

Focus on Talent in a Down Economy

No organization can continue to survive, prosper and grow without having the right people in the right jobs. Winning is about having the best people on your team.

It doesn't help if you're surrounded by people who are less talented than you are. So much of leadership is about accomplishing results through others. The building of a great team starts with developing great leadership or a "great coaching staff" - a staff that gets rewarded for building a great, high performance team.

The soft side of a coaching leadership style is all about making the hard choices. The coaching leader accepts the personal responsibility for making tough decisions about, who is going to be on the team, and who is not. In a down economy it is more important than ever to strengthening your organization with the best talent. Strengthen your talent pool by: investing in A players (the best 10 to 20 percent), developing your B players (the mid 60 to 70 percent), and acting decisively on C players (the bottom 10 to 20 percent). This is not about passing judgment on people. It is about taking a snapshot in time and assessing the bench strength of your players. This process is not about using people simply as if they are merely a means to an end. It has everything to do with seeding the organizational team with solid talent, coaching and inspiring that talent to self-actualize, and helping that talent create meaning for themselves and the organization.

Once you have identified the different levels of talent, you can then begin the dialogue with each player at each level that will allow you to drive his or her level of performance in a direction that will best meet both personal needs, and the business objectives of the organization. This approach amounts to: (1.) Looking out for and strategically placing your very best talent; (2.) Challenging the mid-level talent to get better; and (3.) Deciding what role, if any, your least talented players will have.

One of the greatest barriers to optimum team performance is having people on the teams that are not capable of pulling their weight. Keeping the wrong people around is unfair to the right people because they see their hard work impeded by those who cannot or will not perform as needed. As an organization or a leader, you cannot afford to pamper under performers in a good or bad economy. Additionally, you cannot risk not taking care of and rewarding your over achievers or best performers. This process of ranking your players is directed at evaluating and assembling the best talent for your specific team and placing the right person in the right position for the overall benefit of the person and the organization.

As an organization you must organize around what you want to become, not simply around what is being done on a daily basis. Leaders at all levels must become the developers of a "talent pool" for the future. Anyone in any supervisory/leadership role must understand that their primary job is to focus on the building and development - "the coaching" - of the team (people) for which they are responsible. Also, it is not just a matter of building a talent inventory of people; it is also very important that you create the "play book" that fits "the strategy" and an environment in which that talent can perform to their full potential. Every member of the team needs to clearly understand and be able to carry out his or her play book role, so the team can implement the desired overall winning strategy.

The strength of an organization does not lie in its structure; it is centered in the collective strength of its leaders and the people they lead. As an organization strives to survive, sustain or become a great entity, it must continually invest in and grow great people.

About Ingbretsen Consulting LLC: Interested in putting these tips into action? Roger Ingbretsen provides business guidance to professionals, managers, supervisors and all individuals looking for "real world" career development information. He'll coach and guide you step-by-step as you seek greater success in your career and the success of your organization. To know more and claim dozens of Rogers free articles go to <http://www.ingbretsen.com> to help people use their talent to the fullest go to <http://www.planyourcareernowebok.com>

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