

## *Curb 'Talent Slippage' At Your Company*

### *Develop Your Best Employees*

What do your best employees want from their jobs? Most often, they want to keep on growing. When your focus fades on developing your best employees, their enthusiasm and commitment fade, too. Your best employees are top performers who value and seek growth, challenge, and advancement. They seek these rewards anywhere – either inside your company or someone else's. Talent slippage happens when your best and brightest walk out the door!

Reducing talent slippage in your employee ranks is rising in importance because replacing talented employees is becoming even more difficult. You already know that serious employee shortages are on the horizon as a result of massive workplace retirements (Baby Boomers) and insufficient numbers of qualified replacements (Generations X and Y).

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## *How To Run An Effective Business Meeting!*

How productive are your business meetings? Would you describe the culture that governs your meetings to more resemble World War III or crazy chaos? During a meeting, do you focus on the agenda at hand or do you concentrate more on breaking a foam cup into bits? Would you qualify eating all of the donuts in a meeting as

a major accomplishment in your agenda? If these meeting scenarios sound familiar to you, you are not alone! Many studies have shown that more time is wasted in meetings than in any other business activity. It is estimated that people spend 20-40% (upper management is much more) of their time in meetings and that meetings are only 44-50% efficient (source: Steve Kaye). By improving the efficiency of your next meeting, you may increase your bottom line.

The first step in improving the efficiency of your business meetings is to **recognize that meetings are a collaborative effort**. The very definition of a meeting is a TEAM activity where SELECT people gather to perform WORK that requires GROUP effort. All participants of a meeting, therefore, must play a role in remaining focused and progressing through the meeting in a timely manner.

Before calling a meeting, it must first be decided whether it is necessary. Remember a meeting is not always the most effective way. Other options available might be sending a memo or an email. It is the responsibility of the meeting solicitor to determine the need for calling the meeting and who should attend.

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In general, it is best to invite as few participants as possible (key players only). The solicitor must also review the organization's calendar, reserve the meeting room and assign a meeting facilitator to be in charge of the agenda.

Effective meetings necessitate leadership. Leading a meeting requires attention, confidence, creativity, diplomacy, empathy, flexibility, wits, toughness and yes, humor! The primary role of the leader is to establish the ground rules for the meeting which are namely: to minimize confusion and disruptions and to institute a code of conduct.

*Some examples of team game rules that are designed to make meetings more effective are:*

## RULES

1. If you are planning to introduce a proposal or discuss an issue in a group meeting, send out any relevant information to all team members several days before the meeting.
2. Review the agenda and bring any relevant materials with you to the meeting so that we can make informed decisions.
3. Don't lobby a few members before the meeting and try to ram an idea down the throats of the rest of the group in a "surprise attack." Keep issues above-board and inclusive. "Fight fair."
4. Come to meetings on time.
5. If you are going to be absent, inform others beforehand and send a stand-in who can make at least some decisions in your name.
6. Focus on listening and seeking understanding before disagreeing.
7. If you are the recorder, distribute complete and accurate minutes to everyone within 48 hours after the meeting.
8. If you agree to something, do what you say you will do. Be accountable to each other.
9. Sarcasm, personal attacks, interrupting, dominating the discussion,

*Continued on next column –*

or engaging in distracting behavior during a meeting are all non-productive behaviors. We agree not to engage in them.

10. It is okay to disagree during a meeting, but once the group has made a decision, it needs to be supported by everyone outside of the meeting. Passive resistance, sabotage, negative gossip and guerrilla warfare are not okay.
11. Remember to celebrate successes and to thank members for their efforts.

In addition to implementing these concepts, an effective meeting leader must enforce a code of conduct in order to maintain a safe environment for discussing ideas. The meeting facilitator should compel the meeting attendees to follow some simple guidelines to ensure an orderly meeting:

- Work as a team
- No rank in the room
- One speaker at a time
- Be an attentive listener
- Focus on the issue
- Respect others
- Suspend judgment
- Allow curiosity
- Maintain confidentiality

It is as equally important to end a meeting efficiently as it is to conduct it. Besides just ending a business meeting on time there should be a review of agenda items and results, as well as assignments. A set agenda for the next meeting should also be prepared.



Having an effective business meeting is a key ingredient to having a successful business. If you would like more information on this subject, please feel free to contact us.

*By Jennifer C. Selland CPBA, CPVA, CAIA, TriMetrix.  
Well-Run Concepts*

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However, this does not begin to address the larger challenge of replacing your best employees with new top talent who can carry on where they left off!

Is your company at high risk for talent slippage? Take a moment to evaluate what your company is doing to develop and engage the interests of your most valuable employees. Here are four questions you can ask that will readily reveal where you need to focus:



**1. Who are your best, and therefore your top performing, employees?**

- Do you have a list for each department?
- If so, is that list kept current and regularly reviewed at the executive level?

**2. What tools do you have in place to measure employee performance?**

- Can you name what talents your jobs require for successful performance?
- How do you match employees to jobs to assure performance and satisfaction?

**3. How are you developing your top performers?**

- Where specifically do they need to develop in order to be more effective, productive and challenged?
- What plans are in place for their development, and do they have input to those plans?

**4. How effectively are the above 3 answers working for you now in retaining your top performers, and what improvements need to be made - by when?**

Experts in talent management conclude that finding and keeping top performing employees will rank as a major concern of business leaders throughout the next decade. Make a plan to curb talent slippage at your company. Focus on providing your best and brightest with the development they seek to become even better!

Author: Gayla Doucet, People Powered Solutions LLC, Copyright protected. All rights reserved worldwide.

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*Learning is about more than simply acquiring new knowledge and insights; it is also crucial to unlearn old knowledge that has outlived its relevance. Thus, forgetting is probably at least as important as learning.*

– Gary Ryan Blair

*Effective leadership is putting first things first. Effective management is discipline, carrying it out.*

– Stephen Covey



# ONE MINUTE IDEAS

## Occupational Outlook Handbook 2006-07

*The Occupational Outlook Handbook* is a nationally recognized source of career information, designed to provide valuable assistance to individuals making decisions about their future work lives.

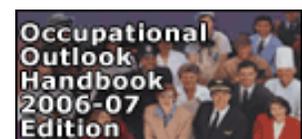
For hundreds of different types of jobs – such as teacher, lawyer, and nurse – the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* tells you:

- the training and education needed
- earnings
- expected job prospects
- what workers do on the job
- working conditions

In addition, the *Handbook* gives you job search tips, links to information about the job market in each State, and more.

Check it out at:

[www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm](http://www.bls.gov/oco/home.htm)



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*I would like to say I never procrastinate, but that's not true.*

### *Is there a cure?*

Sometimes people think procrastination is a time management problem; truth is you cannot manage time. You have 24 hours each day. To make the most of your days, and eliminate the stress of procrastination, think about managing your choices. Managing choices is a *Character Management* issue. Character comes from saying what you will do (honesty) and doing what you say (integrity). This is true whether it is something you say to others or a goal or commitment you “say” to yourself.

Are you a person who keeps promises? Many people are better about keeping promises to others than to themselves; either way this leads to procrastination. If you are procrastinating you are probably mistaking “*might do*” and “*maybe*” for commitment. A commitment problem underlies your procrastination. Each commitment you make with others and each goal or scheduled activity you make with yourself is a promise. As James, the brother of Jesus wrote, “*Let your yes be yes and your no be no.*”

Stop saying to yourself, “*later, tomorrow, next week, after tax season, next quarter, (insert your procrastination term here!)*.” Start saying “*I commit to doing the things I say I will do when I say I will do them.*” The best time to start is RIGHT NOW!

— Mark Sturgell, CBC, Performance Development Network – All rights reserved worldwide



*Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we have rushed through life trying to save.*

— Will Rogers

## Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
The Essentials of Human Resource Management	October 18 <sup>th</sup> & 19 <sup>th</sup> Memphis, TN	8:30 – 5:30	<a href="http://www.coned.memphis.edu">www.coned.memphis.edu</a>
The Coaching Clinic	November 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup>	8:30 – 5:30	<a href="http://www.harmonycc.net/coachingclinic.asp">www.harmonycc.net/coachingclinic.asp</a>
Coaching & Counseling Skills	November 9 <sup>th</sup>	9:00 – 5:00	<a href="http://www.coned.memphis.edu">www.coned.memphis.edu</a>

**Harmony Coaching & Consulting** is in the business of maximizing human talent for individuals and organizations in various industries. We accomplish this through the analysis, design and implementation of [Human Resource Programs](#), [Professional Development Training](#), [Personal Executive Coaching](#) and [Assessments](#).

