KICK -ASS Talent Management

By Alex Raymond

How to get the most out of your **"most important asset"** with process and technology

About the Author

Alex Raymond is an entrepreneur, talent management strategist and world traveler. He's been in the Talent Management field for over a decade and has worked with dozens of companies around the world on their talent management systems and strategies. Alex's articles have been published across the blogosphere and he has been quoted in numerous HR magazines and journals.

Alex has founded two companies in the Talent Management industry (Kapta Systems www.kaptasystems.com and Vast Talent www.vast-talent.com) and lived, worked and studied in 7 countries. He has presented at Talent Management conferences in Europe, the US, Asia and Australia. Alex has a bachelor's degree from Georgetown University in Washington, DC and an MBA from INSEAD in France and Singapore.

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Kicking Ass and Taking Names in Talent Management

To those of us in the Human Resources field, 'Talent Management' has become one of the most frequently used buzzwords. Unfortunately buzzwords like 'low hanging fruit' or 'alignment', which should have never shifted over into the HR arena in the first place, have soured opinions on industry phrases. *I mean when did alignment stop referring to something that needed to be done to your car?*

Talent Management on the other hand is one of those phrases with staying power, as it has proven itself relevant and necessary.

Talent Management basically outlines what it takes to attract highly skilled individuals, while also developing and retaining your existing workforce to meet current and future business needs.

Talent Management is a broad and complex field, but there are some parts of it that apply to every organization, no matter your size, industry or location. What we're going to do in this e-book is talk about some of the maxims of Talent Management and how you can get them working for you. We'll take about the theory of talent management and then go into detail of how to set it up in your organization and use software tools to make the job easier.

This e-book will take you through the process of **building a Talent Management strategy and picking and using a software tool to help you.** The materials here are based on my ten-plus years in the talent management industry and the lessons I've learned along the way.

I've worked with all sorts of organizations on their Talent Management strategies and software tools. That includes healthcare companies and government agencies in the US, consulting and insurance firms in the UK, retailers in Australia, and industrial companies in China. And I've learned a lot along the way: **what to do and what not to do, and how to make this process smooth and efficient.**

It's always tough to roll out a new process or change the way your company thinks about it's "most important asset" (i.e. the workers) – but it's a really rewarding thing to do. This is how HR earns its place at the executive table and becomes a real partner to the business.

When you actively manage talent, you're managing the lifeblood of the organization.

I've learned a lot about Talent Management through countless discussion with interesting and committed HR professionals, and I really want to hear from you. Please write to me (Twitter: @afraymond) with any comments, questions or things you'd like to share as you read.

After finishing this e-book, I really hope you'll be a
full-fledged Talent Management expert!

Part 1: An Introduction to **Talent Management**

Wherefore Talent Management

Why is Talent Management such an important topic these days? **?**

Somewhere along the way, we figured out that the key to meeting business objectives starts on the ground level, with the people you employ. Therefore it's extremely important to make sure that those people are happy and satisfied with the work they are doing, so that not only do they benefit the company, they benefit themselves.

You don't want to fall into the trap of just managing your "high potential" employees or top performers. The real trick to Talent Management is **figuring out how to make each employee perform their personal best**.

So make sure to consider **ALL your employees** when building a Talent Management strategy.

But how do we do that?

Did you know that there is a demonstrated **direct correlation between high caliber talent and high business performance?** Studies by McKinsey, Harvard, Deloitte and virtual every consulting company in the industry have actually been conducted and the results justified. It's not a just a coincidence. And the onset of the Internet age, as wonderful as it is, has created an ever-changing world. Business models and concepts have much smaller life cycles than before. In order to compete, companies have to remain innovative, hence the need to have the best possible people in place.

Addressing the changing needs of the Potential Employee

One thing that many people tend to forget is that employee needs and expectations have changed as well. Even in the midst of a soft economy, **good talent still has the leverage to make decisions on what they want in a position.**

Employees not only want a "j-o-b", they want challenging, meaningful work.

They are more **career-focused** than company focused. They want to do whatever is necessary to foster growth in their own career and personal development, and in turn are looking for organizations willing to support that desire. Finally, employees now expect a **healthy work-life balance.** Flexible hours, telecommuting, PTO, etc… all play a big part in the talent you retain.

There is no more 1950's mentality. Back in the days of old, there were employees and managers (or supervisors), and never the twain shall meet. There was more of a top down outlook on the organization versus the current team-based environment. Today, **employees are seeking a mentor/mentee relationship** with their managers in hopes of learning the organization and how their roles relate to the objectives of the organization. Trying to hold on to the 1950's mindset in which you come to work, do your repetitive job, and go home is a tremendous hindrance to today's organization.
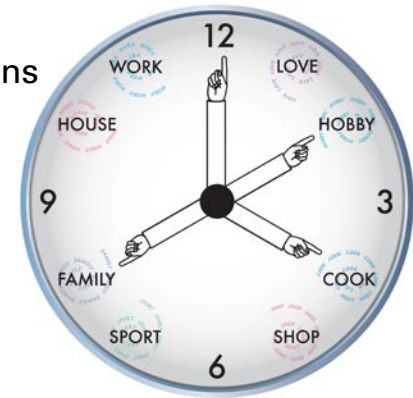
Think about it.

Why do people quit their jobs ?

The number one reason is because they don't see how their day-to-day tasks fit into the company's big picture. All employees want to feel important and that their work is appreciated and needed. They also want to know how their 9 to 5 performance contributes to the overall success of the business.

So communicating with your employees is more important than ever – **tell them what they're doing well and how they can improve to further boost their career and the company's results**.

People are willing to work for a company, provided that the company cares about them and that their work is important.

So one of the key points of talent management is establishing framework for talking to the employees about their performance.

Do you agree? Disagree?
Have your own story to tell?
I want to hear from you!

The second reason people quit their jobs is that they don't like their boss. And that tends to be **a failure of the company, not a failure of the boss.**

Talent Management applies not just to employees but to managers too.

Oftentimes, employees with a strong technical aptitude or a great proficiency in a certain expertise are promoted to supervisory roles. They have to show they are up to the job of managing people. Yes, they perform well from a business standpoint but their managerial skills are extremely lacking. Upper level management doesn't always do a good job of choosing effective leaders and which may not damage the company in the short term, but the employees (subordinates) suffer greatly for it.

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