

# Solve the people puzzle

Adopt these four strategies to put together a talented team that delivers top results

THE very popular movie *Field of Dreams*, starring Kevin Costner, was nominated for three Academy Awards in 1989 and won another five film nominations in various categories.

It attracted an international audience of sentimental fans who developed a catch phrase as a result of a lead character's line in the movie.

The original line, "If you build it, he will come" morphed into "If you build it, they will come"; a quote often used by business leaders and team managers to attract new people to their company mission or organisational cause.

If an organisation is going to use this type of philosophy, it is essential that leaders and managers are aligned to a system that nurtures an attractive environment — from beginning to end.

## Strategy 1 QUALITY MATTERS

To recruit quality people, it helps if the manager or leader also possesses those qualities that are deemed attractive.

Research by countless human resource managers and recruitment firms have concluded that when good people leave good companies, they often leave due to bad managers they worked with who had very poor people skills.

Like any jigsaw puzzle you may have completed in your childhood years, there are specific pieces to solve the management puzzle. If the



pieces are put together correctly, the picture (or team) will look fantastic.

## Strategy 2 HIRING AND TRAINING

Interviewing is one of the most time-intensive aspects of a manager's job. If a human resource department is involved, this process can shave time off the leader's initial hiring objectives or add more time depending on the company policy, procedures and protocols of hiring.

Once a candidate has cleared all the initial hiring phases, it is onto the training phase to learn the systems and outcomes of the hiring manager or leader.

This second strategy separates the great managers from the average. While many managers recruit and hire for technical and competency skills, research has shown that the personal quality of the individual is even more important when training and developing them.

## Strategy 3 MOTIVATING AND MANAGING

When managers and leaders understand their people's internal drivers to achieve, it is much easier to manage and direct them to perform well in their roles within the company or team.

The personal qualities and behaviour of a new person can have a strong impact on the performance of others. Characteristics like integrity, punctuality, team work, focus, open-mindedness, generosity and

consideration are very different from the technical skills of a role.

If a leader or manager is going to develop his people to be effective and productive team members, then the skills listed above are ones that the leader should also demonstrate.

## Strategy 4 TERMINATION OR ROLE CHANGE

The last piece of the management puzzle is often the weak spot for new leaders and managers.

This area can undermine the first three strategies because some employees will test their management team. These people are naturally combative and do not recognise their leader's authority.

A just leader will not be angered by constructive criticism, if he knows it will make the team stronger. But if a team member constantly questions decisions or simply

believes he is always right, it can affect the morale of the other people on the team.

If this problem is not dealt with effectively — either through reassigning the difficult team member to another department or terminating his services if all else fails — it can damage a leader's reputation.

Managers need to hold their ground, lead from the front and continue learning about these four strategies to retain good people and attract new people to their teams.

Article by Rob Salisbury, a corporate trainer, conference speaker and author. He has conducted training in various companies around the world. Website: [www.strategicresources.com.au](http://www.strategicresources.com.au)

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