



Performing a Talent Audit: A Case Study

Industry: Commercial Construction

Company Profile

- \$90 - \$120 million annual sales (Ohio and South Carolina)
- Privately held company
- Services many customers within a 100 mile radius of home offices
- Range of decision makers (CEO and Executive Level)
- 200 employees

Problem

As an industry leader in forward thinking and proactive business practices, this company decided to perform a talent audit designed to assess the competencies of all associates who have interaction with customers and prospects. Their focus was to understand their associates' ability to build relationships, understand customer requirements, secure new business, and apply the technical skills necessary to successfully contribute to closing the sale. There were differences in opinion among the executive leadership team about the competencies of individuals, as well as how the company performed as a whole. These differing opinions created disagreements about who should be promoted and which projects the company should pursue. In addition, only a few associates had individual personal development plans and goals and objectives across the company were not in alignment.

The following goals were outlined at the start of the project:

- Development Planning (individual)
- Development Planning (group or team)
- Succession Planning (specific role)
- Succession Planning (acceleration pool)
- Individual Promotability
- Shortened cycle time from interaction with customer to closing the sale
- Increased revenue and margin

The following assumptions and guidelines were established prior to performing the talent audit:

- Assessments are needed to appropriately develop associates for future success
- Must be viewed by associates as an opportunity, not a threat
- Sense of urgency to communicate results is critical
- Initiative directly supports the company's Mission and Vision
- Increased margin and equity



- Senior leadership must embrace and support this initiative and manage change collectively.



Solution

The scope of work included assessing more than 50 associates, meeting with associates prior to the assessment to clearly communicate no one's career would be threatened as a result of the talent audit, providing a top line report to the executive committee showing the organizational picture of the company's strengths and opportunities for improvement, developing a pre-determined plan on how to present the information to the associates, and creating development plans based on the results.

The audit results concluded the following strengths and opportunities for improvement:

Strengths

- Networking, building relationships, and promoting company image
- Maximizing results by partnering as a customer advocate and pushing for quota attainment
- New business development by quickly identifying customer's needs, appropriately qualifying new prospects, communicating company's value proposition, and educating customers on their specific construction needs.

Opportunities for Improvement/Development

- Adapting approach to different buyer motivations
- Soliciting feedback on recommendations for customer's specific project
- Making persuasive presentations as a part of the selection process
- Gaining the customer's commitment (closing the sale)
- Seeking recognition as a professional

Result

Leadership's view of all associates was fact-based with validated data. The data eliminated the practice of making decisions based on perception and preference. An unexpected additional opportunity surfaced; an accurate view of the company's overall strengths and areas for improvement.

- Talent Audit validated Leadership's decision to include assessments as a part of the hiring process.
- Each associate had a development plan, as well as a career plan.
- Associates felt valued by the company. They appreciated seeing validated data confirming their strengths as well as areas for improvement.
- Development plans enabled managers to conduct effective reviews and accountability discussions with each individual.
- Company goals and objectives were aligned across all business units eliminating associate frustration and feelings of unfair or unequal treatment.
- Company was positioned to assemble the best team of associates for each project based on individual strengths.
- In addition to understanding individual performance, evaluated the company as a whole to



understand strengths and areas of improvement.