



Before Implementing Talent Management

Departments are at different stages in their approach to talent management. Use the following checklists to assess where your department is in relation to developing a talent management process and for some points to consider in a process or program.

When Do You Know That Your Division or Department Needs a Talent Management Program? *

Several common symptoms, if they appear, may indicate the need for a more systematic approach to talent management. Which have you seen?

- The division/department has conducted a *retention risk analysis* (a process of estimating the projected departure dates for each individual in the workforce or work group) for reasons of retirement or otherwise.
- The division/department has no way to respond quickly to sudden, surprise losses of key talent. If a key person is suddenly lost due to death, disability or resignation, it takes a long time to find a suitable replacement.
- The time it takes to fill positions—what is called the *time-to-fill metric*--is unknown or is perceived by managers and supervisors to be too long.
- Managers at one or many levels complain that they have trouble finding people ready for advancing or else have trouble finding people who are willing to accept advancements as vacancies occur.
- Workers complain that promotion decisions are made unfairly or capriciously.
- Women, minorities, and other groups protected by law are not adequately represented at various levels and in various functions throughout the organization.
- Critical turnover*—that is, the percentage of high potential workers leaving—is higher than the number of fully successful (average) workers leaving.

If you have checked any of these boxes, your division or department may need to consider implementing a Talent Management Program or Process.

**Adapted from Effective Succession Planning: Ensuring Leadership Continuity and Building Talent from Within, William J. Rothwell*

1. Assess the current state

Assess the current state of talent planning in your department.

Which describes your current state of talent management?

- Focus is limited to executive level positions
- Focus is on identifying immediate and short-term replacements
- Plans are limited to identifying one or two potential successors for senior positions
- Plans are linked to individual job requirements
- Potential candidates are identified based solely on the ratings of the immediate supervisor
- Talent planning is done in isolation from other related HR activities (e.g., learning/development, diversity initiatives, recruitment)
- Performance Management process is inconsistently used
- Employees are not accountable for development
- Plans aren't linked to Performance Management system



If you have checked any number of these boxes, you may be in a position to improve your current process.

Tip

To assess the current state, consider initiating discussions among key decision-makers and stakeholders, establishing a committee or sending out a survey.

Use available sources of information such as Employee Survey results and workforce demographic information.

2. Consider the desired state

Consider what you want your talent management process to look like.

Which describes your desired talent management process?

- Focus is on key positions at various levels and on development of talent at all levels for the longer-term.
- Plans include developing pools of talent for key positions and are linked to building competencies and skills for current and future business needs.
- There is a systematic process to assess candidates based on feedback from multiple perspectives and sources of information (i.e. 360 assessment)
- Processes are in place to integrate talent management with other HR activities, such as Performance Management.
- Employees are accountable for their professional development.
- Development activities are linked to performance management and career development.
- Representatives from the various HR elements are involved to ensure appropriate linkages (e.g., performance management, learning, recruitment, staffing)
- Roles and responsibilities of stakeholders been determined.
- Aspects of the process will be decentralized to the business unit level and others will be decided corporately.
- The business case been defined and communicated to gain support of key stakeholders (e.g., managers, employees, bargaining unit agents)
- There is a communications plan.
- The process is transparent.
- Data and technology requirements are identified.
- Fiscal resources are identified and secured to ensure that the process can operate effectively.
- Tools needed to support the process are identified.
- A pilot project has been planned.
- Effectiveness is tracked and monitored

