

# THE WAR FOR TALENT

## Surviving In The Era Of Competitive Recruiting

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**MAIN IDEA**

The key determinant of any organization's long-term success is the strength, depth, growth and management of its talent pool.

To prove this, a five year research project was carried out analyzing the talent practices and corresponding operating results of more than 13,000 executives in 120 different companies. This analysis showed there was a statistical correlation between better talent and company performance. But even more importantly, the study also showed that what made the difference in the real world wasn't solely developing better HR processes. Instead, those organizations led by people who understand the importance of talent and take appropriate actions to strengthen their respective talent pools outperformed those who did not.

Or, put another way, finding and then keeping the best available talent is now of critical importance in business. There is literally so much competition for the best people in the Information Age that the balance of power has now moved irreversibly from the corporation to the most talented individuals. And that, in turn, means companies will have to work harder to win and retain the talent they need to prosper.

All of which means there have emerged five imperatives which firms need to act on if they aspire to secure a sustainable competitive advantage by winning the war for the best available talent:

- How to Win the War for Talent** . . . . .
- 1 Have a talent oriented mind-set.
  - 2 Develop superior employee value propositions.
  - 3 Retool your recruiting strategy.
  - 4 Develop people progressively and effectively.
  - 5 Differentiate and keep your most talented people.

**1 Have a talent oriented mind-set.** . . . . . Page 2

A talent oriented mind-set is the strong belief within a firm that to perform well and achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, the organization must have great talent. Therefore, building and expanding the talent pool is the job of every leader in the organization – not just the HR department.

**2 Develop superior employee value propositions.** . . . . . Page 3

A customer value proposition is a clear, compelling reason why customers should do business with a firm. Similarly, an employee value proposition (EVP) are the attractive reasons why talented people should join and stay with a firm. Smart companies tailor their EVPs carefully and deliberately to attract and retain the type of people who will take them to the top.

**3 Retool your recruiting strategy.** . . . . . Page 4

Once upon a time, firms selected the best person from a long list of candidates. Today, most companies have to be proactively finding great candidates. That requires a different recruiting strategy and game plan. Companies have to fundamentally rethink and rebuild their recruiting strategies if they want to attract top-notch talent.

**4 Develop people progressively and effectively.** . . . . . Page 5

Not only do companies need to attract the best talent, they need to retain them. That will only happen if people have viable opportunities to grow and increase their capabilities. Thus, successful companies ensure their people are given the stretch jobs, the coaching, the training and mentoring they need to accelerate their personal development.

**5 Differentiate and keep your most talented people.** . . . . . Page 6

Great companies differentiate how their people are performing on a regular basis. That way:

- The best performers can be fast-tracked and promoted.
- Mid-performers can receive the help required to lift their game.
- Low performers can be moved to other opportunities or let go.

All of this only becomes possible if a disciplined, systematic way to review talent exists and action plans for each individual can be developed and followed through on.

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