

Training Top Talent Employees

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Top talents can be identified in day-to-day operations of a business. These people produce quality work, demonstrate additional responsibility, act according to company culture and values, and have ambition to grow professionally. No special test exists that would find this potential, yet it is obviously not a matter of examinations or quizzes. As soon as we identify such employees, we nurture them to keep them moving forward in their careers.

As a best practice of ours, I would mention "performance round tables" (that's how we call it here) that are held with the idea to identify and discuss our high potential employees at different levels. We mainly do it for managerial positions. During these sessions, some interesting decisions have been made. We try to focus on strengths and opportunities of each employee in order to help the employee develop further within the company, having in mind its great expansion. As a result of such discussions (which are always held among the general manager, departmental managers, division head and human resources) there could be issued a development program, a transferring of employees within the hotel or company, or continuous focus on the employee's areas that require improvement. In the case of top management, an individual's training looks more as a succession plan with a look to future promotion.

Hyatt has never been afraid to give a chance to perhaps less experienced employees. More important is the factor of perspective. We have created an individual training program and named it Hyatrack. It is a compilation of steps (training, projects, talks with superiors) that are designed for an individual person according to his assertions — the reason can be a promotion, gaining new experience, or an attempt to identify new leadership skills. A promotion is not guaranteed at the end of the Hyatrack project, but at the very least is an opportunity for development.

Being a rapidly developing company, Hyatt is using its skilled employees for task force programs and hotel openings. We have a lot of examples when our employees have made great progress after being exposed to other hotel properties for some special event when our sister hotels request help from other hotels or there is a new hotel opening. Working under pressure in a different stressful environment makes employees rise to the task and become fully concentrated. It sometimes leads to the understanding that they are capable to do more in their career and that they are receiving focused training that is necessary for further development. This kind of natural training is proof of the employees abilities, desires and ambitions.

We have a great program at Hyatt International when we can use an opportunity to send a talented employee to a sister hotel that is famous for its operations. When we are eager to develop a talented employee who is committed to his growth, we would identify a hotel in the chain which is famous by its particular area of operations (for example, Grand Hyatt Singapore is a pastry Mecca, Park Hyatt Tokyo is famous for its banqueting operations, hotels in Shanghai have a strong housekeeping team). Spending a few weeks working in a team of top professionals facing day-to-day problems, solving them, and learning new techniques is a great opportunity to obtain natural, real-world training. Before the cross exposure, an employee, together with the superior, identifies opportunities for improvement and makes a preliminary training flowchart where all the necessary development areas are covered.

We use all the opportunities for a creative approach to training. I think that only creative training can be of an interest to a talented person. Talented people are hard to be managed and not easily confined to live within frames, however they are the people that make companies grow and develop creatively. They are the ones who truly make a difference!

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