



Organizational DEVELOPMENTS

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It's Time to Bridge the Leadership Gap

By Diane Hanson

An insidious business crisis has been developing over the last two decades: an impending leadership shortage.

Through a combination of downsizing and a lack of training, American industry has deprived itself of "management bench strength." Many of our best and brightest managers have retired or gone into business for themselves after several rounds of layoffs. In fact, a mass exodus is predicted as baby boomers begin to retire.

The net result is that many of the best candidates for future leadership positions simply aren't available, and government statistics predict a 10 million shortfall of workers by 2010. As the service sector continues to grow in the U.S., future business strategy will be increasingly people intensive. Companies are learning that price is not the only business driver. Operational excellence and service are primary considerations in today's hectic world. With these factors in mind, businesses need to place top priority on attracting, retaining, and engaging talented workers and managers.

You can avoid this pending crisis in your organization by providing adequate training and learning opportunities that will prepare the next generation of leaders. Although some organizations hesitate to spend money on training, fearing that employees will pack up their new knowledge and move on, the reverse is more commonly true. Employees who see that management has their best interests at



heart are likely to stay. Supporting this concept is the fact that the most successful companies routinely invest in the development of their employees and managers.

A poor relationship with their manager and/or lack of opportunity for advancement are the two top reasons for costly employee turnover. Effective leaders must learn to create a motivational climate. That doesn't mean hanging posters that proclaim the merits of perseverance or dedication. Instead, it means learning what truly motivates employees and applying that knowledge.

Employees tend to value personal recognition and development more highly than salary increases; they often won't quit over monetary issues unless they are unhappy about other things.

They might ask themselves "Does my manager show interest in me? Is my good work acknowledged? Am I learning new skills?" "Is my manager accessible when I need assistance?"

Managers might ask themselves "Do I give my employees the necessary tools to improve their performance? Do I keep them in the information loop? Do I recognize their contributions and accomplishments?"

If the answers to these questions are "no" or "sometimes," it's time to

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Diane Hanson, President/CEO

President's Message

In this issue, we talk about several fundamental principles of effective management: the importance of strong leadership, the need for open communication, the value of a motivational climate, sufficient training and understanding of cultural differences.

While any one of these topics could serve as content for an entire newsletter issue and beyond, one central concept ties them all together. That concept is success.

Organizations that train and mentor today's employees to become tomorrow's leaders experience greater success—both today and tomorrow.

Companies that openly communicate with and between all levels achieve more of their goals. Businesses that value diversity and create an atmosphere where individuals are as important as profits, generate higher revenues.

In today's business environment, the fundamentals are as important as the latest and greatest. For managers who find the best combination for their organizations, success is bound to follow.

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learn more about effective management in today's world—especially regarding dissemination of information.

Old-style managers often choked off the flow of information—"I tell my workers only what I think they need to know"—as a means of displaying their power over their subordinates. It's still true that "knowledge is power," but hoarding hinders a manager's effectiveness.

Giving managers as many training opportunities as possible will enable them to perform at their full potential. And those outcomes will reflect positively on you and the company as a whole.

Leaders especially need training in creating a climate for teamwork.

The concept of "teams" has changed fundamentally over the years. Instead of being made up of full-time employees, in a single location, with on-site supervision, today's teams are much more complex. They can include employees, remote workers, outsource partners, vendors, independent contractors, temporary workers, and others. Team members can be in different buildings, different organizations, even different countries. Such situations can present major challenges to managers who haven't been trained

to foster teamwork or to supervise "virtually."

In addition, the complexity of today's work covers many aspects of business. Technology, law, human resources, security needs, environmental standards, and other factors can now impact what might once have been a relatively straightforward decision. Effective leaders must become familiar with issues that range far beyond their immediate responsibilities.

Improving inter-departmental communications through team building with your top management team

increases everyone's understanding of other functional areas and their unique needs and concerns. Planned rotation of assignments within the organization can also help broaden a manager's perspective. Someone who has spent 15 or 20

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years managing a single function won't have the broad perspective of an employee who's worked in purchasing, human resources, production, and other areas.

We'll be able to avoid a future leadership gap only if we recognize that the costs of training and development are invaluable investments in the future of a company, and in the people who one day will be its leaders.

Call CRD for training on any of the following topics:

- The Role of Management
- Communicating expectations and evaluating performance
- Coaching techniques
- Interpersonal skills
- Intercultural communications
- Training others/ giving clear directions
- Delegation
- Strategic planning
- Planning/goal setting
- Creating a motivational work environment
- Managing change
- Conducting performance reviews
- Facilitation skills/Conducting effective meetings
- Time management and organization
- Managing conflict
- Team leadership
- Management communications
- Problem solving/creativity
- Negotiation skills
- Empowering employees
- Presentation skills
- Meeting the press
- Interviewing skills
- Employment law issues: Sexual harassment, EEO, ADA, hiring/firing issues
- Managing diversity
- Working with diverse personalities
- Project management



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Understanding Different Cultures in the Workplace

Interested in importing American semiconductors, a Japanese businessman re presenting several manufacturers of electronic goods came to the U.S. He met with Jim Barnes, Marketing Director for an American semiconductor wholesaler. During his sales presentation, Jim proposed what he thought was an excellent price and payment terms. The Japanese executive did not respond. Almost a minute passed and still there was no response. Frustrated and feeling that there may be a cultural clash, Jim said, "Would you like me to repeat the offer?" From then on, negotiations stopped and Jim never successfully closed the deal.

What happened and what could Jim have done differently? There are several things professionals should consider in business negotiations with the Japanese.

- If a Japanese businessman perceives a speaker as being too blunt or impatient in his approach, he will break off the negotiations politely, preserving the speaker's outward dignity so that the speaker does not "lose face."

- Japanese are relationship builders and oriented to long-term associations. Therefore, it may require several meetings to get acquainted before a decision can be made.
- The Japanese make decisions by consensus. As a representative for the electronics group, the Japanese businessman would relay the information to the group who would then discuss it in an orderly, often lengthy fashion before making a decision, which might occur only after a second or third meeting with the American firm.

The intricacies of working in a cross-cultural platform may be subtle, but, as you can see from this example, they are critically important to your success. To help companies that face this issue, CRD now offers a workshop titled, "**Understanding Different Cultures.**"

This one-day workshop focuses on interpretations and reactions to intercultural communication. It will help you learn to overcome barriers to communication across cultures, recognize the "unseen" aspects of culture, and apply principles of

effective communication to the corporate environment.

Use the workshop to learn how culture influences our values, attitudes and behavior on the job, how it conditions our verbal and nonverbal communication, our participation at meetings, and how we manage conflict. Explore how the interpretation of events determines our reactions, and how to communicate effectively by telephone, teleconference, and emails with global clients and customers who speak English as a second language.

Beyond the global aspects, effective managers need to recognize and adapt to the work styles and cultures of their individual employees. A leader who is aware of different cultural dimensions is better prepared to effectively manage a diverse workforce and demonstrate sensitivity to individual needs in developing his or her employees. This leads to enhanced employee performance and retention, and ultimately influences your bottom line!

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