



# TALENT MANAGEMENT



It is not the leaders in the board-room but line managers at the frontline who have the biggest role to play in talent management. Line managers stretch talent or squash it. The challenge is to provide them with the skills to manage talented people in their team.

## What they said...

It's hard to be humble when you're as great as I am. *Muhammad Ali*

I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set it free. *Michelangelo*

Success is not final, failure is not fatal: it is the courage to continue that counts. *Winston Churchill*

## Note from the Editor, Chris Mathas

E-HR Trends' new look comes with a whole new approach. Our aim in each issue is to **highlight the key issues** surrounding an area of challenge for today's HR professionals. E-HR Trends gives you **valuable insight and information** into the chosen subject area through extracts from a variety of high value articles which we believe will act as a **basis for action and or further study**. In our first issue of this season we focus on the much debated concept of "Talent Management"!

### Something to think about...

#### "Talent Management" **disguise** or innovation?

Unfortunately talent management, as is evident from the plethora of literature, is just a new name (**disguise**) for recruitment, succession planning & training & development.

#### Talent Management defined... maybe not!

From our desk-top research, it would seem that definitions are not only infinite but also **varying in meaning**. We feel that it is important to stress that no matter what your definition, **talent management should be part of an organization's recruitment and retention strategy and should aim to nurture and develop those people identified as having ability and potential**. The terms "ability" and "potential" will of course have their own unique meaning for each organization.

#### Talent Management: Key questions organizations should think about

What is talent? **Is it aligned with great intelligence? Where is talent found** in an organization? Are people still seen as an organization's most valuable asset? What tools are available for managing talent? **Do managers have the right skills for nurturing talent?** Do organizations cultivate a culture that encourages and rewards talented people? Have we effectively identified the talent gap?

PS: Look out for more information on closing the talent gap in the **October 2005 issue of Harvard Business Review**

## Talent: A Breed Apart? by Alison Coleman



"There is a world of difference between talent and the potential to lead an organisation. Ascribing the label 'talent' to the very limited number of people who could actually run an organisation is a perfect example of the way organisations are actually failing to see people as a valuable asset." *Chris Bones, Principal Of Henley Management School*

"... increasingly, when organisations talk about talent and its management, many are only really worried about retaining and developing their top talent and 'hi-pos' - individuals with the highest potential."

"Is it [talent] aligned with great intelligence? Albert Einstein is quoted as having said, **'I have no particular talents. I am merely inquisitive.'** So maybe not, although some might argue that an inquisitive mind and a thirst for knowledge are qualities associated with talented people.

"... highly talented people [are] a breed apart, with very different values and levels of motivation from the majority of people. ...They get frustrated more readily and express themselves readily. In short, they are a different kind of person, and they need a different kind of management."

"...managing talent at a senior level has an integral role to play in meeting the strategic challenges of an organisation, [but] it can overshadow the wealth of talent waiting to be developed elsewhere, and which in some ways, can be more important to the organisation. Tom Crawford, director of solutions consulting at Bernard Hodes says: "As we continue to move towards a service-based economy the biggest impact on the consumer comes from those people working at ground level."

"...talent management is more than just another HR process. It requires a holistic and integrated approach, because in spite of the idea that talent is a natural ability, left undeveloped, it could remain dormant and hidden forever."

Source: [www.management-issues.com](http://www.management-issues.com)

# TALENT MANAGEMENT *(continued)*

## How to Support High Performers *by Susanna Mitterer*

"... High performers are the stars of any organization and need to be nourished and cherished. The reality is that they are often in danger of being left to get on with things—both because they can and because the priority is to deal with poor performers.

Yet it is high performers that need recognition, support, encouragement and new challenges, so that they can continue to make a positive contribution and achieve their best.

Adopting the following principles will help maximize the potential of high performing employees and sustain their contribution to the organization:

1. Identify high performers
2. Focus equally on high and low performers
3. Recognize achievement
4. Broaden the reward mechanism
5. Provide new challenges
6. Motivate and encourage
7. Inspire others

Peak performers do not need as much direction or coaching as others. They are generally people who are constantly seeking new challenges and thrive when they are given autonomy within their organization's value framework"

Source: People Management Magazine, 12 August 2004

### "HELP HIGH ACHIEVERS REACH THEIR FULL POTENTIAL :

- Give them freedom to find their own solutions and listen to their views
- Assign them full accountability for their tasks, while remaining available for help
- Review performance based on the person's own reporting
- Give them the opportunity to tell key stakeholders what has been achieved, how, and by whom and don't take credit for any of their attainments
- Discuss and where possible endorse any suggestions or requests for more resources"

## Talent Reviews: A New Standard Practice *by David Creelman*



*"There is something to be said for focusing efforts in the top and bottom talent in the company, rather than spending so much effort deciding that 70% of employees are somewhere in the middle.*

*Managers do not need to wait for the organization to adopt an enterprise wide talent review process. They can simply get the senior people in their own department together to discuss the talent in their area"*

"Talent reviews are meetings where a group of managers discuss the capability of employees and identify the high and low performers."

"High performers (people who do their current job very well) should be distinguished from high potential employees (people who have the potential to take on senior leadership roles)."

"Harvard professor Dorothy Leonard writes about yet another category of talent: people with "deep smarts". [These people] have know-how developed over many years and cannot be easily replaced. You can't hire someone with that knowledge..., nor can it be developed by sending someone on a training course. This kind of talent needs to be retained and used to mentor others."

"...USC professor John Bourdraue [refers to] "pivotal talent". That is talent that is crucial to the execution of strategy. In this case it is not about looking at individuals but about looking at jobs."

"... in GE's famous talent reviews identifying the low performers was just as important. There are other categories of employees one could potentially include in a talent review.... All employees with a good performance rating who have not been moved in three years."

"Perhaps talent management can be seen as a mindset. Furthermore it is a managerial mindset, not an HR one. Managers with talent mind sets think about the talent implications of all decisions. ... they will ask "what talent do we need to make this work?"

"...talent management is about programs aimed at the people who fill, or have the potential to fill, key positions. These programs include talent reviews, succession planning and leadership development... this is a set of activities that is quite separate from the usual HR programs aimed at the wider employee population."

Source: Creelman Research

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