Ensuring talent sustainability in your organization: Two key considerations

The recipe for success includes a balanced and dynamic ecosystem of diverse talent mindsets combined with a strong talent management system, says Sophia Zhao, Research Scientist at the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®).

Beyond providing the bare minimum of a talent management system, today’s VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) environment has created the necessity for organizations to view talent as a vital resource and have systems in place that deliver impact with lasting results.

More crucially, the issue of talent sustainability reflects the organization’s ability to continuously attract, develop and retain people with the capabilities and the commitment needed for current and future organizational success.

Through a collaborative research between CCL and HRM Asia, we found two key factors that need to be considered when managing talent in the organization:

1. Contrary to popular belief, talent development is not the sole responsibility of the human resource department—a positive mindset throughout the organization toward talent management is crucial.
2. Talent management responsibilities ought to be shared by the entire organization, with everyone playing a role in talent development, from senior management (advocating talent development practices), to line managers (identifying and developing talent) and employees (managing one’s personal growth and career progression).

The cultivation of a culture that encourages and rewards talent development behaviors is necessary. Employees should be given opportunities to develop their talent knowledge and skills.

In such a culture, coaching and mentoring behaviours are not only encouraged, but also become a natural part of what leaders do every day. Here, knowledge is shared, and learning is a collective process.

Also, a well-designed talent management system is very important in contributing to organizational talent sustainability.

The system should consist of eight key elements (as shown in the Talent Sustainability Framework), and these eight elements ought to be intertwined and embedded in the organization’s talent strategy and talent culture.

To yield more significant results, equal emphasis has to be placed on each of the eight elements of the framework consistently.

Potential areas that need to be neglected include the areas of having a leadership competency model, knowledge networks, and a systematic sourcing and recruiting process. Systems within a talent strategy should be incorporated into the business strategy because business success is dependent on talent. In addition, a positive talent mindset within the organization will provide the support for a dynamic and sustainable talent ecosystem.

CCL’s program for senior HR executives recognizes that organizations need to strongly consider talent management in the bigger scheme of things. However challenging, it is necessary to understand how talent management is aligned with business strategy to support the organization’s objectives to drive sustainability.

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