



YOUR 2012 TALENT STRATEGY: A Work in Progress

As 2011 wound down, did you meet your Talent Strategy goals for the year? Chances are some of your efforts remain a work in progress, whether you're recalibrating performance metrics for your people and processes, defining new roles to meet new business opportunities, or recruiting for a key position.

These goals are mission critical, and can easily be sidetracked or slowed by unforeseen setbacks. It's important to keep moving forward. As talent becomes more and more of a differentiator and competitive lever in business, your organization needs you to succeed. According to Marshall Goldsmith, author of *Mojo*, people quit when an effort takes longer than expected, is more difficult than expected, is crowded out by other responsibilities, doesn't initially deliver expected benefits, seems a success too soon, or becomes discouraging because it will have to be done forever. If any of these ring true for you, now's the time to regroup and recommit yourself to even greater success in 2012.

2011 brought more evolution in our workplaces and marketplaces, and to be successful this year, we need to be on top of the trends we're seeing now.

Talent shortages in BC and Alberta have returned to pre-2008/9 levels, and demographic shifts are continuing to impact workplaces everywhere. 2011 was the approximate year when all

increases in the size of the labour market come from inward migration to BC, either from other provinces or other countries. This means that the composition of our labour market has changed and will keep on changing, making it harder to find your "traditional" hire and causing organizations to approach who and how they hire very differently.

We're also seeing an increased difficulty (and cost) to attract junior talent. The demographic drought of employees with 3-10 years experience is now hitting industry full force and the increased demand is causing serious ripple effects - from empty desks to increased training costs - there simply aren't enough quality candidates to fill the current roles in the marketplace. In addition, Juniors are making more. Competitive pressure is pushing salaries up significantly and senior staff are wondering why their reports are getting paid almost as much as they are. The compensation pool is not limitless and this will be an issue of growing concern.

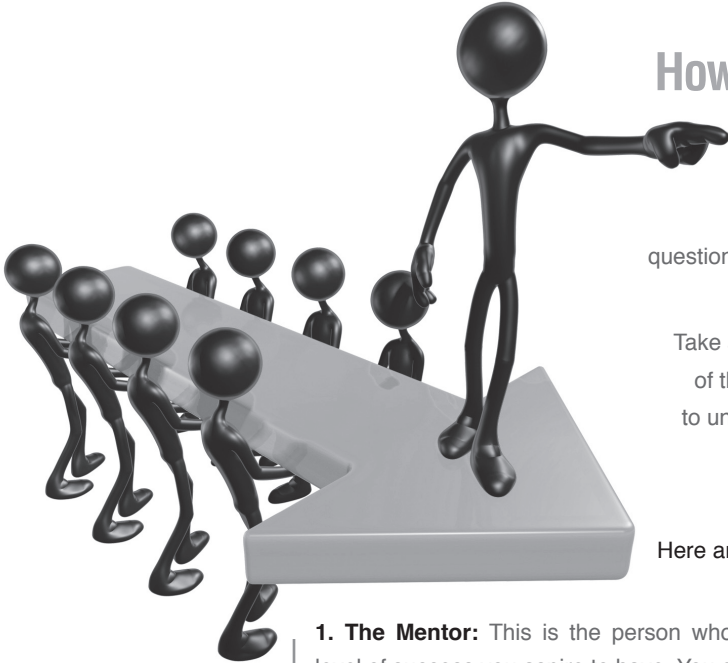
The Millennial or Gen Y generation are now assuming leadership roles - earlier in their careers than any previous generation. The early millennials are 25 to 35 years of age in 2012; no longer neophytes, they fit into the model of the new, high value workforce - often with advanced degrees, high expectations, no pretense about hierarchy. We watch as management evolves to reflect their values, expectations, and collaborative ways of working.

How to approach these trends against your business realities this year? Sometimes, a targeted talk on a specific subject is just what you need to make sense of a difficult challenge. Take Succession Management. We've all heard how important it is to integrate the processes that drive the development of less experienced leaders - but how do you determine what needs to be done, what to do first, and who needs to be involved? And how do you put the accountabilities in place to make it all happen? Maximizing leadership impact is an ongoing endeavor that requires a conscious plan to ensure the right leaders will be in place at the right time. We're here to support your efforts to assess and develop your leaders and the roles they play, so they can capably handle their many responsibilities, and grow as your business grows. A focused conversation on this topic can be the catalyst you need to move forward with this aspect of your people strategy.

We're here to help you take on 2012 with even more *Mojo* than 2011. This uncertain economy will allow for nothing less.

“The only thing worse than being talked about is not being talked about.”

- Oscar Wilde, Irish playwright, novelist and poet



How To Build A Powerful Professional Network

Want to make 2012 the year you get serious about attending to a strong professional network that can provide the leverage you need to make progress at work or in your business? Who should be in your network is the key question today, based on the roles that people can play in supporting your personal and professional success.

Take a look at the eight roles described below - at different times in your career some of these roles will become more important than others. Your focus needs to be first, to understand the role(s) that each person in your network can fulfill, and second, on getting what you need most now.

Here are the top eight roles people in your network can play:



Connections strives to keep you informed on the latest trends and best practices to help you develop and align your people for improved business performance. And because we want you to personally succeed, we always include tips on how to manage your own career, too!

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1. The Mentor: This is the person who has reached the level of success you aspire to have. You can learn from their success as well as their mistakes. Heed their wisdom and experience. This relationship offers a unique perspective because they have known you through several peaks and valleys in your life and watched you evolve.

2. The Coach: The coach is someone who comes in at different times in your life. They help with critical decisions and transitions and offer an objective perspective with no strings attached.

3. The Industry Insider: This is someone in your chosen field who has expert-level information or access to it. This person will keep you informed of what's happening now and what the next big thing is. Invite them to be a sounding board for your next innovative idea.

4. The Trendsetter: This is someone outside of your chosen industry who always has the latest buzz. It can be on any topic that you find interesting. The goal in having this person in your network is to look for those connections that spark innovation via the unconventional. It will also help you keep your conversations interesting.

5. The Connector: This is a person who has access to people, resources and information. As soon as they come across something related to you, they are sending you an e-mail or picking up the phone. Connectors are great at uncovering unique ways to make connections, finding resources and opportunities that most people would overlook.

6. The Visionary: This is the person in your network you can dream with. No matter how “out there” your latest idea is, this is the person who will help you brainstorm ways to make it happen. Without judgment, they are focused on helping you flesh out your dreams in high definition, even if you don't have a solid plan yet on how to make it happen.

7. The Realist: On the flip side, you still need the person who will help you keep it real. This is the person who will give you the raised eyebrow when your expectations exceed your effort. These are not people who knock down your dreams, rather they challenge you to actively make your dreams happen.

8. The Partner: You need to have someone who is in a similar place and on a similar path to share with. In fact, partners do a lot of sharing. This is a person you can share the wins and woes with. Partners will also share resources, opportunities and information.

The value of your networking efforts will be fully realized when your activities and the connections you make are reciprocal. People who devote time and energy to you deserve something in return. You need to find ways to give back. What can you offer to others? Which of the roles described above can you play for those in your circle of influence? Examine your own skills, abilities, experiences and resources to look for creative ways you can be of service to others. Listen to learn what people might need.

