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Succession Planning: Developing the Next Generation of Leaders

Perhaps one of the most important tools for maintaining an organization's long term stability and growth is a rigorous succession planning process.

Overview

There is a good deal known about how to select leaders. There are well over 7,000 books, articles, and presentations on leadership, and some reasonable consensus has emerged about the key issues. Research points to the following set of predictors as the most reliable and valid indicators of leadership potential:

Effective predictor 1

Actual performance of the candidate's team or organizational unit. **Therefore, evaluate real-time performance data.**

Effective predictor 2

Peer, supervisor, and subordinate feedback on the candidate's effectiveness for high predictive validity. For example, it's been demonstrated that subordinate ratings are as effective as (and much less expensive than) assessment center data in predicting managerial performance seven years later. **Therefore, use 360° instruments as a key component of the assessment process.**

Effective predictor 3

The presence of derailment factors in the candidate's profile. **Therefore, look for tendencies to over control, exploit, micro-manage, resist using appropriate consequences, or to be arrogant, political, egotistical, irritable, passive-aggressive, vindictive, abrasive, insensitive, or aloof.** All are proven correlates of managerial careers that flounder, stall, or derail.

Effective predictor 4

Cognitive ability and four specific personality characteristics account for most of the variance in leadership effectiveness. **Therefore, measure the following psychological characteristics:**

Intellectual virtuosity

broad range of interests, creative, broad-minded, curious, open to experience, and raw intellectual horsepower.

Conscientiousness

prudent, will to achieve, responsible, solid integrity, strong work ethic, planful and organized.



Surgency

extraverted, assertive, high-energy, fluent speaker, desire to advance, eager decision maker, and persuasive- “leaderlike.”

Emotional stability

self-confident, self-accepting, balanced, stress resistant, tolerant of uncertainty, graceful under pressure, flexible, and effective at handling conflict and negative feedback.

Agreeableness

diplomatic, cooperative, empathic, friendly, effective communicator, trusting, and good-natured.

Planning For Success

- 1. Analyze Top Jobs, Future Jobs, and Critical Success Factors**
- 2. Interview and Test the Candidates**
- 3. Feedback Meeting with Candidate**
- 4. Consult with Candidate’s Manager**
- 5. Facilitate Development Plan**
- 6. Exploit Executive Development and Succession Plan Best Practices**