Working Resources is a Leadership Consulting, Training and Executive Coaching Firm Helping Companies Assess, Select, Coach and Retain Emotionally Intelligent Leaders; Emotional Intelligence-Based Interviewing and Selection; Competency Modeling; Executive Selection; Succession Planning; Executive Coaching and Leadership Development; Multi-Rater 360-Degree Feedback; Career Coaching; Culture Surveys and Corporate Retreats

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Winning Leadership in Turbulent Times…Developing Emotionally Intelligent Leaders

The ability to select, motivate, develop, engage and retain top people is critical to a company's success. If you want to build a company where people love to work you have to know how to hire and keep great people. Unfortunately, a poor hire can cost a company a great deal of money and cause undue distress and wasted time for everyone involved. Great companies and managers start with optimistic, change-resilient, and committed people whose values fit the workplace culture. Keeping great people involves creating a healthy work environment where people can use all their knowledge, creativity, and skills. Self-managed organizations create work environments where people can continuously learn and make decisions.

Tracy is Vice President of Human Resources at a fast growing company in a very competitive market. However, most of the company's managers are extremely busy and find the hiring process very boring. Many resent time taken away from "important work" that needs to be done. Resumes are glanced at. Interviews consist of questions made up as the interview goes along. Interviewers talk most of the time, largely selling the virtues of the company. Hiring decisions are frequently based on impulse. Interviewers rarely find the time to get together as part of a team and discuss the candidate's work-related competencies. Tracy found herself exhausted with the process and knew there had to be a better way.

Sound familiar?

Believe it or not, hiring the right people can be enjoyable and fun.
Managers can easily learn an innovative method of interviewing, hiring and
retaining people based on a candidate's past performance. Research in the area
of emotional intelligence supports the idea that the ability to communicate
effectively with others is a critical workplace core competency. The selection and
assessment process is a great place to practice these skills.

The first place to start when hiring someone is to do a job analysis. Identify
the critical success factors or job-specific competencies by interviewing top
performers in that position. The next step is to create a job description based on
a candidate's past performance. If you want to hire great people, first define
exceptional performance. Effective job descriptions define what needs to be
accomplished, not the skills and experience the candidate needs to have.
Research demonstrates that the ability to accomplish desired goals is a better
predictor of future performance than the candidate's level of skills and
experience. Comparable past performance is a good predictor of future
accomplishment.

What is a competency?

**Competencies are behaviors that distinguish effective performers from
ineffective ones.** Certain motives, traits, skills, and abilities are attributed to
people who consistently behave in specific ways. A competency model depicts a
set of desired behaviors for a particular job position or level. A competency
model also implies that such behaviors are predictive of who is likely to be
successful in a position or role.

**Two distinct groups of competencies are assessed during any job
interview.**

- Job competencies are the specific skills, knowledge, and abilities required
  to accomplish any given task at work.

- Emotional Intelligence competencies refer to an individual's personality or
  emotional makeup. They consist of habits, abilities, and skills that transfer
  from job to job.

Key Points for Conducting an Effective Interview:

- Successful work behavior requires a mixture of job and people skills.
- "The single best predictor of future behavior is a candidate's past
  behavior."
- Stay focused and conscious. Overcome emotional reactions and remain in
  control. Listen 80% of the time.

Preparation is key to a successful, effective interview:

1. Do a Job Analysis. Identify critical success factors or job-specific competencies.
2. Create a job description based on what work needs to be accomplished.
3. Read candidate's resume and reference letters.
4. Decide how long the interview should take, generally 30-60 minutes.
5. Write job-specific competency questions. Example: Tell me how you have used your computer skills to accomplish a specific business objective?
6. Write Emotional Intelligence competency questions. Example: Some problems require developing a unique or different approach. Can you tell me about a time when you were able to develop such a different approach? (Inventiveness).
7. Indicate problem behaviors (would cause a competent person to fail) on Job Rating Sheet.
   Example: Unable to manage conflict
8. Decide if a work sample is necessary and how the skills should be demonstrated.
9. Incorporate valid, reliable and job-related pre-employment tests.

During the interview procedure:

1. Ask specific job skills and education competency questions that you have prepared.
2. Ask interpersonal skills competency questions. Emotional Intelligence competency questions represent approximately 70 % of any interview, supplemented by other types of questions.
3. Take notes, including any potential problem behaviors.
4. Note areas for personal and career development.
5. Call references.
6. Complete a Hiring Rating Sheet including ratings on general impression, interpersonal skills and job-specific competencies, work simulation observations, test results, references and recommendations for hire.

Hiring decision:

1. Each member of interviewing team shares analysis of candidate's work-related competencies and other job-related data with the hiring manager and a final decision is made.

Coaching Star Performers:

The most important thing managers can do is to guide individuals to develop in ways that will prepare them for changes in their work, increase their job effectiveness and improve their value to the organization. Mangers can help people take personal responsibility for growth and continuous learning aligning personal development goals with the organization's business goals.

People want to know how they are doing in their jobs and how the company is doing in its business. An increasingly popular and powerful means for managers and employees to get information on their performance is multi-rater 360-degree feedback. Used independently or as part of a management development program, multi-rater 360-degree feedback can enhance self-awareness by highlighting what supervisors, peers, subordinates, and customers see as an individual's strengths and development needs. It is an exceptionally effective tool for change. No other organizational action strategy has more power for motivating employee behavior change than candid feedback from work associates. Multi-source assessment creates accountability and service to all stakeholders: supervisor, external and internal customers, including coworkers and direct reports. In recognition of the importance of human capital, organizations are spending billions of dollars to enhance human performance using multi-rater 360-degree feedback tools.

The objective of a multi-rater 360-degree feedback process is to improve the competencies, skills, and behaviors of a single person or group of individuals. Competencies have been called the DNA of organizations because they are the essence of a company's competitive advantage. Organizational core competencies are those qualities that distinguish an organization's products or services from those of its' competitors and establish value in the minds of its customers. A customized set of competencies for a specific position is developed and individuals are assessed on how well they demonstrate the desired competencies. Individuals are evaluated both on how they do the job and the results or outcomes achieved. Using 360-degree feedback instruments, employees can compare their own perceptions of their skills, abilities, and styles with the perceptions of others.

Multi-rater 360-degree feedback is a powerful process for developing people, renewing organizations, supporting a cultural change, team building, promotion and succession planning, management development, building learning cultures, and implementing strategic initiatives.

Organizations are flattening hierarchies by eliminating unnecessary layers of management and putting increased emphasis on empowerment, teamwork, continuous learning, individual development, and self-management. The Multi-Rater Model aligns with the organizations strategic vision to create opportunities for personal and career development and for aligning individual performance expectations with corporate values. As organizations change their culture to align with their vision and values, multi-rater feedback becomes a powerful method to communicate the new competencies required by the new values.

Multi-rater 360-degree feedback has many well-documented benefits:

- Defines corporate competencies. Identifies the critical factors that link job requirements with business objectives.
- Increases the focus on customer service.
- Creates a high-involvement workforce.
- Detects barriers to success.
- It gives employees, managers, and teams a clear understanding of personal strengths and areas for development.
- Increases employee retention
- Produces positive cultural change.
- Employees view feedback from different perspectives as fair, accurate, believable, and motivational
- The flexibility of the process makes it meaningful for people at all levels of the organization.
- Multi-rater feedback enhances the effectiveness of individual and team development, continuous improvement, cultural diversity, change management, executive coaching, and other company initiatives.

While creating a high-involvement culture, multi-rater 360-degree feedback provides a proactive system that aligns employees' behavior with organizational expectations. It promotes the corporate vision, improves employee interpersonal communication, and provides the constructive feedback most employees strongly desire.

How to Keep an Employee Engaged

Engaged workers produce more, make more money for the company, and create emotional engagement and loyal customers. They contribute to good working environments where people are productive, ethical and accountable. They stay with the organization longer and are more committed to quality and growth than are the other two groups of not-engaged and actively disengaged workers.

- ü Employees must have a strong relationship with their manager
- ü They must have clear communication from their manager
- ü They need a clear path set for concentrating on what they do best
- ü They need strong relationships with their coworkers
- ü They must feel a strong commitment with their coworkers so that they take risks and stretch for excellence

Engaged employees tend to get the least amount of focus and attention from managers, in part because they're doing what they are needed to do. They set goals, meet and exceed expectations and charge enthusiastically toward the next tough task.

Great managers don't leave these excellent employees alone. They spend most of their time with the most productive and talented people because they have the most potential.

The challenge for managers comes when the first signs of disengaging appear from an engaged worker. The symptoms need to be addressed immediately or else the disconnection is most likely to continue. Most of the time this disengagement process can be interrupted by having meaningful conversations that strengthen commitment through relationship.

Measuring Employee Engagement

Since 1997 the Gallup Organization has surveyed approximately 3 million employees in three hundred thousand work units within corporations. This survey consists of 12 questions—called the "Q ^{12}" — that measures employee engagement on a five-point scale indicating weak to strong agreement. The analyses of survey results show that those companies with high Q ^{12} scores experience lower turnover, higher sales growth, better productivity, better customer loyalty and other manifestations of superior performance.

These are Gallup's 12 questions (Q ^{12}):

1. Do you know what is expected of you at work?
2. Do you have the materials and equipment you need to do your work right?
3. At work, do you have the opportunity to do what you do best every day?
4. In the last seven days, have you received recognition or praise for doing good work?
5. Does your supervisor, or someone at work, seem to care about you as a person?
6. Is there someone at work who encourages your development?
7. At work, do your opinions seem to count?
8. Does the mission/purpose of your company make you feel your job is important?
9. Are your associates (fellow employees) committed to doing quality work?
10. Do you have a best friend at work?
11. In the last six months, has someone at work talked to you about your progress?
12. In the last year, have you had opportunities at work to learn and grow?

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The *Gallup Management Journal's* semi-annual Employee Engagement Index puts the current percentage of truly "engaged" employees at *29 percent*. A majority of workers, *54 percent*, fall into the "not engaged" category, while *17 percent* are "actively disengaged."

Here is how the Gallup Organization further defines these three types of employees:

1. **(29%) Engaged** employees work with passion and feel a profound connection to their company. They drive innovation and move the organization forward.

2. **(54%) Not-engaged** employees are essentially "checked out." They're sleepwalking through their workday, putting in time—but not energy or passion—for their work.

3. **(17%) Actively disengaged** employees aren't just unhappy at work; they're busy acting out their unhappiness. Every day, these workers undermine what their engaged coworkers accomplish.

How to keep workers:

The ability to retain top people is critical to a company's success. Commitment, the bond between people and the organization, has become the vitamin C of business.

Retaining key people is corporate America's number 1 problem. A solution means more profitable companies, happier, more productive employees, and more satisfied customers.

In most organizations, the CEO sets the tone for how people are treated. Are people valued for what they do on a frequent, individual basis or are they grouped together as a line item in the budget?

Managers need to be held accountable for building a retention culture in their teams and in their departments. Research from the Saratoga Institute shows that 50 percent of work-life satisfaction is determined by the relationship a worker has with his or her boss.

Self-managed, agile organizations create work environments where people can continuously learn and make decisions.

Employers face an unexpected predicament. The economy is robust, technology is expanding our capacity, and global markets provide new customers, but companies don't have enough competent people to get the work done.

Retaining the right people is a strategic imperative. Managers and employing organizations need to understand what good people want and meet those expectations Our country's diverse workers want to control their own destiny, and make significant contributions to society through their work.

Research demonstrates that most people shift their loyalties to a new employer because of non-monetary reasons. Good people leave their jobs for the following typical reasons: 1.The company mission, vision, and values seem incongruent with their experience, 2. Leaders don't communicate how the employee is valued, 3. Inadequate resources and information, 4. No opportunity for advancement, and 5. Compensation issues.

There are a number of important strategies that companies can implement that will provide a solution to keeping valuable people. Which strategies are needed depends on the particular corporate culture. A comprehensive corporate culture survey designed and administered to all employees can help determine which strategies to employ.

Selected Strategies for Retaining Good People:

- Create a Statement of Values
- Share a common vision
- Offer an open management style
- Provide career growth, learning, and development
- Create exciting work and challenge
- Provide meaningful work
- Be flexible, with work hours, dress, work rules, telecommuting
- Work together as a team
- Create trust in senior leadership
- Provide job security
- Minimize work-related stress
- Increase competitiveness of rewards
- Establish quality of a company's product
- Provide opportunities to use skills on the job
- Trust your people
- Appreciate employees on a regular basis
- Reward leaders who listen and act on employee input
- Provide proper resources
- Encourage creativity and innovation
- Establish a learning culture
- Provide rewards based on performance
- Get people involved in decision-making
- Encourage collaboration
- Build everyone's self-esteem
- Demonstrate integrity of a company's business conduct.
- Provide support with managing change
- Facilitate open communication
- Make work fun
- Create balance between work and family

- Assign coaches or mentors who help employees not only with specific jobs, but in developing their careers
- By following this structured map, well-prepared interviewers can attract, hire, develop and retain great people whose values and competencies match the company's culture.