

Talent Management for Organizational Excellence

**U.S. Baldrige Criteria Framework
A Systems Perspective (2017-2018)**

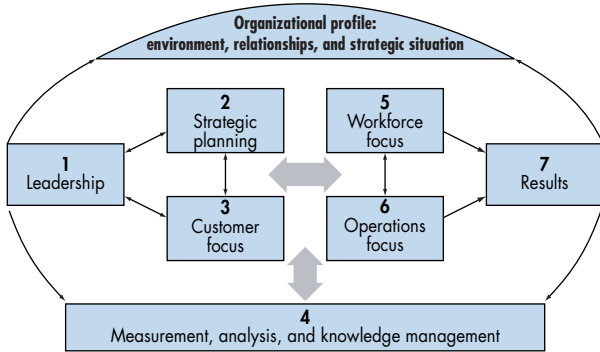


Figure 1
Baldrige Performance
Excellence Framework

To achieve organizational excellence, it is of paramount importance to effectively manage the talent in any organization. This is Category 5 of the Baldrige Performance Excellence Framework (Figure 1).

Let us look at the talent management model shown in Figure 2. The model calls for acquiring the right talent (look for talent/strengths and train them for skills), creating opportunities for their involvement and participation (orientation, mentoring, teamwork, and meeting management), create appropriate motivational practices (employee recognition system, suggestion system, and theory of strength), create development opportunities (education and training, performance feedback, coaching, and employee surveys), and establish good retention practices.

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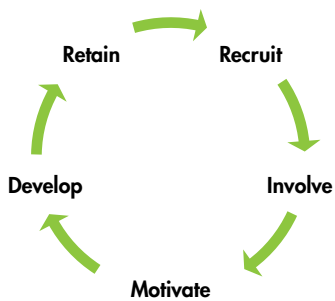


Figure 2
Talent Management Model

Recruitment

Recruit employees with talent and train them for skills. A good reference for this is *First Break All the Rules*. (Reference: Buckingham, M., and Coffman, C., 1999, *First Break All the Rules*, Gallup Press, Omaha, NE.) Key guidance points are:

- **Select a person** ... based on **talents** (and train the person for skills).
- **Set expectations** ... by defining the **right outcomes** (not the right steps).
- **Motivate a person** ... by focusing on **strengths** (not on weaknesses).
- **Develop the person** ... by helping him/her find the **right fit** (not the next rung on the ladder).

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Involvement

Involve employees by exposing them to timely orientation, mentoring, effective teamwork, and effective meeting management practices. An excellent resource for teamwork is *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*. (Reference: Lencioni, Patrick, 2002, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.) Figure 3 captures the five dysfunctions and possible remedies.

Figure 3 The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



Source: Patrick Lencioni, 2002.

Read about effective meeting management in the book *Death by Meeting*. (Reference: Lencioni, Patrick, 2004, *Death by Meeting*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.)

Motivation

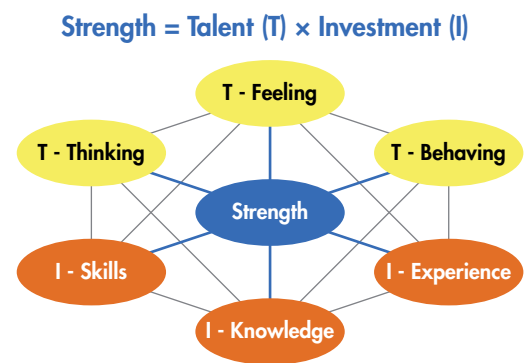
Motivate employees by establishing recognition and suggestion systems. Follow the Theory of Strengths from *Soar with Your Strengths*. (Reference: Clifton, D. O., and Nelson, P., 1992, *Soar with Your Strengths*, Dell Publishing, New York, NY.) Figure 4 shows the great work done by the Gallup organization. (Reference: Rath, Tom, 2007, *Strengths Finder 2.0*, Gallup Press, New York, NY.) Gallup defines strength in Figure 4:

Strength – The ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance

Strength = Talent x Investment

To be successful, one needs to focus on personal strengths and manage weaknesses, so they do not get in the way. Gallup has identified 34 top strengths. When you take an online test using a code from *Strengths Finder 2.0* book, you receive your top five strengths.

Figure 4 The Theory of Strengths



Strength – The ability to consistently provide near-perfect performance

Source: *Strengths Finder 2.0*, Tom Rath, 2007.

Development

Develop employees with appropriate education and training, timely performance feedback, coaching, and employee surveys. Good organizations set specific targets for hours of required training and training cost per employee. More frequent and objective performance feedback develops employees to perform at their best. Find ways to coach your employees based on their career paths. Make good use of the employee surveys to focus on shortcomings in an organization and empower employees and management to remove the systemic hurdles coming in the way.

Retention

Retain your key employees with regular dialogue between supervisor and employee at least quarterly (Reference: Kaye, B., and Jordan-Evans, S., 2014, *Love 'Em or Lose 'Em: Getting Good People to Stay, Fifth Edition*, Barrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, CA). The guidance here is to have regular meetings between an employee and supervisor or supervisor

and manager to take the pulse. At these meetings address three key questions: 1) What things keep you here? 2) What will it take to leave the organization? 3) What can we do to make your work more effective in the short term? By having this regular dialogue, management will know when and why good people leave an organization. It pays to retain your top talent. Otherwise, the organization can become a revolving door, which drains its resources.

Empirical Evidence

During their good days at Sears in the mid-1990s, an empirical study was conducted to examine the employee-customer-profit chain. The vision for Sears can be described as the three Cs: A compelling place to *work* (employees); a compelling place to *shop* (customers); and a compelling place to *invest* (profit). During the study it was determined that employees' attitudes toward their own jobs and Sears as a company were critical success factors. Figure 5 captures the empirical relationships among employees, customers, and profit.

Figure 5 Employee-Customer-Profit Chain, Sears



Source: Rucci et al., *Harvard Business Review*, 1998.



Summary

If your people are motivated, they will bring innovation to their jobs, and improve your processes to delight your customers. When that happens, the organization is well on its way to achieve performance excellence.

Sources

Baldrige Performance Excellence Program (2017-2018), Criteria for Performance Excellence, U.S. NIST, Gaithersburg, MD. <https://www.nist.gov/baldrige>

Vora, M. K. (2005). *Managing Human Capital, "Six Sigma for Transactions and Service,"* pp. 471-500, McGraw-Hill, New York, NY.