

Developing Tomorrow's Leaders

Cultivating the existing talent within an organization to identify and develop tomorrow's leaders is a smart strategy. Every day leaders are developing under the organizational radar. It makes sense to be aware and guide the development. The resulting talent pool will help fulfill some of the organization's leadership succession needs.

Talent development initiatives many times fall within the Human Resources or Training department. These professionals recommend how the initiative is structured, deployed, tracked, and evaluated. A formal, repeatable process is created that is tweaked as feedback is collected and integrated into the evolving process.

Initiatives can be a broad stroke across an entire organization or targeted towards key mission-critical positions.

Regardless of the focus, organizations of any size that take on talent development takes on a large commitment to its workforce. Overall it says to its employees, we value you, we want you to be a long term member of our team, and we want to invest in you. With employees hearts and minds engaged backing off that commitment could undermine the gained benefits. In other words, you are in for the long haul.

Get started now if you haven't already. It is important to prepare for the time when the older workers retire taking all that institutional knowledge and company experience with them.

Most initiatives contain a multi-level approach. General development for all, specialized for potential and existing first line, middle level, and executive leaders.

Many successful initiatives contain an experiential component that involves exercising new skills on the job with formal feedback and coaching. Sometimes this includes taking on new roles in different departments. This critical component

Commitment to continued investment in the process of developing internal leaders that are well equipped to step up to new roles helps organizations thrive.

keeps employees motivated and provides demonstrated skills assessment opportunities.



Sending employees to offsite courses is many times a part of these initiatives. Organizations are careful to ensure they know the learning objectives and content of these offsite courses and have a way to tie it back to internal objectives and performance measures. Reinforcement back on the job is provided.

Another common component is an automated tracking system. This will track attributes associated to an employee helpful in creating succession plans. These systems differ in complexity and is scalable to an organization's specific needs. The system ensures no one is overlooked when considering talent to fill new roles.

The freedom to fail, an important component, allows for employee growth. All worthwhile lessons, so the wisdom goes, are learned from failures along life's road.