

WHAT IF ALL YOUR EMPLOYEES WERE TOP PERFORMERS?

Employers are making difficult choices based on the economic realities – How can they ensure decisions are good for business?

Now is an ideal time for Business Leaders, Owners, and Board of Directors to examine their people, culture, performance requirements, and what is needed to stay competitive and deliver on business objectives. Poor performance is no longer an option as it has the greatest impact on competitiveness, profit, and revenue. Businesses need their top performers. How do you identify, retain, and attract more of them?

Top performers love what they do, leverage their strengths, engage, develop, and are recognized by their employers; they fit their job. Fit includes behaviours, cognitive attributes (how we are wired), skills, motivational considerations, and occupational interests that make someone a top performer. Many employees are misaligned in roles where they are destined for average performance. Knowing the success profile of a role helps leaders determine who fits where. It also helps reduce and overcome costly hiring mistakes.

What is the true cost of the wrong hire and mismanagement? Hiring or retaining an employee with the right job fit has a dramatic impact on revenue and profitability. Once employees are in the right job does not mean they will be top performers. It is important that managers engage, motivate, and develop their employees. Managers who disengage from their employees put performance and retention at risk.

Building a top performing organization takes work but has a significant impact on the bottom line. Taking the following steps can help you increase employee engagement and performance:

1. Understand the job. Examine the job positions in your company. What skills, cognitive abilities, behaviours, qualities, and occupational fit do you need in for each job? This is the first step in establishing job fit.
2. Know your top performers. What are the distinct differences between bottom and top performers? Assessments are a great way to understand what occupational interests, behaviours, skills, and cognitive abilities they have – the facts – information that can't always be determined in an interview. These facts will help you establish the profile of a top performer and what the key differences are from bottom performers.
3. Engage your talent. Look at your current employees. Are they in the right jobs? This is a chance to discuss career paths and job changes before looking for external hires. They already know your business and have a vested interest in success. Hiring new employees at the expense of someone who is just in the wrong job could be costly.
4. Recruit for fit. As part of the interview process, put potential hires through the same assessment process. Do they match what you are looking for? Remember, you can't change how someone is wired, but you can slightly adjust required behaviours through training and coaching. If someone is way off in job fit, even if you feel they'll do great – their true self will eventually come through.
5. Develop your employees. Use assessment results to coach employees or move them to positions where they align in your company. You may have a great sales rep that would like to progress into management. This may seem like a great move, however, they may lack the right fit for the job and the promotion could put sales revenue and their future at risk. It is important to use results to engage employees and invest in their development – promotion is not always the answer.

6. Look for future leaders. Giving managers the chance to become more aware of their own strengths and those of their employees, will help them build stronger relationships, communication, and leadership skills. Managers could very well be your future leaders.

People are happiest and most productive when they are fully engaged and winning. Taking the time to assess your employees will help you improve engagement, productivity, retention, and profitability. The economy will bounce back, the demographic reality still exists, and companies that choose to invest in ways to harness performance, will be ready to meet today's and tomorrow's labour and business challenges with their top performers.

By Glen Sollors

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