

“Career Development”

By: Jack Muellerleile

“Career Development” is an absolute necessity for large, well established entities and even more important for smaller, high growth organizations. Shockingly, it is poorly managed or entirely overlooked by both.

Why important?

Why is “Career Development” so important? Because it is the process whereby ready replacements for persons vacating positions of greater responsibility are identified, trained, groomed, inventoried, interviewed, selected and accepted. Promoting from within the organization causes only minimal interruption in the ongoing conduct of business because the newly appointed persons already know so much about the company and the position to which they have advanced. Persons chosen in this manner tend to enjoy a much higher success rate in their new positions.

Why poorly handled or overlooked?

Why is “Career Development” so poorly handled or even overlooked? Because it takes time, hard work and a firm belief in the generous reward ensuing therefrom. If management is not fully convinced of the value of a formal, active and well understood ‘career development’ program, it will fail to be properly administered. If not administered correctly, it will not deliver the desired results. If the desired results are not forthcoming, management will ignore or abandon a ‘career development’ program.

What are the basic components?

OK, so just what are the basic components of a successful ‘career development’ program? They include the following:

1. Written ‘position description’ for every paid position in the organization;
2. Written annual ‘goals & objectives’ for every employee;
3. Written annual ‘appraisal of performance’ for everyone measuring how completely the goals & objectives were achieved;
4. Written ‘forecast of potential’ for each employee, updated annually;
5. Face-to-face discussion of the above between employee and immediate supervisor, every year;
6. Suggested ‘self-development’ activities to be pursued by incumbents desirous of opportunities for advancement within the organization (i.e.

- academic endeavors, vacation relief assignments, selected readings, 'special assignments' of short duration, etc);
7. Scheduled employee attendance at seminars and management training courses conducted or arranged for by management;
 8. Personnel meetings held annually during which every employee recognized as having potential for advancement is discussed / commented upon by all with whom he has come in contact during the past 12 months; decisions are reached as to the current status of his / her development (i.e. "ready replacement now" for...; "future replacement" for...);
 9. Competitive interviews of all designated "ready replacements" whenever a position is vacated; and
 10. Wide circulation of the chosen person's name, recent background, etc.

jrm.07.25.05