

# Navigating through the Talent Management Jungle

By Teresa Boughey



**Talent management, for some, is simply about training current employees, for others its succession planning for employees in key positions. But talent management should not be one isolated project for an organisation.**

Effective talent management is strategic and integrated with a few or many traditional HR elements, which support departmental and organizational goals. Talent management is about bottom line performance and it encompasses everything from what your organization does to attract talent, to how you manage and keep them. For example, attracting talent starts with how you market your organization.

Ask yourself:

- **How your organisation is perceived externally and internally?**
- **Are you known for being a company with high turnover only caring about the bottom line?**
- **Are your current and former employees spreading a good word about your firm?**
- **What is your brand promise?**

Having a clear understanding of the talents, skills, and behaviours of every employee is vital particularly in today's tough business climate and introducing talent mapping to your organisation is just one means of ensuring success.

## What is talent mapping?

Talent mapping will help you identify what the talent really looks like within your organization and what skills and behaviours are needed to successfully pursue the current business plan. Talent mapping charts every individual in a company according to their skills, competencies, and capabilities, and displays where they sit in terms of their talent within the company on a 'map.' It analyses their talent and potential – where they can add value now and where they could deliver value in the future.

Many companies bring in external providers to help them set up talent management programs. These experts bring an objective view point and can guide companies through the entire process, teaching them how to spot talent, create profiles for individuals, and set up talent maps showing how individuals can be developed in a formal and structured way.

## Talent is not constant and should be developed

Individuals' talents do not remain static. They need to be nurtured and developed, so that they remain motivated and committed to doing the best job they can.



A talent map helps companies focus on short-term goals without losing sight of the bigger picture. It helps them plan a long-term strategy and determine what talent will be needed to ensure future business success.

Line managers need to be coached on how to spot, nurture and develop talent and they should be incentivized and given the time needed to invest in staff so that their team realize that career development is a major business priority.

Talent mapping positions every employee in terms of their skills, attributes and capabilities, and clearly charts how they should progress. At a glance, managers can see when employee development is needed so that development and career progression opportunities can be provided in a timely manner.

Central to maximizing the value of talent maps is line managers' willingness to allow their people to progress within the organization. They need to think about the business strategy as a whole and how much more valuable these people will be to the business after their talent has been developed by working within other departments and having moved out of their comfort zone.

**Steps to better Talent Management**

As with most business initiatives, there isn't one right way to do talent management, Talent mapping is just one methodology.

Here are some top tips to start implementing an effective talent management process which will help organizations improve performance through enhanced management of existing talent and more targeted recruitment of external talent to fill specific skills gaps:

**1.** Identify the skills, knowledge, and technical expertise you require to make the organization succeed in the current economic climate. Making sure the requirements reflect the company's existing or desired emerging culture.

**2.** Find out the extent of your existing employees talent and plot this onto a talent map, which will show what skills gaps can be filled by developing existing employees, and what skills need to be brought in from outside.

**3.** Utilize your organization's talent to maximum effect – be prepared to move your talent so that specific skills are located where they are needed most.

**4.** Talent is dynamic and needs to be developed - use the Talent Map to see how individual talents can be added to and provide the appropriate tools to do this.

**5.** Keep your Talent Map up to date - maintaining an accurate picture of what talent exists and where within your organization will enable you to quickly and effectively adapt to changes in the business environment.

**6.** Ensure that your Talent Management strategy is linked to operational performance measures so you can clearly identify the 'value add'.

**If you would like to discuss your challenges in the area of Talent Management please contact Teresa Boughey at The Jungle Consultancy on 07970 778874 or email: [Teresa@junglehr.com](mailto:Teresa@junglehr.com)**

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