



TALENT JOURNEY

BUILD A TEAM • CREATE A DESTINY

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Leadership Competencies in Talent Management

It is predicted that more companies will go out of business over the next decade than in any other period to date. This is only partially due to the economic recession the world is facing. Other factors such as globalization, innovation, and technological advancements will also play a significant role in the re-composition of the marketplace.

There is no shortage of advice for leaders when it comes to what one should do to survive in these tough times. The tactics include strategic ideas, marketing approaches, leadership philosophies and execution methodologies, to name a few. Most often those tactics, when approached in isolation are futile. We suggest there is no silver bullet, but instead sustainable organizations must balance and excel in three key business dimensions.

1. Strategic/Systems Capability: Purpose orientation
2. Operational Excellence: Process orientation
3. Emotional Intelligence: People Orientation

Excelling in these arenas requires organizations to build strong competence within the company-wide leadership team.

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Are You Managing Your Time Effectively?

Highly Effective Time Management

By changing how you think about your tasks, you can create a better return on investment for your time

Do you have more 'to-dos' than time in your day? Is lack of time preventing you from reaching more of your goals? If you had more time, what would it mean to your business, your finances, your family – your life? No one is given more than 24 hours a day. How then do some people accomplish so much while others drown in incomplete 'to-do' lists, missed deadlines and unmet

objectives?

Effective time management is the process of ensuring that all of your time is spent on activities that move you closer to your goals. What you do is far more important than how quickly you do it.

The bottom line, how you spend your time determines your success. The most successful business leaders and entrepreneurs invest their time very carefully.

Those who develop effective habits for time management create a competitive advantage. The secret is understanding where time is best invested and developing systems, processes, behaviors and habits for effective use of time and priority management.

Change Your Attitude – To change results it is necessary to change behavior. Significant behavior change requires a change in perspective or attitude; in other words, how you think. Effective time habits require effective time attitudes. Think about your time as a limited resource to be invested rather than spent.

Know What You Want – Make a list of your top priorities, both personal and professional. This process helps clarify where to focus your energy and speeds decision-making when events arise that are not top priorities. Daily, weekly, monthly and annual prioritization is a powerful time management habit.

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To achieve this, progressive organizations are implementing competency-based leadership structures. They create a HR Talent Management system (TMS) that guides them in hiring, evaluating, developing, and rewarding the critical behaviors that will drive high performance in their unique organization.

What are competencies? According to Wikipedia, they are the “standardized requirements for an individual to properly perform a specific job.” When integrated into a HR Talent Management system, they encompass a combination of knowledge, skills and behavior that differentiate superior from average performers.

Here are some examples of common leadership competencies categorized by business dimension:

Strategic/Systems Ability	Operational Excellence	Relational Intelligence
Strategic Planning	Initiative	Self Management
Networking and Partnering	Personal Accountability	Communication Skills
Conceptual Thinking	Informing	Interpersonal Ability
Innovation/ Creativity	Goal Management	Influence
Managing Change	Performance Management	Accountability for Others
Planning and Organizing	Results Orientation	Leading Others
Decision Making	Problem Solving	Developing Others
Continuous Learning	Resiliency	Team Building
Customer Focus	Continuous Improvement	Conflict Management

*Talent Journey’s assessment tools can be used to evaluate leadership competency in hiring, performance feedback, development and succession planning. Go to www.thetalentjourney.com

Determining and evaluating staff against a strategic view of competencies yields the competitive advantage to survive and thrive in the 21st century.

Making The Shift

So, how would you develop a competency model? In exploring several different sources of research around framing leadership competencies for organizations, a commonality is found.

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Establish Your Personal 80/20 Rule – Typically, 80 percent of success comes from 20 percent of your effort. Determine what your most profitable 20 percent is and spend the majority of your time in those activities.

Eliminate Unproductive Activity – One of the most practical exercises for better time use is a personal time study. Track activities in 15-minute increments for 3-5 days. Look for opportunities to eliminate unproductive behaviors that do not pertain to top priorities. Often the greatest gains in productivity are the result of eliminating bad habits and non-value added activity.



Automate – Use technology to your advantage.

Automation is a great way to multiply your efforts. Review your time study for opportunities to memorize transactions, create automatic activity series, sort e-mail, auto-complete fields, etc. While it takes time to set up, it is always a wise investment.

Delegate – If the return on your time investment is less than the cost, yet the task is too important to eliminate and cannot be automated, consider delegating it. Opportunities abound to use staff, a virtual assistance, contract professionals, temporary help, family members, etc. Eliminate dependency on specific individuals by creating checklists and procedures for each delegated task. This helps bridge the gap if you have to do the task again *and* improves training effectiveness with new people.

Simplify – Look for every opportunity to simplify processes, decision-making, communications, proposals, customer tracking, etc.

Leverage – This concept refers to multiplying the return you get from every effort. Perhaps creative work can be re-purposed or meetings can serve multiple functions. Look for every place to consolidate your efforts and get greater return on your time investment.

Vision – Take time to create a clear, succinct vision for both yourself and your organization. Don’t stop at the words; create pictures of what it will look like once you accomplish your vision. Imagine what it will feel like once you get there. The more emotionally tied you are to your vision; the easier it is to remember the success habits you are trying to create.

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Although the nomenclature may differ from organization to organization, most leadership competency structures narrow down to a nearly universal set of core competencies (see our list of competencies above). These universal competencies can be customized to the unique strategy, mission, and culture of your specific organization.

Here are some easy first steps when considering a shift to a competency based leadership TMS within your organization:

1. Make a list of the most important leadership competencies for your organization.
2. Survey the executive staff. Ask the executive staff to identify which 9-12 competencies are most essential to driving strategic success.
3. Identify the current level of proficiency by inviting the executive staff to rate the leadership team's proficiency in each competency.
4. Determine gaps and plan for improvement.

This simple methodology provides the architectural framework needed to develop competency based behavioral interview questions, a performance appraisal structure, and training & recognition systems. It links all stages of your leadership Talent Management System into one cohesive system.

Identifying and capitalizing on the existing competencies of an organization in addition to investing in developing deeper competencies within a firm is foundational for organizational success. Focusing on a few important core competencies enables an organization to shape the growth and development of their leaders around business requirements and talent gaps.

~ Diane Brown, Talent Journey, Copyright protected 2009

Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.
– Theodore Roosevelt

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Time Blocking – Complete similar types of work all at the same time. Opportunities for blocking include client visits, telephone work, computer work, writing, e-mail correspondence and completing personal tasks. This strategy maximizes your time investment far better than moving from one unrelated task to another throughout the day.

Analyze – Keep track of what's working really well, personally and for the business. Also, track opportunities for improvement. Review your list regularly and implement new habits, processes and systems at every opportunity.

Successful entrepreneurs create highly effective habits. If time management is actually effective priority management, then creating habits for better self-management is critical to your success. Think about the impact that one or two new time habits and/or attitudes could have on your business over the next year.

Perhaps your best time investment right now is creating your personal action plan for highly effective time habits.

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ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Delegation

Test how well you delegate authority to your employees by asking yourself these questions:

- **How often** do I say: "I should have taken care of that myself"?
- **What is** the turnover rate among my employees?
- **Are my** employees frequently absent when they're not sick?
- **How many** people that I have directly supervised still work with me?
- **How many** of my employees would follow me if I took a new job at another company?

Source: *Streetwise Managing People*, by Bob Adams et al., Adams Media Corp., Holbrook, MA 02343

Great Managers Remove Obstacles

"Managing is the art of getting things done through and with people in formally organized groups. It is the art of creating an environment in which people can perform as individuals and yet cooperate towards the attainment of group goals. It is the art of removing blocks to such performance."

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TALENT JOURNEY
BUILD A TEAM • CREATE A DESTINY

P.O. Box 131172
Carlsbad, CA, 92013

Tel: 760-471-2703

E-mail:

diane@thetalentjourney.com

Visit Our Web Site at

www.thetalentjourney.com



The Spirit of Leadership Column

Positive Self-Direction

By Alison Sfreddo

There are a myriad of events and circumstances in our lives that can lead us down a path – usually of least resistance – that we would not (and sometimes should not) be on.

When I was experiencing my own challenging times, I can vividly recall a visit home and the encouraging words of my father. As we walked on an early April morning, he told me that spring was a time for new beginnings. I believed those words, and the hope that they brought, and within weeks, I found a new job with greater financial and career possibilities.

There is a ‘springtime’ for everyone. By taking a series of small but no less significant steps, we can change both the direction and meaning that we have always envisioned for ourselves and our lives.

Tips for success:

- ◆ **Reach out to family and friends.** Welcome the care and guidance from those around you. The love and friendship of those in your inner circle can help you maintain a sense of well being and support.
- ◆ **Find a place for inner peace.** Your spiritual well-being is critical for both your self-esteem and your sanity. Whether it is a place of worship or a special quiet place for meditation, achieving inner peace will bring balance and joy into your life.
- ◆ **Maintain your focus.** There are elements around us that may bring temporary comfort and distract us from the things most important to us. Take a moment to acknowledge those things, and make a conscious effort to push them aside and let them go.
- ◆ **Explore your options.** As oddly as it may seem, if you find yourself unsure of your future career path, take a moment to reflect on what you were doing and objectively assess if this is what you were destined to do. From there, explore the different paths available, weigh the pros and cons and determine the one that best fits with your values and goals.
- ◆ **Remember to breathe.** When it feels like things are moving a mile a minute, it’s easy to be carried away and lose track of your vision. Remember to slow down, smell the roses and breathe the fresh air. Be thankful there are multitudes of opportunities just waiting for you.
- ◆ **Envision and believe!** Begin each day “dreaming” about where you would like to be in your life and what you would like to have. Sooner than you think, these things will become yours.



Spring should be a time of renewal, hope and promise as my father told me, a time of new beginnings. Take a deep breath and enjoy your new journey!

~ Alison Sfreddo is a member of the The Training Connection, Inc. www.trainingconnection.com

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

— John Quincy Adams

TJ Associates 760-471-2703 or E-mail: diane@thetalentjourney.com

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