

As a unique feature for the newsletter, we asked a current client, Charter Manufacturing, several questions about their high potential program efforts. Enjoy!

1. How have you aligned your high potential program with business strategy and objectives?

We are expending effort to clarify what critical roles are most important to our achieving current and future business goals. We have also placed emphasis upon defining what “bench strength” means for us so we can align human capital with organizational needs.

2. What features or aspects of your program are you considering as important to change or enhance to fit your organizational culture?

We are planning for more frequent talent discussions with our executives to iteratively work towards individual development and deployment. While we discuss talent from a companywide viewpoint, we want to become more focused by starting with our overall business goals and, then, subsequently discuss our talent. We want to specify which business units/functional groups have specific roles need that require focus to achieve our business results. We will then seek to identify what knowledge, learning activities and work experiences help people to prepare for those business needs.

3. What have you identified as the critical skills or competencies necessary for high potential(s)?

We have a current potential rating titled “Broad, Multi-faceted Learner”. This is someone who would be considered adaptable behaviorally and agile learning. We need individuals that are highly capable to take on a wide range of business assignments. In the process, we learned emphasis must be placed on the employee’s engagement at work and long-term career aspirations. Understanding these facets of people provides us with a clear picture of the “high potential” employee. To a degree, we are still aligning on a definition of “high potential.” We are moving away from the past where we confused top performers with high potential employees.

4. What proved most difficult in implementing your high potential program? Why?

We are spending considerable time clarifying our future business needs and, then, defining how to engage and deploy “high potentials.” Our organization is highly participative and it will require time to build agreement. However, as a byproduct, we expect to have strong buy-in for our programs once consensus is reached.

5. What pleasant surprises or outcomes have you received through the execution of your high potential process?

We have generated great interest, energy and input in building and developing talent throughout our organization. Our new employees are expressing interest in developing as leaders and are specifically asking what skills and/or experiences are necessary to in the future to succeed.

6. What is your current state of your talent strategy and program(s)?

We are in the midst of developing a stratified leadership development and training program to ensure we are providing the right type of resources to fit our various levels of management. We also intend to leverage technology to build talent profiles, align performance management processes and create talent development programs.

7. What resources have you considered and used to develop your program?

We have adopted many best practices that are evidenced-based and empirically proven. We examined information from the Corporate Executive Board and articles from sources such as Harvard Business Review. We intend to strip away the bureaucratic and hierarchical aspects of programs that, for the most part, are onerous and, therefore, weigh down obtaining valued results and key outcomes.