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*"Keep your workforce
 running smoothly"*

Employer's Advantage

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Grooming Your Organization's Talent for Future Success

There has been much debate and conversation in the workforce about the generation gap, and the loss of the baby boomers in the workplace, to be replaced by the often less experienced generations X and Y. While most small and mid-sized companies rely on a network of senior executives as the lifeblood of their organization's management – what happens when one of these key executives retires, is offered another opportunity, or leaves the company unexpectedly?



A recent study by the U.S. Office of Personnel Management says that over one third of the U.S. workforce is eligible for retirement. Faced with this reality, how do we replace these valued and experienced employees with qualified and confident leaders to continue guiding our organizations? The answer for many proactive and innovative organizations has been a strategic succession plan for key positions. Succession planning ensures that capable and confident people fill your key positions in a variety of

job roles for many years to come. As Robert M. Fulmer, Ph.D., of Pepperdine's Graziadio School of Business & Management said in his recent article, "Choose Tomorrow's Leaders Today," It's not just succession to the top – it's getting the right person in place for every job. Some of tomorrow's key jobs may not even exist now. If a firm plans to double in size in five years, they will need more talented managers."

Do you know which methods of learning can best help an employee get the development they need to be a successor? There are five methods of internal staff development that organizations commonly use to help successors achieve their learning objectives. Knowing when to use the following methods of internal staff development will help to ensure that successors are ready when you need them.

1. On-the-job training

The first method of internal staff development is on-the-job training. With this method, an employee begins working in the actual work environment and receives training in specific job tasks as the tasks arise. This training provides the basic knowledge or skill required to correctly perform a single task. On-

the-job training is particularly effective at demonstrating tasks, such as manual or procedural skills, that involve telling, showing, doing, and evaluating activities.

2. Job rotations

The second method is job rotations. This method allows an employee to experience a wide variety of lateral job positions by rotating or trading jobs with other employees. The employee already has basic knowledge or skills and only needs situational experience in a variety of job positions to obtain an increased ability to solve problems or learn more about the company. Job rotation is often necessary for promotion to a position that supervises those lateral job positions.

Job rotations are a good method for providing feedback and appraisals for each function that an employee does since there is opportunity for job performance evaluation over a period of time. This method requires that there is sufficient time for an employee to carry out each job rotation. There also has to be enough company flexibility to allow the employee to trade jobs with others. This method works well when there are several employees under development at the same time.

Mentoring

A third method of internal staff development is mentoring. Mentoring is the pairing of an employee with a more senior person, or mentor, in the organization for general workplace advice, information, counseling, and career advice. The format for learning is usually a meeting where the mentor listens to the employee's ideas or provides leadership advice on how to handle problems or gives career direction. The relationship usually lasts for a long period of time.

Mentoring works best when the employee respects the mentor. Compatibility is a must. A mentor can only handle a few employees at one time due to the time required for providing advice. The mentor should be outside the employee's direct line of authority so the employee can feel free to discuss work issues. A mentor should also be two levels above the employee for best effect. If the employee is changing careers, the mentor may come from the new career path.

Training sessions

The fourth method of internal staff development is training sessions. Training sessions include courses, certificate or degree programs, and seminars. They are useful when a large number of trainees make it difficult or cost inefficient to use other forms of training. Completion of training sessions tests provide formal evidence of successfully learning the information. These sessions are useful for covering basic information or information that needs a standardized delivery to all employees.

Action learning

The last method is action learning. Action learning is real-time group learning while solving a problem in the organization. This is also known as experiential learning. This is a very effective learning method because the learner gets to do a real task or solve a real problem and then reflect on how it was done, even if done incorrectly. A facilitator is available to provide additional information or resources required by the individual or group. An organization may then implement the solution to the problem.

Action learning requires that a small group of four to ten people meet to participate in the training so that

each employee can learn from each other. Action learning may be difficult to coordinate if employees have to travel far to participate in the group or if there are fewer than four employees needing training. Knowing that a variety of methods are available to you is just one aspect of developing your staff. To achieve the best results, you also have to know which method is right in a given situation. Consider the following example.

Mark, a quality assurance manager at Chunderwalla, needed some advice. He had a solid foundation in basic managerial skills but he was having problems with several employees. Mark made an appointment with Rhonda, the director of personnel. After discussing the problem with Mark, Rhonda, suggested that he ask Jeff, the director of information support, to be his mentor. How did Rhonda know mentoring was the right method for this particular staff development problem?

On-the-job training

On-the-job training for Mark didn't lend itself well to helping him know how to deal with the employees. Mark knew enough about basic management and leadership. What he needed was advice on what to do in various cases.

Job rotation

Job rotation would certainly help Mark get experience with problem employees, but Mark didn't need to learn a new job just to be able to solve problems.

Training sessions

Formal training sessions have already given Mark a basic knowledge of management and leadership. Another training course wouldn't be able to show him what to do because each situation is different.

Action learning

Action learning could help Mark recall how he had dealt with problem employees in the past. However, Mark needed continuing advice for the present and the future—something action learning couldn't provide.

Mentoring

Mentoring from a more experienced person, such as Jeff, is what Mark needs to learn how to deal with

problem employees. Jeff is likely to have encountered similar problems and would be able to offer good advice that Mark could respect.

Employee development can be achieved using a variety of methods including: on-the-job training, job rotation, training sessions, action learning, and mentoring. To choose the best method for a particular situation, you need to correctly identify the development problem and apply a solution based on the employee's current level of skill and experience.

Start a succession planning initiative at your organization today! Review our e-learning course, Succession Planning Management, below.

Preview this and other **Succession Planning Training** courses at <http://www.companycollege.com/automotivehr/> and visit the Demo Learning Center



So, you have a succession plan but you've identified some problems. What do you do now? By taking this course, you will learn how to establish a leadership and talent development program that will ensure your succession plan achieves its goals. You will also learn how to overcome some common challenges that management teams face when trying to find the right people for a position. Since succession planning is an ongoing process, you will also learn how to evaluate your succession program to ensure that it meets your organization's present and future needs.

Target Audience

Managers, executives, succession planners (consultants), and HR specialists concerned with insuring information and business continuity via succession planning.

Expected Duration
2.5 Hours

Seven Deadly Sins of Leadership

While the self-help section of the library has numerous volumes on leadership and how to do the right thing, sometimes knowing what the wrong things are and how to avoid them can be just as valuable. Here is our list of the “seven deadly sins of leadership.”

Assuming your employees know the company’s objectives and purpose. So you and your management team have a great strategic plan in place. Who will implement that plan? Even the best plan is worthless unless it is understood and embraced at all levels. Your workforce is the engine that powers your plan. You should integrate your strategic workforce planning with your business planning.

Approaching selection and hiring in a haphazard manner. Best case scenario — 14 percent of the time you will get a good employee. Worst case scenario — most of the time you will get a less-than-stellar worker and worse, you might get sued. Good hiring practices at all levels improve overall performance and help deter lawsuits. Rigorous interviews and background checks can help employers form an accurate picture of past behavior, but pre-employment screening for a potential employee’s attitudes toward integrity, substance abuse, reliability and work ethic is a better predictor of future behavior.

Assuming your people are trained. Failing to develop your people’s talents through appropriate training is a massive waste of resources. Many companies spend more time and money negotiating and paying for maintenance contracts on their equipment than they do training their staff. And yet, they claim their employees are their number one asset.

Failing to evaluate and measure. It is easy to fall into the habit of “business as usual;” performing tasks by rote or doing things the same way simply because that is the way they have always been done. You should continually assess your business’ activities. Are they necessary and relevant? If so, then these activities should be tracked to assess effectiveness as well as efficiency. If you can’t measure it — don’t do it.

Failing to provide appropriate feedback. Fear of conflict can cause leaders to avoid mentioning unacceptable behavior or requiring accountability. Whether through performance reviews or conversations during the course of daily activities, meaningful,



constructive feedback is necessary to produce good performance and to help employees’ career development. In a recent study conducted by **Salary.com**, of 2,000 employees and 330 HR professionals, two thirds of companies believe their performance reviews are effective, but only 39 percent of employees agree.

Assuming you are doing a good job and your customers are happy Have you asked? Assuming your customers are satisfied simply because you have not received complaints is not necessarily an accurate barometer. Your business should

have mechanisms in place to encourage customer feedback. You should listen to, and act on that feedback.

Not marketing (failure to understand the relationship between marketing and sales). Even businesses with an excellent sales force should actively market themselves. Marketing and its disciplines of Public Relations, Research and Advertising are critical strategies to identify new markets; communicate to prospects and clients and to establish your brand and message among all of your constituents. Failure to actively pursue these strategies handicaps your business’ ability to compete.

As if seven deadly leadership sins were not enough, we will leave you with a bonus. Treating employees as a commodity. Any company who has experienced the high cost of employee turnover understands its toll: replacement costs, loss of productivity and decreased morale. Treat employees like a commodity and they will respond in kind — by leaving you as soon as possible for the next best offer.

Developing Leaders — Fast Track and Feedback

In a typical Fortune 500 company, most leaders spend an average of four years in a given position. That means that annually, at least one fourth of the managers will change jobs. Successful leaders in mid-level positions move even more often — every two to three years. Given these averages, companies must continually develop new, effective leaders to remain competitive. Superior companies attract and inspire talented people. To keep them, they must engage them and hone their leadership proficiency.

Effective leaders strive to continually improve themselves — not just their skills. They use both formal and informal support networks to get honest feedback about their performance. Listening is critical.

So how important is feedback? It is critically important at all levels.

- Leaders do not work in a vacuum. No leader has all of the answers all the time. Getting high-level input and access to great minds is helpful to any executive.
- Often, large organizations operate as a silo community isolating leaders in their roles. Helping leaders learn from each

other builds needed peer support and relationships.

Equally important, establishing two-way communication with staff is essential to leadership performance. Leaders must be able to express their objectives and listen to their staff's feedback to build productive teams and produce results.

In addition to soliciting appropriate feedback, up and coming leaders should be encouraged to put their values into action.

Values in Action

Good leaders are as driven by their values and principles as they are by recognition and rewards. Know what motivates your

leaders. Give them opportunities to make their mark

on the company. Often a leader's corporate vision is fed by his or her personal values. A person who holds kindness and respect as personal values is more likely to create a corporate vision that exemplifies respect for clients and associates. Leadership integrity drives long-term results. You may be able to achieve short-term results by fear, threats or coercion ... but sustained organizational results can only be accomplished through integrity and consistency.



AHR Helpline

Two Stories—Which One Will Be Yours?

Lou and Sally were the proud owners of a thriving retail business. Lou had taken over the business from his Dad and Uncle when they retired and had grown up working on vacations and weekends in their first store. Lou kept running the business himself. He had several store managers who did a decent job but he didn't want anyone working for him who had ambitions to take over. His plan was for his oldest son, Luke to inherit the stores some day. He kept information about the operations to himself not even sharing the ins and outs with Sally. He was sure he could run things better than anyone else. Besides if he groomed others they might want to take over before he was ready or they would leave and go to work for someone else or open their own store and compete with him.

Sally was his high school sweetheart and after taking a business course or two at the local community college, did some of the bookwork for the business.

They had 3 kids who were in school and they had just opened their 3rd new store when Lou had his first heart attack. For the next 3 years they lived a nightmare with Lou unable to do most of the work managing the operation and Sally trying to take care of Lou, 3 kids and learn the business. Then Lou died. The business started to fall apart as Sally didn't know enough to manage it. The debts mounted and eventually she had to sell out and go to work at a local business to make ends meet.



Bob and Joanne also owned a successful retail operation. They both worked in the business and shared management responsibilities. Joanne was stronger with the administrative work and handled most of it. Bob was clearly the technical expert and was very good at picking and

training good techs.

They also had a plan for their future, and like Sally and Lou wanted their kids to inherit the business someday, but realized that their kids might not want to work every Saturday! They developed a carefully thought out Succession Plan.

Bob and Joanne made a conscious decision when hiring key managers to evaluate the potential for each person for the future. Over the years they had hired several young employees who showed skills in the technology and in business. They offered support for these people to learn all of the ins and outs of the company. They met on a regular basis with their store managers to discuss the operations in general and to give them information on how the corporate work was done.

Bob and Joanne even had a rotation schedule for bringing their other store managers into the main store to train as back-ups for their

jobs. When they took a vacation, one of the key managers who had been trained was in charge.

There were a few people, who took their well developed skills and left the organization, but they kept in touch and some became valued peers and friends in business.

In addition, Bob and Joanne joined a local business group and used the services offered by one of their suppliers for business development and human resource consulting. They always had some who they could call for advice and council.



When Bob was diagnosed with cancer, they were very upset and wondered how they could cope with managing the stores, going for treatments and taking care of the kids. Their worries were short lived however when they realized that they could use the future plan they had developed a little sooner. They had well qualified managers to back them up and help them run the business while Bob was undergoing treatments.

Though Bob didn't survive his illness, they didn't loose money during his treatments and after he died, Joanne was able to call on her management team and

advisors to keep the business going. She was even able to hire back one of those former managers to help her by running the technical parts of the business.

Their investments in people and planning for the future paid off.

Which scenario would you rather have? By developing a good succession plan now, you are more likely to survive in the future.

Even if you don't face the serious crises that these two couples did, a most American's discovered after 9-11, the future is not predictable. By having a good plan going forward that ensures a well trained workforce and development of people to replace top managers, you can weather the storms and move forward in most crises.

What are the components of a Succession Plan? Succession planning is a lot like strategic planning but focused on the "talent" needed to run the business. Some key components, questions:

- ◆ What is your core business now and what will it be 5-10 years from now?
- ◆ What key activities keep your business going?

◆ Do an internal environmental scan – who currently has the skills and knowledge within your company – who is doing the work and who could do the work/learn the skills?

◆ Do an external scan – who has the skills/knowledge outside the business and how could you tap into these resources?

◆ Determine any gaps and do a plan to close the gaps with:

- * better evaluation/assessment of new hires
- * assessing current employees and their potential and personal ambitions using assessment tools and performance management programs
- * use employee development programs including cross training of current employees and opportunities to work in different roles including temporary leadership.

Finally, don't put all you eggs in one basket and be willing to share information and even groom and train people who might leave – they might come back someday!

Succession planning if done well is time consuming, but it can be "insurance" against loss of a business you've worked hard to build!

--Phyllis G. Hartman, SPHR
Your AutomotiveHR Consultant

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

To create the life you truly want, you need systems that automatically carry you down-stream toward your ultimate goals.

Design your office, your home, your schedule and your relationships so they "conspire" to help you get there!

Talk with loved ones so they actively support you! Eliminate clutter and replace it with equipment, furnishings and tools that make you smile, that energize you and keep you focused.

Design a schedule that includes time for your important daily priorities.



Self-knowledge Provides the Opportunity for Leadership Development

It is estimated that in most organizations, 15 to 20 percent of employees are considered top performers. At any given time, 80 to 85 percent of an organization's employees are not fully engaged and motivated. Many have the skills, experience and education to suggest they should be top performers, but the engagement simply is not there. Often, the disconnect is in management and leadership ability.



When you think about it, you need your employees more than they need you. Your success relies on your employees working effectively under your management. The more you are aware of their issues, the better you can address them. Listening and responding is a core leadership skill. Sometimes leaders talk too much and fail to listen. To get feedback, you must ask for it, be open to it and respond effectively.

Profiles CheckPoint 360° Feedback System™ provides leaders with feedback from those who observe their performance: their direct supervisor, employees and peers. A powerful professional management development tool, the CheckPoint 360°™ provides the basis for planning and executing a program for professional growth.

The CheckPoint 360° Feedback System provides different perspectives on leadership characteristics. It gives leaders more specific, job-related information about their performance. With the self-knowledge drawn from this instrument comes the opportunity for:

- Performance improvement
- Identification of training needs
- Improved skills – leadership, goal setting, interpersonal and organizational
- Increased leadership accountability

Using this type of feedback, you now have an opportunity to clarify issues and misunderstandings and make positive changes. It gives you the feedback you need to manage effectively. The Checkpoint 360° positively impacts your individual growth and the organization's success.

'Sorry I'm Late; a Raccoon Stole My Shoe'

By Kathy Gurchiek

From gridlock to oversleeping to being victimized by a raccoon, employee tardiness plagues employers, according to a recent CareerBuilder.com/USA Today survey that found 16 percent of workers arrive late to work at least once a week.

Most hiring managers typically don't question the reasons workers give for being late, but slightly more than one-fourth (27 percent) don't believe the excuses they hear most of the time and 25 percent of employees admit to faking an excuse for their tardiness.

The survey, conducted in the United States from Feb. 15 to March 6, 2007, included responses from 6,823 employees in the private sector and 2,591 hiring managers and HR professionals with significant involvement in hiring decisions.

Traffic was the top excuse many gave for showing up late, with 31 percent of employees citing this; 16 percent admitted falling back asleep and 8 percent had problems getting their kids on their way to school. A long commute, forgetting something at home and feeling sick were among other reasons given.

But some were real doozies, such as:

- Someone was following me and I drove all around town trying to lose them.
- My dog dialed 911 and the police wanted to question me about what really happened.
- My girlfriend got mad and destroyed all of my undergarments.
- I woke up and thought I was temporarily deaf.
- I just wasn't "feelin' it" this morning.
- I was up all night arguing with God.
- A raccoon stole my work shoe off my porch.
- I super-glued my eye thinking it was contact solution.
- I was putting lotion on my face when my finger went up my nose, causing a nose bleed.



In other findings, men are less likely to be late than women (41 percent vs. 37 percent, respectively) and—unless they're lying on the survey questionnaire—are less likely than women to fib about why they are late (22 percent vs. 28 percent).