virtual team meetings; use good basic meeting management techniques, and create, foster, and force engagement and interactions frequently.

By learning, applying, and adapting these best practices for managing virtual teams, you have a better chance of leading your teams toward project success.

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WHAT IS THE COST OF HIRING A MEDIocre performer?

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“I have experienced 13+ years of efficient, honest and professional service. Thank you for helping us build a great team of employees!”

“By utilizing tools like P3 (behavioural assessment), Drake made candidate selection more scientific and from our perspective produced a “best fit” solution.”
Since the late 1990s, Rainmaker Thinking has been tracking the emerging young workforce. In recent years, we have focused on the second-wave millennials, born 1990–2000, now flooding into the workforce.

Here’s what our research shows: Millennials are not a bunch of disloyal, delicate, lazy, greedy, disrespectful, inappropriate slackers with short attention spans, who only want to learn from computers, only want to communicate with hand-held devices, and won’t take “no” for an answer. Millennials want leaders who take them seriously at work, not leaders who try to humour them; leaders who set them up for success in the real world, not leaders who pretend they are succeeding no matter what they do; strong, highly-engaged managers who establish clear structure and boundaries and provide regular guidance, direction, support and coaching. Millennials need clear expectations; they need to know that somebody is keeping score; and they need to understand the quid pro quo of work every step of the way.

Yes, millennials want more money, more flexibility, more training, more interesting projects, and more exposure to decision makers. Yes, they want more of everything. But they don’t expect any of it on a silver platter. They just want to know, every step of the way, exactly what they need to do to earn it.

How do you prepare managers for the highly-engaged leadership and coaching necessary for such dynamic management relationships? These are the keys:

**Establish a regular routine for one-on-one meetings**

One of the most effective ways to help your young employees learn to be managed by you is to schedule regular discussions with each of them about their work. At first, err on the side of meeting more often with each person — every day, every other day, or once a week.

Like everything else, this dynamic process will change over time, and your approach will have to change with each young employee you meet with regularly. For each one, decide how often to meet, how much time to spend at each meeting, what format to use, and what topics to cover. Over time, you’ll make adjustments. If things are not going well with a specific millennial, maybe you’ll have to meet longer and more often, going over their to-do list twice a day with a fine-tooth comb. And if things are going really well with one, maybe you only need to meet twice a week, just long enough to check progress and troubleshoot any issues that come up with their current tasks, responsibilities, and projects. No matter how well things seem to be going, you still need to verify that they are indeed going as well as you think. If they are, make sure that the millennials knows just how many points they are scoring today.

Your one-on-ones are your primary method for keeping the lines of communication open. Keep your expectations on the table, and make sure you are showing them exactly how to meet and exceed your expectations. And keep asking, “What do you need from me?”

**Teach them how to manage themselves**

Millennials are often amazingly advanced in their knowledge and skills at a very young age, yet they often lack maturity when it comes to the basics of professionalism, critical thinking, and followership. So, to fill those gaps, teach them good old-fashioned:

- **Professionalism**: the basics of rigorous self-evaluation, personal responsibility, good work habits, good attitude, and interpersonal skills.
- **Critical thinking**: the basics of proactive (instead of reactive) learning, problem solving, and decision making.
- **Followership**: the basics of appreciating context, being a good citizen, adopting a service mindset, and practising good teamwork.

**Teach them how to be managed by you**

Decide on your expectations and speak up. Set ground rules. Maybe, corporate policies are in place already, but often no concrete policies regulate important intangibles like attitude, tone of voice, and other subtleties of professionalism in the workplace.

You may need to figure out these ground rules on your own and say, “Whenever you are working with me, on any task, for any period of time, these are my ground rules,” lay them out in no uncertain terms, and make it clear you can’t work with someone who doesn’t follow them. The better you spell out clear ground rules up front, the better things will go. Use catch-phrases if they come naturally. Then speak them. Write them down. And speak them some more. They will serve as an easy point of reference whenever you want to remind an employee, “We both know that this is one of my ground rules.”

**The real keys to managing millennials**

Millennials want to know, every step of the way, exactly what they need to do to earn it.
Whenever you have a new task, responsibility, or project for one of your very capable young employees, always start by spelling out expectations.

Establish clear boundaries and structure

Whenever you have a new task, responsibility, or project for one of your very capable young employees, always start by spelling out expectations. Make absolutely sure they understand exactly what you expect them to do and how to do it. That’s the only way to get employees to adopt your organization’s best practices and turn them into standard operating procedures. As long as the assignment lasts, you should follow up regularly with one-on-one check-in conversations to review employees’ progress. In those conversations, you should ask, “What have you already done? What steps did you follow? What step are you going to do next?” Listen carefully to their answers. Make it a habit to wrap up these conversations by deciding on a specific place and time for your next meeting to follow up.

Help millennials keep score for themselves

You might think a generation raised on mantras like “we’re all winners” and “everyone gets a trophy” wouldn’t be particularly competitive. But that is not the case. While the self-esteem movement was chipping away at millennials’ competitiveness, the testing movement was building it back up. Still, testing breeds a different kind of competitiveness: competition against standards and benchmarks, against averages and means, and against one’s own past performance. When millennials know you are keeping track of their day-to-day performance, their measuring instinct is sparked and their competitive spirit ignited. Keeping close track of their work tells them that they are important and their work is important. The process motivates them to perform because they want to get credit, score points, earn more of whatever there is to earn.

Negotiate rewards in small increments

When that millennial knocks on your office door and asks if you have a minute to discuss their special need or want, realize that this might just be the key to driving this employee’s performance to a whole new level, or at least the key to getting more work out of them better and faster for the short term. The best approach is to negotiate these special rewards in very small increments. You want to be able to say, “I’ll do that for you tomorrow, if you do X for me today.” Work a particularly undesirable shift? Work longer hours? Work with a difficult team? Do some heavy lifting? Work in some out-of-the-way location? Clean up some unpleasant mess? Then deliver the reward in question as soon as you possibly can. Immediate rewards are much more effective with millennials because they provide a greater sense of control and a higher level of reinforcement. Millennials are likely to remember the precise details and context of the performance and are, therefore, more likely to make the connection the next time the desired performance is called for. Plus, they won’t spend time wondering if their performance has been noted and appreciated, and they will therefore be less likely to lose the momentum generated by their short-term success.

That’s your starting point. From there, take control of the ongoing negotiation and drive millennials’ engagement, performance, and retention by helping them earn those special rewards they want so much, one day at a time. In the process, you’ll get so much more, and better, and faster work out of them, one day at a time.

When millennials know you are keeping track of their day-to-day performance, their measuring instinct is sparked and their competitive spirit ignited.

Conclusion

Does this approach mean that, when it comes to millennials, everything must be open to negotiation? No! You should be rock solid on your basic standards and requirements. What is not negotiable? What is essential? What is not acceptable?

Manage your millennial team more effectively with a Drake P3 online assessment. It reveals a person’s natural tendencies, communication styles, emotional intelligence, motivational needs, decision-making abilities, energy levels, and more. To find out how Drake P3 can help you guide your millennials, contact the Talent Management Solutions team:

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Bruce Tulgan is a speaker and the author of numerous books, including the best seller It’s Okay to Be the Boss (2009), the classic Managing Generation X (1995), as well as The 27 Challenges Managers Face (2014), Bridging the Soft Skills Gap: How to Teach the Missing Basics to Today’s Young Talent (2015), and Not Everyone Gets a Trophy: How to Manage the Millennials (2016). This article is an excerpt from Tulgan’s book, Not Everyone Gets a Trophy.
Fully engaged employees are actively involved in, and enthusiastic about, their work. They are willing to go the extra mile to ensure customer satisfaction and make the organization a success, spreading enthusiasm within their teams and beyond. Partially engaged employees, on the other hand, do the minimum to get by, concentrate on the job at hand, and add little extra value. And disengaged employees demonstrate negativity at work and undermine the accomplishments of others, potentially creating a toxic atmosphere in the workplace. Engaged employees feel personally connected to an organization, are more productive, are less likely to seek alternative employment, and act as champions for their company.

Dale Carnegie charged MSW Research with identifying and understanding the dynamics that govern employee engagement, ranging from such tangible dimensions as age, education, gender, and income to the more intangible such as emotions. To assess their level of engagement, respondents were asked two questions:

1. How likely are you to recommend your company to your friends as a place of employment?
2. How likely are you to recommend your company to others for the purpose of doing business?

Dale Carnegie surveyed 1,500 managers and employees of different ethnicities, working both full and part time in large and small companies, government, and education throughout the US. Fewer than one-third of those surveyed reported being “fully engaged”, while just over a quarter were “disengaged”.

Key demographics affecting engagement

How it is that one person will be invested in their work while another is less engaged? Picking the right person for the job is the obvious first step, but for employees already working in an organization, it is useful to examine the variables that can affect the level of engagement. The study reveals that gender, ethnicity, and race do not affect employee engagement levels; however, age, length of service and position within the organization, education level, income, working full or part time, and industry all play a significant role.

Examining these critical variables in more detail we find that:

- Young employees and those aged 50+ are more engaged than people in middle age. This may be attributed to the expectation of a new career or the exuberance of youth, and the achievement of career milestones in older workers. Those in the 40–49 age range are more likely to have external pressures due to family responsibilities.

Disengaged employees are 2.5 times more likely than engaged employees to change jobs for as little as a 5% pay increase.
life; however, disengagement could also be due to these employees feeling they have reached a plateau in their careers. Organizations need to ensure the employee doesn’t sink from partial engagement to complete disengagement with all the negative impacts that can have on their work and that of their co-workers. Training opportunities and interventions specifically aimed at workers in their 40s should be considered.

- The length of time an employee has worked for a particular organization affects engagement. Those who have been employed for at least three years are more engaged than the newly employed, particularly those in the first year, who may be less confident about their role or skills. However, the level of engagement peaks after three years of employment. Engagement is low among people with 20+ years of service, perhaps because of difficulty in maintaining motivation or a stalled career path.

- Those at a VP level or above are the most fully engaged, but the 47% engagement among this group is relatively low given the importance of their role. The economic climate and pessimistic attitude toward corporate America may account for the relatively low level of engagement among senior managers.

- Surprisingly, fewer of the most educated (post-graduate) are fully engaged compared to those who have either some college experience or even a high school diploma. This partial disengagement could be attributed to the most educated having greater expectations that have yet to be met.

- Higher income correlates with higher engagement, but while significantly more people earning $50K and above are fully engaged than those at lower income levels, income is not a driving factor. The most disengaged are those earning less than $50K, but multiple factors may influence this. For example, low-level incomes are usually associated with positions with high customer interaction, where respondents are more likely to be disengaged. There are no differences in engagement based on varying salary levels of the partially engaged.

- Part-time workers, who make up an increasing part of the US workforce, are much less engaged (26%) and more likely to be disengaged (29%) than full-time employees, who were 31% engaged and 24% disengaged.

- Employees in sales or customer service are the people companies most need to engage. They tend to be the lowest paid, but working at their best level, they will boost both customer satisfaction and revenue. Employee engagement is much lower in some sectors than others. Those who work in government, education, and manufacturing are among the most disengaged. Those who work in health care are the most engaged.

**Emotional dynamics**

Emotions have a major impact on an employee’s engagement. Negative emotions have greater influence than positive. The fully engaged employee is more enthusiastic, empowered, happy, confident, and valued. The disengaged find their workplace upsetting and are irritated merely by having to show up for work.

**Workplace dynamics**

Positive engagement is affected by overall job satisfaction. Disengagement is mainly due to dissatisfaction with senior management, although the disengaged express little satisfaction with any facet of their job. Interpersonal relations, a positive working atmosphere, and a caring manager contribute to a climate of engagement.

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**Moving employee engagement forward**

Employee engagement is a function of the interaction between background and skills on one hand and position and compensation on the other. It leads to higher staff retention, greater customer satisfaction, and stronger sales. But the majority of US workers are not fully engaged. Organizations need to manage employee engagement, ensuring that the engaged employees retain their enthusiasm and the disengaged and partially engaged employees move into that category.

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**The fully engaged employee is more enthusiastic, empowered, happy, confident, and valued.**
Why Conduct a Human Resources Audit?

An audit is an unbiased examination and evaluation of systems and processes of an organization conducted to demonstrate whether it is in compliance with a standard. The human resources (HR) function of any business covers all aspects of the employer’s relationship with its employees: personnel policies, hiring, orientation and training, performance evaluation, compensation, corrective action including termination, safety, record keeping, and organizational development.

Whether conducted internally by employees of the organization or externally by consultants, an audit of your HR systems can help you:

- demonstrate that management is in compliance with board policies on treatment of staff
- ensure that your HR practices are in compliance with each jurisdiction’s laws
- find improvements you can make in administrative efficiency
- prepare for expansion and growth by taking your HR systems to the next level

HR audits tell the board whether pay and benefits, personnel policies, and corrective actions are being administered fairly and consistently, without favouritism or arbitrariness.

MONITORING FOR STAFF TREATMENT

All companies and boards want assurances, based on objective data, that their employees are well treated. An audit report can answer such questions as:

- Are the personnel policies clear enough that staff can abide by them and managers can carry them out?
**WHY CONDUCT A HUMAN RESOURCES AUDIT?**

- Are people being paid outside the pay range for their job on the pay scale? Are there outliers within pay ranges that can’t be explained clearly by reference to hire date or past evaluations?
- Is the grievance procedure robust enough to handle all types of staff complaints so that they won’t end up in the board’s lap?
- Are documentation, security, and retention of personnel records adequate to comply with employment laws, prevent identity theft, and provide information for personnel decisions?

In monitoring staff treatment, HR audits complement employee surveys. Surveys can tell the board how satisfied employees are with their pay and benefits, how the personnel policies are applied, and how corrective action is handled. HR audits tell the board whether pay and benefits, personnel policies, and corrective actions are being administered fairly and consistently, without favouritism or arbitrariness.

Employees are not necessarily in a position to know whether certain HR practices are being followed consistently for everyone. Surveys reflect their point of view, which is vitally important for board and management to know and to address because perceptions drive behaviour. But those perceptions aren’t the same as an unbiased evaluation of actual HR practices.

**COMPLYING WITH EMPLOYMENT LAWS**

An audit can show whether your documentation of personnel actions is robust enough to stand up to outside inquiry, such as an administrative hearing for unemployment benefits claims, an equal employment opportunity complaint, or a wrongful termination lawsuit. By reviewing randomly selected personnel files of current and recent employees, an auditor looks for answers to such questions as:

- Are the personnel policies themselves legally compliant?
- Does documentation for corrective action dovetail with the company’s policies?
- Are performance problems documented with a similar degree of detailed evidence from one employee to another?
- Do evaluations reference corrective actions that occurred during the period covered by the evaluation?
- If the basis for termination was violation of a policy, is there evidence that the employee knew about the policy?
- Are employees eligible for benefits receiving them? If not, do signed waivers show that they declined the offered benefit?
- Are accidents and injuries properly recorded?
- Are people being paid outside the pay range for their job on the pay scale? Are there outliers within pay ranges that can’t be explained clearly by reference to hire date or past evaluations?

Small companies without experienced full-time HR managers benefit from HR audits because they need help putting in place basic structures — filing systems that ensure appropriate content, personnel policies that cover all the bases, hiring procedures that attract and select the best workers, and performance evaluation procedures that provide clear goals and help employees achieve them. An audit can help ensure that management is not inadvertently breaking laws.

But larger companies too can be out of compliance with, for example, legally required posters missing from the breakroom or not paying required overtime.

**IMPROVING EFFICIENCY**

Over time, especially after a period of rapid growth, HR systems that once worked well can no longer be relied upon. Layers of policies and forms can build up that contain internal contradictions or inconsistencies. If HR staff labours under a mountain of paperwork, trying to keep track of dozens of different forms for each employee, there may be too many policies or contradictory policies.

A proliferation of policies and procedures can also make it difficult for all the managers to be on the same page when it comes to hiring, pay raises, and corrective action. Policies can fall behind the times and fail to reflect changes in employment laws and technology. Pay scales can become obsolete if new workers get hired at pay rates well above the base of their pay range, and long-time workers get raises that take them beyond the top. In response to out-of-date or unworkable HR policies and systems, different department managers may go different ways, creating workarounds or “guerrilla HR systems” in the process. As a result, the HR department’s workload increases in the effort to administer multiple systems.

Inefficiencies in HR systems can also occur when management attempts to manage by policy instead of addressing individual abuses.

An HR audit can ask these questions to find areas for efficiency improvements:

- Are the personnel policies all in one easily accessible place, with individual policies found through a table of contents or index or search engine?
- Is there written guidance for supervisors on how to implement the policies? Is that guidance succinct and easy to follow?
- Do forms for personnel record keeping cover several bases instead of requiring a multitude of separate forms?
- Is a uniform template used for all types of job descriptions? Is the template overloaded with boilerplate or does it allow the unique job duties to be easily grasped?
- Are evaluations timely? If not, is the process unduly cumbersome?
- Is benefits enrollment high? If not, is information on benefits provided? Is it easy for staff to access and written in straightforward, comprehensible language, rather than “insurance-speak”?

Furthermore, if a company is planning to expand the workforce, HR systems must be considered in planning along with all the other operational systems. Planning for expansion requires building capacity in HR. With more employees comes more risk of interpersonal conflicts, policy abuses and legal violations, even if inadvertent, and accidents and injuries. If there is a lack of accountability in supervision now, the problems will be compounded with a larger staff. An audit can show management where HR staff efforts need to be focused to ensure sound systems are in place prior to expansion.
An audit can help ensure that management is not inadvertently breaking laws.

**Taking it to the Next Level**

HR work can be transactional or transformational. Transactional HR works within existing systems and concentrates on record keeping, documentation, and legal compliance. A transformational approach to HR focuses on identifying and analyzing problems and creating solutions. Major changes such as expansion, new competition, or threats of disasters call for transformational HR.

An HR audit can help identify opportunities for transformation. Many transformation initiatives start with determining the data needed, collecting and analyzing the data, and looking for patterns. These are some areas that can benefit from transformational HR:

**Staff Turnover:** Analyze where in the company and when in the employee lifecycle turnover tends to occur. Conduct face-to-face exit interviews with open-ended questions, if the staff size and turnover rate permit. For larger companies, interview perhaps one in every three departing employees and ask the others to fill out a questionnaire online. Ask about on-the-job training, pay and benefits, evaluations, and supervisor relations. Mine employee survey data also. Then identify opportunities for increasing retention, such as more supervisor development or more paths to promotion. If high turnover in certain departments and labour markets is unavoidable, create super-efficient training programs and other practices that support shorter-term workers on the front-end.

**Safety:** Analyze the circumstances in which accidents occur — departments, types of injuries, time of day, etc. Interview injured employees and witnesses. Identify underlying causes, such as lack of thorough training, overcrowding, faulty equipment, and understaffing, and work with managers to develop solutions that address these causes.

**Benefits:** Instead of just accepting what an insurance broker hands you, research creative benefits solutions.

**Hiring:** Identify recruiting sources that bring you the best candidates, and focus your attention there. Instead of just posting job announcements on your website, sell the company as a great workplace, and start communicating your expectations with a dynamic jobs page. Pre-screen job applicants to leverage the hiring manager’s time. Identify the competencies needed for success in each job, and design interview questions to reveal how well the candidate meets them.

**Orientation:** Think strategically about the company’s objectives and how workers contribute to them. Design programs that involve other staff besides HR. Use this early opportunity to clearly establish the expectations of employees and their roles.

**Communication Channels:** Study the flow of information, top-down, bottom-up, and interdepartmentally, to locate bottlenecks and breakdowns. Employee survey data can be useful here, too. Partner with IT staff and other managers to develop more effective systems.

These are only some examples of ideas that can come out of an HR audit. To devote time to transformational work, HR staff must find ways to streamline its transactional workload. An audit can suggest ways to move some transactional tasks away from HR staff as well as point to opportunities to invest saved time in projects that will transform the organization.

In sum, the careful, objective evaluation provided by an audit can yield information critical to the successful development of the HR department. With more effective people management, companies can create the momentum necessary for success and sustainability in the marketplace. A human resources audit can help your company become the employer of choice in your community.

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**Drake Business Review**

Leadership organizations understand the importance of integrating HR compliance with Workforce Analytics in their overall business strategy. Knowing how to connect and interpret your data will allow you to stay competitive, mitigate risk, manage costs, and improve workforce quality now, and into the future.

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People who lead by example are mentors and role models, building business results through relationships and integrity.

Webster’s Dictionary defines lead as “to guide and conduct; to govern; to precede”. A leader is defined as “one who leads; a guide; a captain; a head of party”. In contrast, the definition of manage is “to wield; to direct; to conduct or minister; to have under command; to treat with judgment”.

Simply put: Managers manage processes, and leaders inspire and motivate others to accomplish goals. Ask yourself which definition applies to you? Are you a leader or a manager? Which would you rather be?

Great leaders lead by example, demonstrating their values through their actions. These leaders build relationships by mentoring and providing guidance, creating cohesive teams, and earning the loyalty of their employees.

There are many managers in organizations across the country, yet very few leaders. This is due to most organizations still using an outdated method for hiring and promoting people from within — choosing people who are very good at what they do, without considering whether they can motivate and inspire others.

Managers are tactical, hands-on personalities. There is no argument that managers can achieve results. However, these are almost always short term.

Great leaders lead by example, demonstrating their values through their actions.
People will do what they are told for many reasons, including fear of losing their job, lack of education, bad experience making them unwilling to argue even if they feel the manager is wrong, and apathy toward the company and its goals.

Leaders provide guidance. They motivate and inspire people to take action. In this way, leaders achieve long-term results through a productive and happy workforce. Leaders use many strategies to achieve these results. The behaviour that has the most powerful impact on employees, customers, and vendors is leading by example.

The next time you have a staff meeting, try this exercise. Ask everyone who has integrity to raise a hand. You will probably see all hands raised. Next, ask them to raise their hand if everyone that they work with has integrity. You will see far fewer hands. Why is this? It is natural that we judge ourselves based on our intentions, while others judge us based on our behaviours. So, while most people intend to always have integrity and to do the right thing, that does not always happen.

Leaders who lead by example are courageous. You can recognize courageous leaders by looking for these characteristics and behaviours:

- They provide information, encourage their employees to make decisions that they support, and do not take credit for employees' successful ideas.
- They are continually coaching, providing honest and direct feedback, and supporting their employees. Under these circumstances, employees build skills and rely less on the leader.
- They empower employees and provide opportunities for greater responsibility.
- They recognize employees' problem-solving actions and encourage risk taking, rewarding the employee for the effort as well as the results.
- They face conflict and confrontation on tough issues and fight the right battles for employees, customers, and the organization.
- They do what they say they will do.

Great listening skills characterize leaders who lead by example. (This does not mean they have an open-door policy.) Leaders must be willing to listen to employees' concerns and ideas and seriously consider implementing their ideas whenever possible. They also must take complaints seriously and take the time to investigate claims of ill treatment or inappropriate behaviour on the part of other leaders.

In today's business world are many distractions. Consider this example: An employee comes into your office and states that he needs to speak to you. Immediately, you know it's serious. You try to do all the right things. You put down your pen, forward your phone calls, and give the employee your attention. Yet it is hard to ignore the ding of e-mail that just arrived. The phone rings three times before switching to voice-mail. Others pop their heads in periodically to ask a quick question. You hear an argument in the hall. How do you turn off all of this?

It is not easy, but blind motivational speaker, David DeNotaris, has some advice. Since he does not have the advantage of observing body language and facial expressions while listening, DeNotaris has learned to listen, as he says, "like a blind man". In other words, he believes that everyone can learn to listen with the heart rather than the head.

“When you are listening with your head, you're collecting facts and thinking, 'I'd better prepare something to say when this person is done speaking,'” says DeNotaris. “But when you listen with the heart, you show interest in the other person's feelings — not your own reputation. You find out what the other person wants and needs, and then you can speak in a way that meets those needs.”
Learning to be a leader who leads by example is not easy, especially with the distractions and stress of the business environment today. Many times in coaching sessions, leaders have said they have no idea where to start. Try these brief activities to identify the characteristics of a person who leads by example.

1. Identify at least one person who was or is a role model for you as a leader — a teacher, your parent, a religious figure, an athlete, or a boss, for example.

2. Make a list of the things your role model did or said that inspired your loyalty and motivated you to succeed. What characteristics and behaviours did they demonstrate that you would like to exhibit to others?

3. How will you do this?

4. What behaviours or characteristics do you need to change to be more like the role model who influenced you?

Leaders who lead by example are mentors, willing to give of themselves to promote the growth and development of others. These leaders get to know their employees and build relationships that last a lifetime. They learn employees’ names, know about their families, and take the time to understand what motivates and inspires them. Most important, they practise the behaviours that motivate and inspire others. These leaders demonstrate strong ethics and moral behaviour in their business and personal life.

In short, leaders who lead by example are the leaders who are competent and drive business results for the organization while building relationships with employees, customers, and vendors. These are the most effective people in an organization. Unfortunately, these are also the most difficult people to find.

When you find one, you must do whatever it takes to keep them in the organization, for they will take your business to new heights.
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BUILDING A HIGH-PERFORMANCE ORGANIZATION

High-performance organizations are the role models of the organizational world.
Business leaders are always asking, “What makes a high-performance organization?” Many companies claim to be high-performance organizations; however, the real thing is rare, and instantly recognizable.

Apple, Google, Berkshire Hathaway, Microsoft, Procter & Gamble, General Electric, Unilever, Coca-Cola, Southwest Airlines, and Johnson & Johnson are members of an elite circle, where exceptional performance is an everyday event. These groups operate on a different plane. We can name them, but can we explain them? When does high performance happen? What does it feel like? Can it be replicated?

High-performance organizations are the role models of the organizational world. They represent real-world versions of a modern managerial ideal: an organization that is so excellent in so many areas that it consistently outperforms most of its competitors for extended periods of time.

Managers want to know more about high-performance organizations so they can apply the lessons learned to their own companies. Their goal is to ensure that their own organizations excel in the marketplace.

SEVEN AREAS OF SUPERIORITY

Recent research provides new insights about high-performance organizations and how these can be applied. The High-Performance Organization Survey commissioned by the American Management Association (AMA) and conducted by the Institute for Corporate Productivity asked 1,369 respondents about organizational characteristics associated with high performance. It found that, generally speaking, high-performance organizations are superior to their low-performance counterparts in these seven areas:

1. Their strategies are more consistent, clear, and thought out. They are more likely than other companies to say that their philosophies are consistent with their strategies.
2. They are more likely to go above and beyond for their customers. They strive to be world-class in providing customer value, think hard about customers’ future and long-term needs, and exceed customer expectations. And they are more likely to see customer information as the most important factor for developing new products and services.
3. They are more likely to adhere to high ethical standards throughout the organization.
4. Their leaders are relatively clear, fair, and talent oriented. They are more likely to promote the best people for a job, make sure performance expectations are clear, and convince employees that their behaviour affects the success of the organization.
5. They are superior in clarifying performance measures, training people to do their jobs, and enabling employees to work well together. They also make customer needs a priority.
6. Their employees are more likely to think the organization is a good place to work. They also emphasize a readiness to meet new challenges and are committed to innovation.
7. Their employees use their skills, knowledge, and experience to create unique solutions for customers.

Without the passion for improvement, high-performance organizations are unlikely to remain high performers for long.

High-performance organizations are much more likely than others to report that their organization-wide performance measures match their organizations’ strategies — the single largest difference between the two groups. However, like great athletes, even high-performance organizations must continuously strive to improve and “work on their game”. Without the passion for improvement, they are unlikely to remain high performers for long. After all, there’s no shortage of business leaders who are working hard to ensure that their own companies reach the top echelons of organizational excellence.

FIVE FACTORS OF HIGH PERFORMANCE

According to another study by the HPO Center in the Netherlands which reviewed 290 academic and management publications and gathered data from 2,500 organizations in 50 countries, high-performance organizations share 35 characteristics, falling into five groups: (1) management quality, (2) continuous improvement and renewal, (3) long-term orientation, (4) openness and action orientation, and (5) employee quality.

They found a clear correlation between how well an organization scores on these high-performance factors and its financial performance. Revenue growth increased by an average of 10%, profitability by 26%, and total shareholder return by 23% in high-performance organizations compared to others. Better non-financial performance included higher customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, employee loyalty, and quality of products and services. These positive correlations were found in every industry, sector, and country in the world. In short, it pays to be a high-performance organization.
HIGH PERFORMANCE FACTORS:

1 MANAGEMENT QUALITY: The factor that most determines whether an organization becomes and stays a high-performance organization was identified as the quality of its leadership and management. A high-performance organization’s leadership maintains trust relationships with people on all organizational levels by valuing employees’ loyalty, showing people respect, creating and maintaining individual relationships with employees, encouraging belief and trust in others, and treating people fairly.

Managers of a high-performance organization live with integrity and are role models: being honest and sincere; showing commitment, enthusiasm, and respect; having a strong set of ethics and standards; being credible and consistent; maintaining a sense of vulnerability; and not being complacent. They apply decisive, action-focused decision making by avoiding overanalysis but instead coming up with decisions and effective actions, while at the same time fostering action taking by others.

High-performance organization leadership coaches and facilitates employees to achieve better results by being supportive, helping them, protecting them from outside interference, and being available. Management holds people responsible for results and is decisive about non-performers by always focusing on the achievement of results, maintaining clear accountability for performance, and making tough decisions. They develop an effective, confident, and strong management style by communicating the values and making sure the strategy is known and embraced by all organizational members.

2 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT AND RENEWAL: The second factor concerns characteristics that not only create an open culture in the organization but also focuses on using the openness to take dedicated action to achieve results. Management values the opinion of employees, frequently engaging in a dialogue with them and involving them in all important business and organizational processes. High-performance organization leadership allows experiments and mistakes by permitting employees to take risks, being willing to take risks themselves, and seeing mistakes as an opportunity to learn. In this respect, management welcomes and stimulates change by continuously striving for renewal, developing dynamic managerial capabilities to enhance flexibility, and being personally involved in change activities. People in a high-performance organization spend much time on communication, knowledge exchange, and learning to obtain new ideas to do their work better and make the complete organization performance driven.

3 LONG-TERM ORIENTATION: The third factor indicates that long-term commitment is far more important than short-term gain. And this long-term commitment is extended to all stakeholders of the organization, not only shareholders but also employees, suppliers, clients, and the society at large.

A high-performance organization strives to enhance customer value creation by learning what customers want, understanding their values, building excellent relationships with them, having direct contact with them, engaging them, being responsive to them, and focusing on continuously enhancing customer value.

Leadership teaches organizational members to put the needs of the enterprise as a whole first. They grow management from their own ranks by encouraging people to become leaders, filling positions with internal talent, and promoting from within. A high-performance organization creates a safe and secure workplace by giving people a sense of physical and mental safety and job security and by not immediately laying off people until it cannot be avoided as a last resort.

4 OPENNESS AND ACTION ORIENTATION: This fourth factor is very much in line with a trend that has been keeping organizations busy for the past two decades — continuous improvement and innovation. This starts with adopting a strategy that will set the high-performance organization apart by developing many new options and alternatives to compensate for dying strategies. It continuously simplifies, improves, and aligns all its processes to improve its ability to respond to events efficiently and effectively and to eliminate unnecessary procedures, work, and information overload. The company also measures and reports everything that matters, so it rigorously measures progress, consequently monitors goal fulfillment, and confronts the brutal facts. It reports these facts to not only management but everyone in the organization, so that they all have the financial and non-financial information needed to drive improvement at their disposal. People in a high-performance organization feel a moral obligation to continuously strive for the best results. It also masters its core competencies and is an innovator by deciding and sticking to what the company does best, keeping core competencies inside the firm and outsourcing non-core competencies.

5 EMPLOYEE QUALITY: The final factor addresses workforce quality. A high-performance organization makes sure it assembles a diverse and complementary management team and workforce, and recruits a workforce with maximum flexibility to help detect the complexities in operations and enable creativity in solving them. It continuously works on developing its workforce by training them to be both resilient and flexible, letting them learn from others by going into partnerships with suppliers and customers, inspiring them to work on their skills so they can accomplish extraordinary results, and holding them responsible for their performance so they will be creative in looking for new productive ways to achieve the desired results.

CULTURE AND PERFORMANCE

Culture, like brand, is misunderstood and often discounted as a touchy-feely component of business that belongs to HR. It is one of the most important drivers that has to be set or adjusted to drive long-term
sustainable success and performance. It is not good enough just to have an amazing product and a healthy bank balance. Longterm success depends on a culture that is nurtured and alive. Culture is the environment in which your strategy and your brand thrives or dies a slow death. It cannot be manufactured, but rather genuinely nurtured by everyone from the CEO down. That is why it is so important to focus and work on culture. But it is an area that is often neglected or poorly managed.

Bain & Company research found that the best companies succeed on two dimensions simultaneously. First, every high-performing organization has a unique identity, distinctive characteristics that set it apart from other organizations. Second, winning cultures usually embody six high-performance behaviours:

1. **HIGH ASPIRATIONS AND A DESIRE TO WIN:** For employees in high-performance cultures, good is never good enough. They are always pushing to go farther, better, faster. It’s not just about short-term financial performance. It’s about building something truly special and lasting.

2. **EXTERNAL FOCUS:** Companies with high-performance cultures focus their energies externally on delighting customers, beating competitors, and caring for communities. They don’t get caught up in internal politics or navel gazing.

3. **“THINK LIKE OWNERS” ATTITUDE:** A hallmark of a high-performance culture is that employees take personal responsibility for overall business performance.

4. **BIAS TO ACTION:** High-performance cultures are impatient to get things done. They are doers, not talkers, keeping an eye on where the value is to ensure their actions will enhance the business.

5. **INDIVIDUALS WHO TEAM:** Winning cultures encourage people to be themselves and help individuals develop to their full potential. They also recognize the importance of teamwork, being open to other people’s ideas and debating issues collaboratively.

6. **PASSION AND ENERGY:** Everyone in a high-performance culture gives 100%, striving to go beyond adequate to exceptional in the areas that really matter and bringing an infectious enthusiasm to everything they do.

A true vision for a business rests on foundations of both purpose and values. The power of vision is at its best when it comes alive in the people of the organization and they live the vision. They become passionate about what they do and why they do it and perform at a higher level. The business goals must then align with this foundation. Without a clear foundation, a business will never be truly strategic. So it is better to stand for something beyond simply increasing profits.

It should come as no surprise that an organization that genuinely places its customers and its people at the heart of the business, whose people understand where it is headed and the role they play in delivering the future, and continually improves the way it works is one that will outperform its peers. The key to an organization’s success, as ever, lies in the commitment of its leaders and their willingness to implement. The good news is that, regardless of your current reality, you can always elevate your leadership game. High performance is within the reach of any organization.
When Should You Fire a “Good Enough” Employee?

Managers and business owners alike understand this dilemma: just when should you fire an employee who is just good enough?

The decision to terminate an employee is one of the most difficult challenges and decisions a supervisor or owner can make, yet it must be done if an employee is simply going through the motions and no longer performing to expectations or, worse, stopped self-improvement. You know the one — they’ll tell you they have ten years’ experience but, in truth, it is one year’s experience repeated ten times.

How do you know when?

Firing someone you’ve worked with for years, especially someone you know, can be painful, even for the most experienced managers. It’s almost impossible to take the emotion out of what is a very personal decision, even when it makes rational or economic sense.

So with all of these conflicted feelings, how do you know if your employee can be the “A” player they once were? And do you give them another chance? How will you know when enough is enough?

Say you have done everything by the book up until this point. You have given honest and constructive feedback. You have set realistic goals and objectives to be met, complete with timelines to follow. You have even asked your employee for input about how they can improve their performance, hoping for a personal commitment from them. From a human relations and management standpoint, you have done most everything in your power to set this employee up to win, to have a chance to contribute once again.

But what if, after all of this, nothing improves to a desirable level? Answer these three questions to quickly see what you need to do.

Is your employee meeting the responsibilities listed on their job description?

Although this is the baseline, many of us don’t refer back to a job description after we’ve completed the hiring process. Neither do our employees. But by revisiting a job description well into an employee’s tenure, a manager can now assess how aligned the employee is with it. This is where you can have a meaningful discussion about each part of the role and where the employee is falling short. It is a chance for the employee to re-calibrate their priorities or for you to revise the job description if necessary. If the employee’s performance isn’t matching with the current or revised job description, it may be time to terminate.

Good enough is never good enough. It’s not fair to you, it’s not fair to the employee, and it’s not fair to your clients. Employees who aren’t doing their job bring the team and the company down.

By allowing an underperforming employee to remain also undermines you as the employer. It says to the entire staff that a mediocre job performance is acceptable to you, and soon the performance of the entire team will slide to the lowest level. And why not? You allowed it to happen and even encouraged it by not taking action.

Employees who aren’t doing their job bring the team and the company down.
Can the market offer you a better employee at the same price?

Many managers are trigger-shy because they haven’t done any succession planning for this employee’s role. How hard would it be to replace this person? How much time, energy, and resources would you need to invest to find someone with the needed skill, talent, and dedication?

The cost to replace talent is expensive — for an executive, anywhere from 20% to over 200% of their salary. Without a doubt, the hiring process is daunting, but with few exceptions, everyone is replaceable, as much as we’d like to think otherwise, and that includes ourselves.

Even a tenured employee with a solid history can become stale over time if not challenged. Some may have found themselves in a rut and unwilling to change or be motivated. The eventual replacement of this employee will bring a fresh pair of eyes, diverse thinking, and a powerful professional skillset.

In the end, the labour markets are full of efficient and talented employees looking to progress forward in their careers. Managers need to keep this in mind, even though it can be hard to see in the moment.

If the employee resigned today, would you fight to keep them?

By framing the question this way, you can honestly address your internal turmoil: How would you feel if they left you? Devastated? Then maybe the relationship is salvageable. Relieved? Then it’s time to show your employee the door.

Will you ask yourself why you waited so long?

In the end, you will find another employee who will exceed your expectations and make you question why you’d waited so long to act. And the terminated employee is now free to move on to another job with a better fit. While it may be incredibly difficult in the moment, it’s often better off for everyone in the long run.
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