



# Power-Up Unique perspective on Talent Management

## Hiring Mistakes

**A single bad hire** can cost between **\$60,000 and \$120,000**—that's not exactly the way you want to spend precious dollars in a difficult market ... **I am sure some of you reading this have experience this pain.**

Business owners are facing a down economy in which scores of job seekers clamber over each other in order to land scarce positions. The influx of new candidates into the marketplace makes it even more difficult for executives and hiring managers to find the perfect people for open, high-impact positions.



**So how do you avoid the wrong hire?**

**Here are 4 strategies to review....**

1. **Don't settle.** Almost every tip I've provided works in both a good and lousy economy. But let's be honest: When the good times roll, it's easier to find someone and say "good enough." But in a down economy, you should never do this. Take the time you need to find the right candidate, either active or passive, and make the right hire.
2. **Look for repeated patterns of success.** Don't just look for tactical job responsibilities and skills—find the applicants who have repeatedly made a mark and exceeded expectations, time and time again. Drill down in the interview to ask those questions; find out how they measure their own success and whether their employment history tells a story of a superstar.
3. **Define the requirements carefully.** This sounds ridiculously easy, but it's amazing how many business owners will embark on a search without determining exactly whom they want to hire. It's important to detail the specific job requirements and desired personal characteristics, creating a "position bench-mark" that can be used in screenings and interviews to determine if a candidate can fulfill the requirements of the job. Needless to say, it's also critical to determine if the candidate will be a cultural fit as well.
4. **Find a recruiting platform that allows for pre-screening.** When you do need to wade through resumes, use a recruiting system with pre-screening questions and candidate rating capabilities. This allows you to focus on the exact capabilities you need and only review the candidates who have passed the initial screening, saving yourself massive amounts of time. **Behavioral Profiles work!** We use the DISC method which provides us with the confidence to provide a full year guarantee on our candidates.

5. There's no question this is a great time to hire people. But don't make the mistake of thinking it'll be easier. The exceptional hires are out there, but just as in the old days, you may need to do some detective work and actively seek out the people who will make your company great.

### Five things Top Sales Performers participate in

1. **Top-performing salespeople are always students.** They not only know their products and services inside and out, they know about the industry or industries they are working in. They read. They stay on top of market changes. They share the news. They get to know other top performers. And they learn the ins and outs of the industry as it changes.
2. **Top sales performers align themselves with other successful people in a business.** Salespeople understand networking and how to reach a level of networking that gives them a pipeline of referrals and referral sources. You need to be connecting clients and associates with other successful clients and associates. Then they will refer back to you.
3. **Top performers take risks.** They are willing to do new things, experiment, change old habits, learn and try new things. They are early adopters and don't feel it is necessary to wait to "see how others do first." If they believe in it, they take that risk. Although top performers are already successful, there is never a limit to their success. They always want to learn and implement new things.
4. **Top performers are never excuse makers.** If there is an obstacle getting in the way to their success, they go over it, under it or around it. But they never see it as an obstacle. How do I work around this? How do I make the sale anyway?
5. **Top performers are stingy with their time.** Your time is worth a lot of money. And top-performing salespeople are very particular about how they spend their time and what activities they spend time doing. It isn't about socializing; it's about getting out there and being productive. And it's about being in front of the right people as often as they possibly can. They don't spend time with marginal opportunities, only high-chance opportunities. They get that and don't let the junk get in their way.

## Finding Sales Talent



Companies are facing competition like never before in pursuit of high producing sales people. Classic recruitment structures are limiting the “speed of hire” which is essential in remaining competitive as the pace of change in business and competition for talent increases. Companies will have no choice but to revisit speed of hire approaches and tools in order to land candidates that are in high demand.

Finding high-impact technology is problematic although there is a wealth of new technology in recruiting, almost all of it is designed to reduce costs and administrative burdens. After almost 30 years of waiting, I have yet to encounter the breakthrough recruiting technology that produces a competitive advantage of all new hires by at least 20 percent of existing processes that being said, leading companies have to be forward looking attempting to identify and assess future talent targets long before they are needed.

A proactive approach requires that you identify “your future sales talent pipeline”. This practice involves identifying and then **“mapping”** the top talent throughout your industry with the goal of eventually on-boarding the best when they are ready to move. That means you need to be strategic in your planning and have the best possible resources around you to be successful with the right talent outcome.

Retention challenges will increasingly impact your success as more and more top sales performers shift towards other offers increasing turnover rates. This turnover will create many new “**sudden openings**” which will put an added strain on the already challenging process. Companies need to be proactive in retaining with their own sales talent by designing a sales performance programs targeted to address the competitive environment along with accessing compensation and cultural changes as they arise. Turnover is costly communication is key knowing what needs to be improved and following up keeps your team together. Believe me when I say “if they are not happy” they are out looking before you get the chance they have landed another opportunity if they are good at what they do.

**Finding sales talent** is a strategy that needs a clear process for success along with expertise in the field of finding what works for your environment and sales success. Placing an advertisement today hoping to reel in your top performer is not going to cut it. You will be streaming through unqualified potentials wading desperately to find that diamond shining in that pile of potential hopefuls. Spending almost 30 years in the field of business development I do know one thing for sure investing in a guaranteed process save you time and money allowing you to expand and stay on top of the [sales recruiting](#) challenge.

## Who Has the Right Stuff?

We are all looking for that “perfect hire” here are some ideas that can assist you along the way.....

- **Look for the hidden virtues.**

One of the most overlooked strengths today can be expressed in one word “Resilience”

- **Find your unlikely stars by noticing what others don't see.**

The best in any field are constantly learning something new about their subjects.



**Prepare a list of questions that tell you more there experience and aptitude.**

1. What kinds of sacrifices have you had to make to be successful?
2. What is the most fun you have ever had winning a customer over?
3. Tell me about a sale that went wrong. What did you attribute it to?
4. Which parts of your job excite you? Which parts bore you?
5. What have you done in the past 30 days to deepen relationships with key accounts?
6. Telling me about a time when you took action without explicit permission

- **Push your best candidates to grow even stronger.**

Motivation reveals itself as the selection process plays out. Never hire after one interview it takes several ...

Strong recruiters thrive on analysing the middle of the pile- even if there is just one overlooked “Winner” in each stack of 50 “maybes” they find him or her. They widen the talent pool and never lower their standard. In their hands, the jagged resumes are not so hard to decode after all –

Here are some of their most powerful methods:

- **Compromise on experience; don't compromise on character.**

Be willing to embrace unconventional views of what skills are truly needed in each specific field.

- **Your own career is a template; use it.**

The best insights into candidate's potential come from leaders whose own life experiences speak to the traits they are seeking.



- **Rely on auditions to see why people achieve the results they do.**

When you watch a candidate in action you are not watching for a flash of brilliance you are hunting for dozens of clues that show how and why someone succeeds.

The use of profiling tools can assist in discovering more about the candidates' behaviour and success factors that tie into the position if you would like to learn more about our profiling tools head to our web-site at [www.findsalestalentcanada.com](http://www.findsalestalentcanada.com) to learn more.

## Personality or a Paper fit decision



How many times have you experienced a candidate that looks great on paper interviewed well had all the necessary qualifications for the position but still fell flat on their face after the first few months?

It is understandable that we all want the absolute **“Right Fit”** for our companies but, too often many of our hiring decisions are based on the opposite of what we should be looking for.

### **“Someone who will Excel in the Position”.**

Most position listings have a comprehensive inventory of needed degrees, certifications, qualifications and requirements all too often undervaluing the right personality!

Too often get caught up in what looks good on paper and forget to reflect on what we need hour by hour day by day month by month from a synergized team working together. A CHEMICAL FIT is crucial to recruitment success, without it the relationship does not survive the long term. A Master's Degree will not tell you if a person is a self-starter, or a certificate will not give you any idea if this person works well with others. Disqualifying unqualified candidates too early may wipe out individuals that could be a great fit before they can prove themselves and perhaps bring innovative solutions to the team.

We need to remember knowledge can be gained, skills can be learned but it is impossible to train someone to get along with existing team members or importantly our culture. Studies have shown that **attitude** and **cultural fit** are much larger contributions to success and longevity to a team environment. If we fail to connect this dot in our recruitment process it can cost an organization between 50-60% of the person's annual salary, according to the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

It's important to define and articulate the organization's culture – its values, goals, and practices – and a behavioral profile that works best for the position success then weave this understanding into the hiring process.



For example, if a strong sense of entrepreneurship is one of your organization's cultural hallmarks, ensuring that potential candidates are entrepreneurial, with a track record of thriving in similarly entrepreneurial environments will be imperative. This would be a key signal of culture fit.

**Here are some questions that will help assess culture fit in an interview:**

- What type of culture do you thrive in?
- What values are you drawn to and what's your ideal workplace?
- Why do you want to work here?
- How would you describe our culture based on what you've seen?
- Is this something that works for you?
- Tell me about a time when you worked with/for an organization

where you felt you were not a strong culture fit. Why was it a bad fit?

To define a behavioral profile a tool called DISC utilizes a method for understanding behavior, temperament, and personality. A DISC Profile provides a comprehensive overview of the way that people think, act, and interact. It is the most widely used profiling tool of its kind, and is supported by decades of validation and reliability studies. We have used this profile extensively in our hiring process and have this testing available independently for companies that have their own HR departments and value the important factors this profile provides to the hiring evaluation ask us for a free review at [www.findsalestalentcanada.com](http://www.findsalestalentcanada.com) or [www.findsalestalentusa.com](http://www.findsalestalentusa.com)

## Hire | Retain | Deploy | Engage | Talent



**The ability to effectively hire, retain, deploy, and engage talent- at all levels- is really the only true competitive advantage an organization possesses.**

Everyone knows the value of having the best talent in order to succeed in our competitive and increasingly complex economy. Companies understand the need to hire, develop, and retain talented people; organisations must manage talent as a critical resource in order to achieve the very best results.

**There is a demonstrated relationship between better talent and better business performance.**

**Communication** Links the talent management initiative to the business drivers puts forward a vision the organisation can rally around and sets expectations for what will happen in the organisation.

**Accountability** Role clarity so that each individual in the talent management initiative knows what is expected of them.

**Skill** Developing the right skills and providing coaches and mentors for support.

**Alignment** Must align talent management initiatives to the business drivers but also need the right kinds of systems to identify high potentials, to diagnose for development, to link to performance management, and to do development that really changes behavior.

**Measurement** You can't manage what you don't measure. It creates the tension, and objectives become clearer to help execute a talent strategy. The most effective measurements go beyond mere statistics

**Key components of a highly effective talent management process include:**

- A clear understanding of the organisation's current and future business strategies.
- Identification of the key gaps between the talent in place and the talent required to drive business success.
- A sound talent management plan designed to close the talent gaps. It should also be integrated with strategic and business plans.
- Accurate hiring and promotion decisions.
- The connection of individual and team goals to corporate goals, and providing clear expectations and feedback to manage performance.
- Development of talent to enhance performance in current positions as well as readiness for a transition to the next level.
- A focus not just on the talent strategy itself, but the elements required for successful execution.
- Business impact and workforce effectiveness measurement during and after implementation.

**Employee expectations are also changing. These forces organisations to place a greater emphasis on talent management strategies and practices.**

Employees today are:

- Increasingly interested in having challenging and meaningful work.
- More loyal to their profession than to the organization.
- Less accommodating of traditional structures and authority.
- More concerned about work-life balance.
- Prepared to take ownership of their careers and development.

Responding to these myriad challenges makes it difficult to capture both the “hearts” and “minds” of today's workforce. Yet, it's critical to do as cultures built within our organisations are crucial to attracting and retaining key talent.

## Four Screening Questions to Ask

I am always interested in finding screening questions that can assist with the “**WHO**” do I want to interview. Our postings always drive interest and the key is to learn ways to weed out the resumes that do not fit. In our company, we have developed several quick steps to identify initially who might be of interest before we dive into a phone interview- profiling and then face to face time with a candidate.



The following are four great questions for a first over the phone interview to determine if he/she qualify to move to a second step among other clues such as how they presented them self on paper. **Attract Attention** Build Interest and Create Action if you are not doing that with your resume trust me... I will not see who you are! Thought I would just fire that in this article for those of you out there looking.

### Getting back to these four Questions;

- 1) **What are your career goals?** – Give the candidate the 1st word rather than telling the person about the company, Talent people know what they want to do and are not afraid to tell you about it.
- 2) **What are you really good at professionally?** – Make sure the candidate gives you at least 8 – 12 positives so you can build a complete picture of their professional aptitude.
- 3) **What are you not good at or not interested in doing professionally?** If the candidate comes up woefully short, if the weakness are all strengths in disguise or if you hear deal breakers relative to what you need then screen the candidate out.
- 4) **Who were your last (3) bosses and how will they each rate your performance on a 1-10 scale when we talk to them?** – Notice the language used “When”. Candidates will be thinking “I’d better be honest”

After a candidate answers one of the primary questions get curious about the answer with “*what,*’ *how or tell me more*’

**Sample:** *What do you mean?– What did that look like?– What happened?–What is a good example of that?– What was your role? – Probe, Probe, Probe.*

Hopefully the above will give you at a start to uncover the “WHO’ you may want to entertain into an interview.

## Compensation Plan



Yearly, companies will consider de-designing or creating a new sales compensation plan. It can be the most important sales management undertaking at the start of the New Year.

The best plans serve as strong motivation for your sales team and assist you with recruiting top producers, which ultimately will boost your bottom line.

Of course, writing a compensation plan is a specialized skill. If you have the expertise, go for it. If not, consider hiring a compensation specialist to work with you and offer suggestions that are tailored to your small business.

Consider these tips to help you get started:

### 1. Reward Top Producers

Superstars like to be remembered. Design a plan that recognizes top performance in sales over and above the average. As an example, let's say your sales staff has a sales quota of \$100,000 per month and they are paid a commission of 5 percent per dollar. Most of your reps sell between \$103,000 and \$110,000 monthly, but your strongest sales rep routinely brings in more than \$170,000 a month. Then, you may want to consider paying 7 percent commission on sales revenue between \$101,000 and \$150,000 and go a little higher – say 10 percent — for sales above \$150,001.

**The tiered plan will entice a money-motivated superstar to sell more — month after month.**

5 percent commission		
Sales		Commission
\$170,000	5%	\$8,500
Tiered compensation plan		
Sales		Commission
\$100,000	5%	\$ 5,000
\$ 50,000	7%	\$ 3,500
\$ 20,000	10%	\$ 2,000
\$170,000		\$10,500

## 2. Make Room for Sales Contests

Generally, one to three percent of the amount available for sales commissions or bonuses should be set aside for contests. When a sales rep wins an iPad or Hockey tickets they feel good about themselves, their profession and the business they work for. In my experience, sales representatives typically enjoy longer tenures with companies that sponsor regular sales contests.

## 3. Don't operate independently

Once the elements of your new plan are in place, get some feedback from your support network other business owners who have experience managing a sales staff. They can point out inconsistencies, inequalities or mistakes in your compensation plan. You also want to seek feedback from your sales staff; ask them what changes they would make. You may be surprised at the interesting and fair-minded suggestions that reps will share with you.

After you received all feedback, make the tweaks and finalize the plan as quickly as possible. You don't want sales reps holding off on closing deals because they're waiting for the plan to take effect. Once the compensation plan is official, you'll be sending out your sales reps on a clear path to success. Your entire organization will thank you.



## On Boarding Sales Talent

So many companies make the mistake believing that sales recruitment ends the moment a new sales rep commits to coming onboard.

The process of "Onboarding" is critical and, when done right, protects your hiring investment by getting your new sales talent performing at his/her best.



### Common Challenges

- No plan or process
- Logistical issues
- No Orientation
- No process checkpoints
- No Follow-up

### Onboarding Best Practices

- Implement the basics prior to the first day on the job.
- (83 % of Best in Class companies start on-boarding prior to day 1 by welcoming new hires warmly and tackling administrative matters in advance)
- Make the first day on the job special.
- Develop a written onboarding plan.

### Key areas:

- Company & Product- Service Knowledge.
- Knowledge of the Sales Role: Activities – Process – Resources
- Customer – Buyer Knowledge
- Tools and Systems related knowledge and capability
- Make onboarding participatory.
- Be sure your program is consistently implemented.
- Ensure that the program is monitored over time.

- Ensure that the program is monitored over time.
- Use technology to facilitate the process.
- Use milestones, such as 30, 60, 90 and 120 days on the job—and up to one-year post-organizational entry—to check in on employee progress.
- Engage stakeholders in planning.
- Include key stakeholder meetings as part of the program.
- Be crystal clear with new employees in terms of: Objectives – Timelines – Roles – Responsibilities

As businesses begin to grow their sales teams, there are a number of key steps they can take to help accelerate ramp-up times and reduce turnover. These include making sure their companies are sales ready, hiring sales people who fit their success profile, developing a comprehensive training program, providing ongoing sales coaching, assigning well-matched mentors, and measuring and monitoring sales activity levels. By creating this framework, business owners can confidently scale their sales organizations and more rapidly realize a return on their investment.

## Millennials for leadership



What are we doing to prepare for the future departure of the Baby Boomer and how are we supporting the Millennial's now in preparation?

- **Workers over age 50 will make up 80% of our workforce by 2018.**
- **By 2025, Millennials are projected to make up 75 percent of employees in the global marketplace.**
- **Thirty-eight per cent of Canadian companies said the ageing workforce is having a damaging effect on their ability to compete.**

### Improving leadership development

Impending retirement of the baby boom generation and the crisis in leadership during the economic recession have further elevated the importance of leadership development in the eyes of the Leadership and shareholders. Companies face two major challenges in finding and developing leaders. They need to identify qualified candidates to fill current and future leadership roles, and they need to develop a comprehensive leadership program to cultivate and develop the leaders of tomorrow.

### Managing talent

Finding the right people with the right skills into the right jobs is a common definition of talent management and a basic HR challenge in any organization. Although talent management often focuses on managerial and executive positions, the issues involved apply to all jobs. Including:

- Workforce planning, which estimates future demand along with
- Hiring (entry-level and lateral) and internal development and promotion.

Strategic emphasis is clearly needed in keeping strong talented leaders and developing their successors with in most companies. Many organizations today are reducing their workforces, but we must be careful not to cut so deep that talent is scarce as our current economy rebounds. Replicating a high-quality, highly engaged workforce is nearly impossible. The ability to effectively hire, retain, deploy, and engage talent—at all levels—is really the only true competitive advantage an organization possesses.

### **Delivering on recruitment and staffing**

On average, 118 people apply for any given job and of those 118 candidates, only 23 actually get an interview. This conundrum begs the question: are employers building the best candidate pools? Staffing agencies and corporations face an identical challenge — attracting the *right* candidates to begin with.

To match people with the best jobs for their talent and passion, we must reinvent the practice of recruiting. Corporate recruiting teams should take a page from their staffing agency counterparts: Rely more heavily on pro-active relationship-based recruiting, restructure to focus on attracting the best candidate pool, and *relate recruiting to revenue through measurement and reward*. Ownership will land the best candidates only when they rethink how they're getting applicants in the first place.

### **Managing demographics**

As employees get older and retire, businesses can face significant losses of critical knowledge and skills, as well as decreased productivity. The demographic trend has been exacerbated by the relentless focus on cost reduction that's become the business norm. In their zeal to become lean, organizations continue to have round after round of lay-offs—without realizing that in just a few years they may confront severe labour shortages or, if they've shed mostly younger workers, be left with a relatively old workforce. In some cases, a company's ability to conduct business may even be hindered: When people begin retiring in droves, there may be no one left who knows how to operate crucial equipment or manage important customer relationships.

Analysing future workforce supply and demand under different growth scenarios and on a job-by-job basis will enable companies to determine how many employees they are likely to need, which qualifications they should have, and when they will need them. With that information, they can set up a *tailored retention, recruitment, and talent management strategy* for the job functions at greatest risk of a labour shortage. Such an initiative must be launched long before things reach a crisis stage, because the remedies may need years to take effect.

## **Managing Change and Cultural transformation**

Our challenge is to make change management part and parcel to the business plan, and not a function that in many cases is added on managed independently. We have allowed managers to outsource change management to HR specialists and consultants instead of taking accountability. Who is accountable for effective change management in your organization: Managers or “experts” (whether from staff groups or outside the company)? Unless your managers are accountable for making sure that change happens systematically and rigorously — and certain behaviours are rewarded or punished accordingly — they won’t develop their skills.

Everyone agrees that change management is important. Making it happen effectively, however, needs to be a core competence of managers and not something that they can pass off to others.

## **Conclusion**

It’s clear that millennials will be a powerful generation of workers and that those with the right skills will be in high demand. They may also be one of the biggest challenges that many organizations will face along with our retiring experienced work force.

There are a number of key steps employers can take to address concerns raised through this review. Company leadership must develop strategies with experienced talent including a focus on mentorship roles supporting up and coming leaders along with exits strategies with senior staff well before retirement plans. No one has a crystal ball but we can plan ahead and be proactive then be reactive to the changes that will occur in our immediate future. Our company exclusively works with the manufacturing sector [supporting selection](#) and [strategies solutions](#) towards building strong teams.

## Accountability



As leaders, we get the behavior we tolerate. When it comes to holding people accountable, we are often our own worst enemy. We accept excuses that sound logical even when we know better. We allow emotions to cloud our decision making. We delay having a conversation with an underperformer because it's easier to avoid a difficult conversation than have one. Instead of practicing accountability, we practice avoidance.

### Three valuable lessons about accountability are,

1. Clear expectations must be established. When your purpose, expectations and rewards are crystal clear, your employees will embrace accountability as a way to become even more successful.
2. Bad news does not improve with age. As soon as you see a problem, it's best to address it immediately. Failure to speak frankly with the person about his or her performance means nothing will change.
3. It's not personal. Leave emotions and opinions behind. Stick to the facts, set a plan to get performance back on track, and communicate specific consequences for underperformance.

### Clarity Creates Confidence

To bring out the best from the people on your team, you must tell them what to expect. Setting clear expectations at every level in the organization is one of the simplest and most effective steps leaders can and should take to drive performance. Your operating (or strategic) plan should ensure that everyone is clear about

- Where we are (Point A).
- Where we're going (Point B).
- How we'll get there.
- Who's responsible and will be held accountable for specific tasks.
- Deadlines for commitments.
- Rewards and penalties related to performance.



When your plan includes the above-mentioned components, it becomes your contract at the leadership level. And the basis of your accountability model.

At the individual level, expectations should be established as an up-front contract with an if/then component. The power of the if/then component is its simplicity, its clarity, and the fact that it is discussed and agreed to — as the name of the contract says — up front. “If you do this, then you will get this. If you do not do this, then this is what will happen.” Clear expectations and clear consequences for both sets of behavior are indicated. Accountability breaks down and emotions swirl when clear expectations are not established up front. To galvanize unity and drive high performance, people need to know what you want them to do and what's in it for them when they do it. To accomplish great things, the employees of an organization must be unified around a common goal, and each person in the organization must believe that what they do will affect whether that goal is reached.

A great resource: Book called **The Key to Driving a High-Performance Culture by Greg Bustin.**

Greg Bustin is a business and leadership consultant, an international speaker and a Master Chair for Vistage International, the world's largest CEO membership organization. He writes a monthly bulletin sent to more than 5,000 executives globally and regularly speaks at events throughout the world. His perspective on leadership has appeared in the Wall Street Journal, and other major publications.