

The Right Staff

How do you get the right staff in the right place at the right time?

A MAJOR factor in answering this question is how stable the organisation is. The higher the rate of change in your organisation or industry then the more complex it usually is to get the right people in the right place at the right time. This often means getting the most capable people now! But motivation is important. If someone has the capability but not the motivation to do something required to perform, then the necessary behaviour is very unlikely to arise and they will not perform; similarly, if someone has the motivation but not the capability. You need both motivation and capability for performance.

The dynamism of the organisation is likely to have an affect on the motivations of the staff in the organisation, although this effect may be dichotomous with some staff being motivated by a fast changing environment, while

others are demotivated by it. So it can be hard to predict what motivates individuals and simple analyses are often wrong. For example, there is a lot of research indicating that there is a "myth" around bonuses. The myth is that external rewards in the form of bonuses improve productivity or results. In fact, research shows that it can lead to team members to make poorer decisions and then focussing on trying to get their bonus, even when it is at odds with what is best for the organisation.¹

A good model on human motivation is necessary because it helps you to understand people's motivations, and motivations underlie their behaviours and resulting performance.

Once we can understand motivation better, then you need to integrate all the

"people" systems in the organisation to maximise staff performance. Systems such as: Organisational Branding & Recruitment; Selection & Assessment; Induction; Performance Management; Training and Development; Promotion; and Exit & Redundancy.

Some people systems tend to have a greater effect on the calibre of employees than others, and the selection and assessment system is a critical one.

As the saying goes: "You can train a turkey to climb a tree but it is much easier to hire a squirrel."

One way to get the capability right in the organisation is to use a "talent pool". If a talent pool is set up right it can help make sure that three important systems are all addressed, which get you right staff in the right place at the right time: performance management, training and development and promotion.

Principles for setting up talent pools in organisations

Clear Purpose: Be clear about what is the reason and benefit you want to get from the Talent Pool. For instance is it to help retention of good people or to help ensure a succession plan?

Commitment of Senior Team:

Get the buy in of senior managers to develop a leadership culture in the business (as opposed to management one) and a strong leadership pipeline at all levels of the business.

Real Leadership and Development Needs:

Understand the essence of authentic leadership through formal on-going leadership development learning and then identify key leadership development needs and priorities versus the wants. Make sure the program increases self-awareness, as a prerequisite to leading others is self-awareness.

Map Out the Whole Process:

Develop a practical, broad ranging experiential learning program, including significant cross functional business orientated projects and

addressing unique business challenges, together with leading a functional team at a senior level.

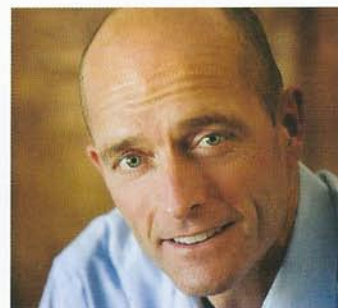
Delegate Key Responsibilities to the Participants. Ensure they know to take control of their career development like it is their own strategic plan. Help them develop their brand and a what's possible 5 to 20-year career plan which incorporates business, career, family and personal aspirations and goals.

Measure Progress: Evaluate both performance (what is being achieved) with competencies (how it is being achieved). The 'hows' are the keys to long-term success of the program. This is in the spirit of what is not measured is not managed.

Support with the Right People:

Involve both organisational executives so they interact periodically with the talent pool face-to-face share leadership experiences, war stories and lessons on the leadership journey and an executive leadership development coach to provide a critical objective perspective.

Setting up and implementing talent pools offer many more benefits than just the obvious ones if they are done well, so they are tailored to the needs of the specific organisation, resourced appropriately (not too much or too little), and a "cookie-cutter" approach avoided.



MARK OLIVER

Mark is the CEO of MarkTwo Consulting, and over the last 20 years has designed and facilitated advanced leadership and assessment courses for Australian 'Top 100' and American 'Fortune 500' companies in Australasia, USA, China, Singapore and India. He has three honours degrees from Cambridge University and lives in Melbourne. The revised second edition of his book, *The Seven Motivations of Life*, was released in April 2013.

