

Growing your own

When budgets are reduced, recession is upon us and employees hunker down in their current jobs and try not to be noticed in case they are 'rationalised', sensible organisations are more likely to also look to developing their in-house talent rather than just recruiting new people. A recent CIPD survey stated that 97% of the companies they surveyed (over 700) were developing their top talent. However, only 18% were looking with any dedicated enthusiasm at the rest of their workforce.

We know that the demands on local government are constantly shifting, budgets reducing and customer expectations growing. This is nothing new. But a predicted outcome of the economic recession is that labour turnover slows down. With less chance to recruit new employees, but ever increasing demands, councils will have to invest more than ever in their existing workforce.

They are likely to be pulled in two ways by their employees: towards stability by the desire for security and towards change by the equally strong desire for excitement and innovation. Balancing employees' needs and customer expectations, whilst ensuring the organisation develops and improves is difficult and needs skilled management.

Growing talent is an expensive investment and there is little room for failure: it needs to be right first time. Councils must be clear about their direction of travel and then set out a clear plan for organisational development. It is wise to start that development at the top, ironing out any issues within the top team and getting buy-in. Without this, there's less chance of being taken seriously



by the rest of the organisation, who may be suspicious of any sudden investment, wary of new initiatives and watchful for hollow promises.

For any OD plan to succeed it must be seen as valuing employee experience and learning. It needs to build on and shape what is already there. Managers and employees must help develop the plan. This helps get buy in from the whole organisation rather than creating a sense of imposed change. Any plan must further equip managers and employees with tools that will make them

Janvier Hyde looks at some of the challenges of using in-house talent to fill posts

flexible within the organisation, to support them in an evolving organisational culture.

Building emotional intelligence into an organisation, using tools like transactional analysis and neuro-linguistic programming can be a complete eye opener to managers. Many have practical and professional tools but not the complex management skills needed within a challenging and evolving environment.

Developing managers in the basic techniques of TA or NLP can provide them with the confidence to manage high maintenance employees and assist in their development through coaching and mentoring. Introduced in the right way (and not as a 'flavour of the month' gimmick) it can become an accepted and valued practice and make employees more self aware – this often leads to more innovation, risk taking and hunger for change. As employees look elsewhere for new challenges, this is the time to offer new opportunities to take the organisation forward - it's when step change is most likely to be achieved.

The successful organisation takes advantage of that step change and ensures it leads upwards and onwards. The coming years will be challenging, but the intelligent organisation will come out stronger, more focussed and more motivated, with a talented workforce pushing change rather than hiding from it. ■

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12th	Special focus on Efficiency Whitehall Supplement	18th	Special focus on Sustainable Communities & CIH issue	OCTOBER	
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APRIL		2nd	Special focus on Sustainable Communities & LGA issue Whitehall Supplement	15th	Special focus on Adult Care & Health
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16th	Special focus on Climate Change	23rd	Special focus on Efficiency	NOVEMBER	
23rd	Special focus on Efficiency	30th	Special focus on Children's Services	5th	Special focus on Finance Whitehall Supplement
30th	Special focus on Adult Care & Health & PPMA issue	AUGUST		12th	Special focus on Adult Care & Health Efficiency Supplement
MAY		6th	Special focus on Finance	19th	Special focus on Sustainable Communities & Thames Gateway Forum issue
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28th	Special focus on Climate Change	3rd	Special focus on Finance Whitehall Supplement	10th	Special focus on Finance
JUNE		10th	Special focus on Climate Change Efficiency Supplement		
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