

MANAGING AND RETAINING TALENT



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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Talent management is about having the right people with the right skills at the right time and in the right place and is a core part of a manager's job. Getting this right ensures you have a highly engaged, motivated team, who will remain loyal and perform better. Focusing on talent management will also help you to retain staff for longer and reduce your reliance on recruitment.

You can't have one single approach for developing talent – you can't treat everyone the same when it comes to talent management. You must give people a tailored experience depending on where they are in their career journey.

When you don't develop people, you tend to lose your best talent because they have the choice and ability to find other opportunities that will happen. And with high employment and a scarce talent pool, it's easy for people to go elsewhere. If you don't do this, you'll lose them.

In this second and last part of our Talent Management course, the group will learn how to foster engagement and loyalty in their team through talent management, upskilling, and reskilling. If people leave your team, they will learn how to properly prepare the next phase with succession planning and master the art of off-boarding to leave a good impression on the team and the person leaving.

LOOK – watch the videos and reflect on the content and message.

THINK – activities and questions linking the videos to their own experience and workplace.

REMEMBER – a summary of the key learning points.

Each section relating to the videos will last around 15 minutes.

PRACTISE – At the end of the series of videos there is a practical exercise which will bring the learnings together. Delegates should be encouraged to record any personal development actions on their Personal Action Plan sheet.

FEATURED VIDEOS

- Talent reviews and mapping
- Reskilling and upskilling
- Succession planning
- Offboarding talent

FILM 1 – TALENT REVIEWS & MAPPING

LOOK (play video, 6 minutes)

Give the group some background before you show the film. Karin: Karin is the Office Manager and the Queen Bee. She is forever worried about attracting and retaining the team. Andy is her colleague and is a high performer who is critical to the smooth running of the team. Jane provides HR support and wise counsel to Karin.

We are about to join them as Karin & Andy join the inter-department talent review. Talent reviews are formal meetings where leaders openly share their perspective of talent from their business areas with colleagues and peers – unless they are Karin!

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Ask the group to discuss the common mistakes that managers might make in relation to talent reviews and mapping? Here are some examples you can share.

- Not having a clear model or tailored approach to talent mapping/development.
- HR buzzwords and tools can be misinterpreted or misused by managers.
- Mistakenly focusing purely on performance/tasks not potential
- Managers acting on their own accord and not collaborating with other stakeholders – pigeonholing talent and protecting their own silo.
- Not prioritising talent reviews or viewing them as a core part of a manager's role.
- Assuming everyone wants the same thing for their career.

Explain that you can't manage talent effectively without first reviewing and mapping the teams strengths and limitations. Reviews like this allow you to differentiate between the strengths and limitations of talent, while discussing how to manage their performance and support their development and growth. It also enables leaders to table and champion their people, whilst generating a forum for healthy challenges for talent in relation to their performance and potential. If you want to retain talent, you want to ensure you're giving them a tailored approach to career development.

The benefit of doing this is that you produce a mapped pipeline of talent across the business. This helps identify highflyers that would benefit from additional support, movement or promotion and highlight poor performers that require a specific action plan to improve or remove. Providing a structure such as the 9-box grid also increases the quality of talent conversations at management level.

REMEMBER

Let's look back at the key points we have covered.

- Always Ensure you have formal talent reviews, where managers can share their perspectives on the talent within their teams with other colleagues and peers.
- Take a holistic view and map and differentiate your talent using performance and potential to allow you to effectively execute a tailored approach.
- Consider assessing potential on judgement, drive, and influence, and remember that potential is not a constant state of being.
- Mapping isn't static; it's a stamp in time. Review your talent this way at least once each year.

FILM 2 – RESKILLING & UPSKILLING

LOOK (play video, 6 minutes)

Set the scene for the team before showing the video. Attracting talent is central to the role of a modern manager and not a job they can just delegate to HR or a recruitment agency/platform. Karin's approach needs some work!

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Explain that in the recruitment market, the power is often now with the jobseeker – there's more choice, and the competition for talent is higher than ever. In addition, people are changing roles more frequently. People are leaving jobs because they've had a chance to reflect on what they really enjoy doing and want to do. Increased time at home and indoors has also made people reflect more on their lifestyle/work-life balance. Therefore, influencing where people choose to go comes down to how you choose to act in attracting new talent as a potential new boss. Common mistakes that managers make include:

1. Having a weak online presence.
2. Relying too heavily on HR or recruitment teams to attract talent.

Ask the group to think about the consequences of these mistakes and what can be done to fix them. Answers should cover these points.

Online presence

Hiring managers with a weak presence on platforms like LinkedIn and Twitter restrict how many potential candidates they are exposed to, particularly with younger demographics. A lack of online presence may put candidates off accepting the role when faced with other more proactive managers. Managers should use their social media presence as a way of selling their company and themselves. Connecting with potential candidates online is a highly effective recruitment method and a great way to build talent pools for future roles.

Relying on others

The best hiring managers will view attracting talent as a critical part of their role, not HR's role. Managers should be involved in making sure the job description is correct and the job advert is correct. If they are slow to react to responses from candidates or display a lack of company knowledge and ability to sell a narrative about what the company stands for and what it does, they can lose a candidate's interest.

Close the discussion by suggesting that hiring managers (as well as the organisation) need to build a brand that makes people want to come and work for them.

REMEMBER

- Attracting talent is an ongoing part of your role as a manager, so don't assume the HR team or recruitment function will take all the responsibility.
- Invest time and support into the job description and advertising the role to ensure you attract the most relevant candidates and respond quickly to questions and interest.
- Candidates will expect you to communicate your organisation's culture, values, specific benefits, and career progression opportunities you will offer with the role, so be prepared for this.
- Remember you're selling your company and yourself, both in person and online, so use your social media as a basis to create talent pools for future roles.

FILM 3 – SUCCESSION PLANNING

LOOK (play video, 5 minutes)

Set the scene for the team before showing the video. Once you've built your team, you can't then become complacent and stop thinking about talent – you need to have a plan for the future. Invite them to see how Jane introduces the subject to Karin.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Ask the group to discuss any common mistakes that managers might make in relation to succession planning? The discussion should cover these points.

1. Managers being afraid of successors 'stealing their job'.
2. Worrying - what if people are ready to take the job but you aren't ready to promote them? Lose them to competitors? Use development to engage and retain them.
3. Not knowing what your critical roles and critical talent are so, when people leave, there is a detrimental impact on client relationships, day-to-day tasks etc.
4. Not having a good handover/transfer of knowledge process. If someone is off or leaves, there's no one there with any knowledge or skills to be able to fulfil the role temporarily.
5. Pigeon-holing people into roles they don't really want to do due to your desires as a manager, unconscious bias etc and losing them.
6. Going straight to external recruitment as a default, instead of mapping talent and succession planning.

Explain that succession planning marks the culmination of the talent management process and will dictate how easy it will be to replace talent that you've lost or recruit for new talent. In the event of a loss of a key player, having a strategic approach to managing the flow of talent is extremely beneficial. By utilising your talent reviews and mapping and setting up a succession plan, you can ensure that you have the right people in the right place at the right time.

Consider it from a crisis planning perspective (a lottery win, rather than a tragedy hopefully!) Who are the key people? Where are your strengths and weaknesses? Could you move people to give them experience and a taste to develop in these roles?

REMEMBER

Complete the discussion by concluding that If you've done succession planning well, you will be able to mobilise your internal talent pool more effectively and have less reliance on external recruitment. looking back at the key points we have covered.

- Succession planning should be based on critical roles and critical skills: those who have key roles, unique skills or critical relationships that are highly important to the delivery of the business or client commitments.
- Ensure you have a pool of people within your business who can replace certain roles and talent if anyone leaves.
- Hold regular stakeholder meetings to determine whether successors are for immediate, mid, or long-term succession, and agree the development or exposure that is required for successors to fill current capability gaps.

FILM 4 – OFFBOARDING TALENT

LOOK (play video, 4 minutes)

Set the scene for the team before showing the video. Though it may be hard sometimes, managers should learn how to leave the best impression possible when someone is leaving the organisation. Ensuring you're sending people off in the right way, and leaving a good lasting impression, will increase the chances of them becoming an advocate for your business, referring potential candidates for new roles or even returning themselves. See how Karin reacts to news from Andy.

THINK (10 minutes discussion)

Ask the group why it is important to create a positive impression during offboarding? The discussion should cover these points.

Digital footprint

Every company has an online presence and a digital footprint. You want to ensure your brand is well-regarded, so how you treat people when they're leaving is just as important as when they're joining.

Positive reviews

People will talk about their experience in the company they previously worked for or even leave a review on sites like 'Glassdoor'. Having a good review for your business in this regard will also help you attract new talent more successfully. They may also recommend someone new when a job opening comes up.

Returners

People are changing roles so often that it's more likely that people may one day consider returning to a company they've previously left.

Effect on others

Failing to invest time in an exit interview or offboard someone at all can affect other team members too – seeing someone else have a bad experience may put them off wanting to stay.

REMEMBER

Let's look back at the key points we have covered.

- Conduct any leaving conversations in a positive, constructive, professional manner. Show your support and genuine interest in why they're leaving, how they can share the news, and how you can support them as they move into their next role.
- Be clear on your expectations of the person before they leave, and any objectives they must achieve to ensure a smooth transition.
- Carry out an exit interview if possible, to discuss what the causes for leaving were, what was good and bad for them, and any suggestions from the employee.
- Remember that the best talent pools also include people who have left your organisation, who can provide referrals or even re-join themselves.

GROUP EXERCISE

The objective of this exercise is to get the group to reinforce that Talent management means driving the performance and managing the talent in the team you already have, not just focusing on new starters.

The biggest mistakes that managers make are.

- Too much focus on recruitment and not enough on developing what you have.
- Too much focus on tasks, delivery, and deadlines rather than where the employee wants to progress to and what their career aspirations are.

So, it helps to address these 4 questions before you develop your talent strategy.

1. What are the potential new roles your business will need in the future?
2. What are the skills, strengths, and not to forget 'attitudes' you are likely to need from your future workforce to meet the requirements of these new roles?
3. How do you put the right plans and processes in place to identify, develop and nurture those skills internally?
4. If these skills can't be developed internally, what are the future talent and skills gaps you will need to fill.