Star Talent: Investing in High-Potential Employee Development

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About Lisa

- Lisa Downs, MS Ed., CPLP, ACC
- ATD Board of Directors, 2013-2014
- Based in Redmond, WA (Seattle area)
- Independent leadership coach and consultant
- Experience in accounting, aerospace, insurance, IT, and telecommunications industries
- Leadership development work for last 13 years
Poll

How would you describe your current state with regard to developing your high potentials?

A. Just starting the work  
B. Have an existing program that needs revising  
C. Work has started; need to adjust the plan  
D. Haven’t started anything, though it’s a goal  
E. Simply exploring what we may want to do

A Bit of Research

• High potentials are 75% more likely to succeed in senior roles  
• 70% of high potentials will stay with their organizations if challenged (in a good way)  
• 82% of job seekers would favor employers with a high-potential program v. those without  
• 96% of executives strongly believe high-potential programs positively impact recruitment and retention  
• 43% of executives report their company doesn’t yet have a program in place

Sources: Corporate Executive Board and Korn Ferry
High Performer v. High Potential

How do you distinguish between the two?

High Performers are Not Always High Potentials...
- 71% of high performers are not high potentials
- 29% of high performers are high potentials

...But, High Potentials are Mostly High Performers
- 93% of high potentials are high performers
- 7% of high potentials are not high performers

Source: HR High-Potential Management Survey 2012, Corporate Leadership Council

High Performers
- Technical or managerial experts
- Superior performers year after year
- Great depth of organizational knowledge
- Trusted resources within the organization
- Difficult to replace in kind
- Widely recognized outside the company
- Love what they do; may not aspire to broader management

High Potentials
- Agile learners
- Promotable outside their areas
- Candidates for senior management positions
- Highly curious; easily learn new functions
- Deal well with ambiguity and complexity
- Impatient; don’t accept the status quo
- “Push the envelope” but willing to take the heat

Source: HR High-Potential Management Survey 2012, Corporate Leadership Council
Key Attributes of High Potentials

Aspiration

Ability

Engagement

Source: The Corporate Executive Board Company, 2014

Identifying High-Potential Talent

Performance Reviews  Talent Reviews

Individual Development Plans  Career Plans

Anecdotal Data  Metrics

(Merit Increases, Promotions, Equity Grants)

NOTE: Only 1 in 3 orgs. use hard assessment data to identify HiPos (Corporate Executive Board).
Transparency: To Tell or Not to Tell

63% of organizations don’t tell
89% of organizations don’t ask
70% of HiPos will stay if challenged

Source: The Corporate Executive Board Company, 2014

Parts and Pieces
• Coaching
• Mentoring
• Assessments (360°)
• Formal learning
• Applied learning (case studies)
• Stretch assignments
• Special events
• Rotations or shadows
• Facilitated group sessions

Possible Partners
• Executives
  • Sponsors
  • Mentors
  • Event hosts and speakers
• Team Members and HR, OD
• Vendors
• Subject Matter Experts
• Executive Assistants
• Managers of HiPos
Poll

How do you currently measure success of employee development initiatives?

A. ROI analysis
B. Kirkpatrick’s 4 Levels (or at least a couple of them)
C. Metrics against success criteria
D. A combination of the above
E. Other
F. We don’t do much of anything right now

Measurement

What does success look like?

• Rate of promotions and desired job rotations
• HiPo pool retention
• Results from pre- and post-assessments
• Results from surveys for behavior change and/or application of learning
• Rate of adoption of business solutions proposed by HiPos
• Positive feedback from formal learning
• Achievement of specific business results tied to work of HiPos
Communication

- Kickoff event and initial program overviews
- Manager events (live and/or virtual)
- FAQs (for HiPos and their managers)
- Executive/sponsor pieces
- Information packets (outline, calendar)
- Update communications
- Newsletters/special communications
- Social/online community postings

Key Questions

- What are the desired outcomes?
- What’s the HiPo identification process?
- What will be the level of transparency?
- What will be the role of the executives? Partners?
- What program components will you include?
- What is your anticipated timeline and budget? Infrastructure needed?
- Will it be mandatory? Piloted?
- Level of HiPos targeted? Managers and above?
Next Steps

What’s the first step you’ll take?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Action Plan: High-Potential Development</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name _______________________________ Date ____________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desired outcome for high-potential employee:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Desired outcome for high-potential program:</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Steps &amp; Resources:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Action Steps:</td>
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Thank you!

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