



# TALENT JOURNEY

BUILD A TEAM • CREATE A DESTINY

April 2009

Volume 8, Issue 11

## *Leading in Turbulent Times*

In times like these, when the economy is struggling to recover, strong 21<sup>st</sup> century leaders will exemplify three key attributes: authentic communication, values alignment, and strategic talent retention.

### **Communicate with authenticity.**

According to Maslow's theory, physiological and safety needs are core basic needs, more central than affiliation, esteem, or career fulfillment. In turbulent times, creating an environment of authentic communication and trust is critical. People want and need to know truth, even if the news is bad. The simple task of sharing information and listening to concerns builds a reputation of trust. However, truth and openness are not sufficient. Effective leaders also need to generate hope by leading with vision and realistic optimism. Staying committed to sharing the truth, but also communicating that message in a way that engages and gains the commitment of team members is vital.

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*Are You Retaining the Right Talent for Success?*

## *Retaining the Right Talent to Reach the Next Level*

In today's economy, every business executive, owner, CEO and president should be asking themselves one important question: "Do I have the talent to take this business to the next level?"

If the answer is no, you probably want to begin looking, but if the answer is yes, then employee retention should be at the top of your list. With employee retention statistics that prove your best employees may be sitting on your payroll while

patiently waiting for the "right" job, you need to be sure that you are managing employee retention with specific individuals in mind and long-term goals in place.

### **Employees Are Not All Alike**

A good manager knows the strengths and weaknesses of their employees. But do they know what motivates them?

In employee retention studies, TTI has found that money is NOT the reason most employees leave a job, which seems contrary to popular belief. In our latest study of over 19,000 job seekers, only 19% said money was the reason they were looking for a new job. Instead, more popular reasons included stress, mismanagement, lack of room for advancement and lack of employee development.

In order to effectively manage employee retention, it is important to determine the core values of each individual. What drives them to take action? What keeps them engaged and motivated? What needs do they have that should be fulfilled on the job? For example, let's assume Steve is a salesman for a medical device company that sells new health care devices to hospitals.

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When leaders paint truth, alongside realistic hope, they build trust that generates commitment. Trust functions similar to a bank account. When we invest truth and hope, the return on investment multiplies.

Although some may disagree with President Obama's political positions, he serves as a potent model in communicating with authenticity. He has been forthcoming in terms of the crisis that exists, the amount of time it will require to find solutions, and the need for responsibility of both top leaders and individuals. A potentially gloomy speech each time he approaches the podium is transformed into a promise of hope. He engenders hope by referring to the work ethic, ingenuity, and greatness of American people. Whether we agree or not with his position, these communication examples demonstrate authentic leadership communication.



**Take action using key corporate values.** Whether your organization is growing or shrinking, the way you treat employees and customers will shape organizational culture for the future. People catch culture; culture is not mandated. No matter what tough decisions you need to make, ensure that you act consistently with the values you espouse. It is always important to honor people, commitments, and processes. (See our integrity article in this issue for more on the importance of leading with integrity.) Where economic conditions mandate shifts in commitments and processes, do everything possible to over-communicate. Make your messages clear, simple and transparent. Let your team know you are looking out for their best interest, as well as the business' success. Any variation from your values to manage profit, calm employee waters, or pacify stakeholders, risks long-term repercussions. In some cases it will be necessary to step-back and not allow the immediacy and stress of the moment to lead to regrettable long-term mistakes. Under stress, even the best of us can inadvertently miss the broader view.

**Retain talent aligned with your strategic mission.** If you are in a downsize situation, remember that it is difficult on everyone. We encourage you to take a strategic approach to downsizing.

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First, are there any other options available such as reduced hours, allowing part-time working arrangements and/or establishing quarterly shutdowns?

Look for opportunities to create wins (some workers would love to get a short-term break from full time work) in these tough economic times. At the end of the day, if you need to downsize, ensure that you analyze your talent strategically. Many organizations downsize whole project teams or eliminate a department. This is rarely the best option. Long-term viability depends upon retaining your BEST talent. We recommend doing a resource planning assessment to identify the top skills and competencies you will need over the next 2-3 years and beyond. Then, use a competency-based assessment to determine which team-members should remain with the organization, regardless of where they are currently working.

Leaders of today, we need to act strategically, respond carefully, and communicate authentically.

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## *Stop Dragging Work Home with You*

You'll find that your worklife and your homelife will be more productive and enjoyable if you can confine work to the office.

*Here are some tips that will help:*



- ✓ **Gripe about work for no more than 10 minutes.** If you've had a bad day, keep it from invading your evening at home. Set a timer if you have to. Return the favor by listening to the other person's gripes.
- ✓ **Tie up loose ends.** To keep your mind off work, write down any nagging, office-related matters as soon as possible after arriving at home. **Example:** "Remember to call Jones tomorrow before noon, re: contract renewal." Then forget about it until the next day.
- ✓ **Take 20 minutes to clear your mind.** Create some ritual that marks the transition from work to home. **Examples:** Take a walk, meditate, shoot baskets or read a section of the newspaper.

Source: *Manager's Edge*, as adapted from *Secrets of Executive Success*, Mark Golin, Mark Bricklin and David Diamond

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What motivates Steve to get out of bed each day, put on his suit and give a great sales pitch? Perhaps he knows that each time he introduces better technology to a hospital, he impacts the lives of many every day. Or, maybe Steve's personal goal is to be the top salesman in the company. Yet another possibility is that Steve comes from a family of salesmen and takes pride in following in their footsteps. Whatever the case may be, the important thing is to know what motivates Steve and ensure that employee retention strategies cater to his unique, personal motivators.



### **Employee Retention Must Fit Corporate Goals**

Developing an employee retention strategy that is specific to each individual must start with an in-depth look at the company's long-term goals and what it needs for success. What is the next level? What skills do you need to get there? Who has those skills and what skills are missing in the company? While it is not an easy task, it is an important step in the process of creating an employee retention strategy that will help you meet your long-term goals. Perhaps you will find that job roles should be re-organized, skills of certain employees are better utilized in another way, or certain employees are key to future success. Once you have determined how your workforce needs to adapt to meet company goals, you can implement an employee retention strategy that ensures your best talent is there to help you reach the top.

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## **Web Site Of The Month!**



### **Welcome to the Deep Web – PIPL.com**

Since most personal profiles, public records and other people-related documents are stored in databases and not on static web pages, most of the higher-quality information about people is simply "invisible" to a regular search engine. Pipl's query-engine helps you find deep web pages that cannot be found on regular search engines.

Unlike a typical search-engine, Pipl is designed to retrieve information from the deep web, to interact with searchable databases and extract facts, contact details and other relevant information from personal profiles, member directories, scientific publications, court records and numerous other deep-web sources.

Check it out at [www.pipl.com](http://www.pipl.com)

*It's all about quality of life and finding a happy balance between work and friends and family.*

- Philip Greene



# **ONE MINUTE IDEAS**

### ***Be On The Lookout For Coaching Moments***

Coaching isn't appropriate for every situation. Sometimes, staffers want to work on their own, uninterrupted by the boss.

To spot employees ready for coaching, pay attention to when things aren't going well or when they could use an extra hand on a tough project.

That's when they'll be eager to work with you.



### ***When to Meet***

The best time to start a meeting is mid – to – late morning, when most staffers are at their best. Morning people are still energetic, and others are beginning to function effectively.



Also, the meeting is less likely to last longer than it should because lunch provides a natural stopping time.

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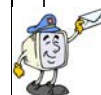
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## *Facts about Taking Early Distributions from Retirement Plans*

If you took an early distribution from your retirement plan, here are some things you need to know:

1. Payments you receive from your Individual Retirement Arrangement before you reach age 59 ½ are generally considered early or premature distributions.
2. Early distributions are usually subject to an additional 10 percent tax and must be reported to the IRS.
3. Distributions you rollover to another IRA or qualified retirement plan are not subject to the additional 10 percent tax. You must complete the rollover within 60 days after the day you received the distribution.
4. The amount you roll over is generally taxed when the new plan makes a distribution to you or your beneficiary.
5. If you made nondeductible contributions to an IRA and later take early distributions from that same IRA, the portion of the distribution attributable to those contributions is not taxed.
6. If you received an early distribution from a Roth IRA, the distribution is not taxed.



There are several exceptions to the additional 10 percent early distribution, such as when the distributions are used for the purchase of a first home, certain medical and educational expenses, or if you become disabled. To find out more go to [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov).

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## *The Spirit of Leadership Column*

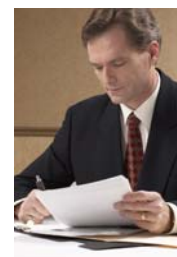
### *Integrity – From the Inside Out*

**I**t is important for leaders to demonstrate integrity. In order to effectively lead, we must continually keep ourselves in “check” and make sure there is alignment between our character and actions. Integrity drives wise decisions and earns respect.

Integrity is defined as the state or quality of being entire or complete; wholeness; entireness; an unbroken state. It is referenced as a moral soundness; honesty; freedom from corrupting influence or motive. Integrity is the internal “stuff” of our personhood. When someone has integrity, it means they bring strength and courage to any situation. Integrity stands in the hard places and makes the hard decisions for the good of the whole and the long term. Integrity says that honesty is a higher truth than any dishonest short cut.

*What does a person with strong integrity operating in his/her character look like?*

1. They have the ability to connect authentically and with kindness.
2. They seek truth relentlessly (which leads to finding and operating in reality).
3. They embrace problem situations head-on and without fear.
4. They get results.
5. They are oriented toward continual improvement and growth.



In today’s uncertain times, the importance of leading with integrity should not be underestimated. It is too easy to find ourselves distracted by short-term interests or the pressure of our environment. Under these types of pressures, we can be tempted to take shortcuts that lead to disaster. Today’s leaders must walk the higher path. In areas where we fall short on integrity, customers and profitability will suffer. Undeniably, poor decisions lead to negative consequences. Most of us do not have to look far, or think too long to recall an example of that scenario. A very real example is how the lack of integrity of some leaders and individuals resulted in the state of our economy today. Success always rests upon the foundation of integrity.

Think of yourself as a builder and your life as your home. Every day you have opportunities to hammer a nail, place a board, or erect a wall. It is critical to build carefully because this is the only life you have. The plaque on the wall says, “Life is a step-by-step project.” Your life tomorrow will be the result of the decisions and actions you make today. *Live a good life, live a life of integrity.*

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