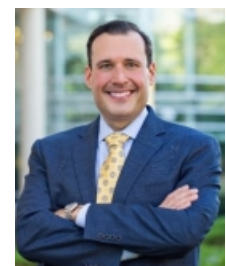


Put People Strategy at the Top of Your Leadership Agenda

Posted by Joe Fournier

Fall begins officially on September 22, and Labor Day marks the unofficial end of summer. We return to our office, hospital or clinic refreshed after recharging our batteries on vacation or during longer weekends. Relaxed and energized to tackle new challenges, we quickly discover how easy it is to slip back into old routines including a daily schedule crowded with meetings.



Hit pause before your next meeting and take a minute to consider the agenda. Leadership retreats and management gatherings regularly focus on how to be more "strategic," competitive, efficient and customer focused. Ask yourself and your colleagues a simple and direct question: How much time are we investing in development of a people strategy? Labor Day reminds us to put **people strategy** on the agenda – at the top.

Defining People Strategy

Whether your organization uses a term such as "colleague," "caregiver," or "associate" to describe your employees, they all refer to your "people." As your business evolves and transforms, so must your people. The objective of a people strategy is to clearly define the talent needs and capabilities that the organization needs now and in the future. If little or no time is devoted to formulating and monitoring a people strategy, the organizational will struggle to implement its business strategies and drive sustainability.

An organization's savvy competitors can replicate many of its processes, but they can never replicate what defines an organization most—its people and culture. Think about nearly every organization that has been successful over time and you'll find that people and culture - from its leaders to front-line workers - are what has made it successful.

The Talent Blueprint

The volatile and changing health care market is relentless -- it demands that senior leaders think and act differently about the way highly skilled clinicians, researchers and care professionals work. Similarly, individuals are embracing innovation and collaboration as they chart new directions for personal and professional growth. Collectively, these plans should be tied to a well-defined and articulated business strategy which has a comprehensive talent blueprint at its foundation.

Whether you serve as Chief Executive Officer, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief People Officer or Chief Human Resources Officer, you have a responsibility to develop a people strategy that serves your organization both now and in the future. A talent blueprint is a strategic plan – technical, practical and feasible – that drives action! Ready to start? A few tips to consider:

- Remember to make the blueprint forward looking and aligned directly to your organization's business strategies
- Be specific as you define the need for key talent over time based on internal and external demographics.
- Project capability of leaders and all employees now and in the future to execute the business strategy
- Evaluate your organization's brand and its impact on the organizational culture

- Forecast the labor supply and promote solutions for learning and development needs

Architecting a talent blueprint is a form of strategic planning that requires design and process thinking. Moreover, it requires an openness and fresh perspective on how people contribute to the organization, tenure, career progression, qualifications and customer-focused behavior, to name a few. With a talent blueprint in hand, you'll be ready to guide your organization's actions to have the right people in the right place at the right time.

Remember, it doesn't take a lot of meetings to create a vision document to guide the people strategy. If you are already on your way to developing a talent blueprint, keep going! If you haven't started yet, now is the time. Taking just a few key steps will ensure and sustain your organization's success amidst a rapidly changing health care sector.

If you would like more information on developing a talent blueprint, please drop me an email at fournierj@inveniaspartners.com and we can exchange notes.

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