

Talent Review Programs

Most organizations spend a considerable amount of time periodically reviewing their monthly and quarterly financial performance, their new product plans, their inventory levels, and other dashboard-driven business data. What is unusual about many of these same organizations is the conspicuous absence of a similarly focused, formal, and periodic review of their human resources.

We are committed to helping organizations regularly set aside time to review the strengths, needs, and improvement opportunities associated with each of their employees. By helping an organization create a Talent Review Program, we ensure the periodic assessment of all employees in an organization. Conducted every six to twelve months, the senior executive of each operating unit meets for several hours with both the CEO and the senior human resources executive. During these talent reviews, the focus is on ensuring that the organization's best people are getting the attention, rotational assignments, and other developmental opportunities necessary to keep them engaged and committed. The process helps identify talent-ready employees so that when opportunities arise within the organization, the organization is prepared to assign the appropriate person.

Talent review programs also provide organizations with the opportunity to identify those employees that are not performing up to expectation, and create the accountability for developing performance improvement plans that either coach these employees to improved performance or help them to exit the organization. The knowledge that action plans will be reviewed at the next talent review often compels senior managers to follow through promptly on their committed actions.

Most talent review programs involve some comparison metrics that help differentiate employees by assigning them to different categories. For example, an organization may want to distinguish between high-potential, high-performing, solid-performing, and low-performing employees. Other organizations may opt to use a different set of criteria for assessing performance and potential. By causing the operating executive to make and then discuss these distinctions with the CEO and senior human resources executive, we help to create a shared understanding of the organization's potential, and again provide accountability for following through on commitments made at the reviews to strengthen the organization's talent pool.

Talent review programs provide individuals in an organization with the benefit of a regular review of their contributions, developmental needs, and succession potential. They often are viewed as a sign of the organization's investment in and commitment to ensuring the highest levels of professional growth for all members of the organization.