

BEST EVER YEAR GROWTH GUIDE

PART 4: RECRUITING KEY EXECUTIVE TALENT

INTRODUCTION

The next phases of any business growth is to be able to relinquish responsibility and some control (notice we said some) to a team of senior executives that can continue the running of the business while you use some of your freed up time to work on the growth of the business.

However invariably owners or senior executives do not understand how to define the next person in the team and what role they should take, let alone put together a brief for the recruitment of the key individual.

This tactical white paper is a practical guide to help owners understand the steps that can lead to a key senior individual joining the team.

UNDERSTAND WHAT ROLE IS REQUIRED TO MOVE THE BUSINESS FORWARD

This may be obvious to one or two of you, but it is worth doing the exercise to cement what you believe is true. Use the following table below and outline all the activities that you undertake in your role TODAY as CEO/MD and work out the % that it encompasses in a typical week (or month). Then in the third column outline what you believe the % should be to allow you the time to leave at least 1 to 1½ days (ie 20-30%) to develop the business.

Activity	Total % spent in week	Ideal % time to be spent
Eg Spending time in the work area	25%	15%
Financial control	15%	15%
Sales support	25%	10%

In this example the business leader wants to reduce his time spending in the operational side of the business, as well as less time in the field on direct selling. So there is a decision to make in regards to what role will have the biggest impact on the business. In this case the individual has gone for the sales role as this will fuel the growth of the business and provide the cash to get an operational support in the future.

DEFINE THE CULTURE AND VALUES OF THE BUSINESS

In our strategic away day with our clients this area of activity has been found to be the most enlightening. Defining the DNA of the business is important if responsibility is to be delegated to a new member of staff. Helping a new recruiter understand what makes your business tick, what are the non-negotiables in how you deal with customers and staff is paramount in getting the right individual. However fantastic a candidate is, if they bring a different culture and value to the business, they will not fit in with the staff but potential may alienate your customers and suppliers.

DEFINE THE ROLE CLEARLY

Even though this seems bureaucratic, creating a job description is essential if you want to ensure that in the future there is no ‘come back’ in relation to the early dismissal of a new employee. It also helps to brainstorm the various elements of the role that you would like covered and help to paint the picture in your mind of the type of person that you would like to have on board.

CHOOSE A RECRUITER WHO IS ABLE TO DO THE DONKEY WORK FOR YOU

Unless you have massive amount of time on your hand we would always recommend a professional recruiter in your field to do the advertising, search and first interviews for you. Negotiate fees and be prepared to walk away if they are too high. Provide claw back of fees if the individual does not last 6 months or negotiate a free search if the candidate does not accept the offer or

pulls out at the last minute. This is a client market so you should be able to command good deals.

Ensure the recruiter understands your business and talk them through the vision of the business and the culture and values of the business. Maybe even invite the recruiter to come down and visit your company to discuss the role with other members of staff. It is important that the recruiter is able to be your HR resource and sift through the myriad of potential applicants as well as do first interviews as if they were your HR department.

PREPARE METICULOUSLY FOR THE INTERVIEW

We find it amazing how top leaders do not give the time to prepare for interviews, especially if it is for a senior executive/ management position. For one it is disrespectful to the interviewee and provides the perception about how you care about your people and disrespectful for you in putting your business at potential risk in not spending the time to vet someone who could jeopardise your hard earned growth in the business as well as cost you hard cash if no return is experienced over a 3-6 month period.

WHAT TO PREPARE?

Read up about the individual. Understand the companies that they have worked with. Look carefully at their achievements; can those achievements be applied to your business? Understand strengths and look for weaknesses. For example for sales executives we always look to identify their ability to close a sale or are there signs that they are ‘piggy backing’ on someone else’s sales skills.

Prepare questions in advance, as well as asking questions about what makes them tick and how they handle people. This will help to paint a picture of

whether they will fit into the culture of the organisation and have the values that you want.

THE KEY ELEMENTS OF THE INTERVIEW

It is worthwhile creating a small panel of 3 people, including you, in relation to the interview process. This is important as each person will see the interviewee in a different light. However have some key questions that are unique to you all, readily prepared and create scores (1 to 5) for each of those questions. This will ensure that when it comes to comparing candidates the process is fair and will help if a candidate wants to question how you arrived at the decision.

For sales executives we have sometimes suggested a 30, 90, 120 sales plan presentation for the candidate to carry out to the interviewing team to help the business understand what a salesman would do in their first few months. The power of this part of the process cannot be underestimated as it helps to see the interviewee in a pressured environment as well as helping you to understand the type of strategies they would adopt in getting new clients and developing accounts.

POST- RECRUITMENT

Once you have your candidate on board then the preparation of a solid induction will help to cement all that you have prepared for the individual. A nice tip is to even invite the new candidate and their partner for an evening dinner to get to know what makes them tick in a social environment. Remember a person's home life that is happy will provide you with a productive individual. It is essential to take up references and take copies of any important documents; checking them professionally if necessary.

Be clear after the induction the objectives that this new individual will need to cover during their probationary period. Ensure agreement is reached. This could take place following an opportunity for the new staff member to come back to you with a plan for the next 3 months. Either way this is important as unfortunately if things do not go well then you have some documented evidence of the objectives that were not met. However we are confident that with the clear process identified it is likely that you have a candidate that is likely to perform.

DELEGATION PROCESSES NEED TO BE IN PLACE; ONGOING

The final step of the process is to develop a good delegation process that will allow you to delegate responsibility but remain in control. Regular reviews with the team and one-on-one meeting are essential to ensure that the key performance indicators of the business are executed effectively.

FURTHER INFORMATION

We hope that you have found this white paper of benefit and value. Please drop us a line or contact us for clarity on any of the issues outlined in this document. We wish you well in your growth endeavours for this year.

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