

Talent Metrics for the CEO

Glenn Hallam, Ph.D.

Jack Welsh spent much of his time at GE thinking about talent. “There’s no way for me to understand the complicated systems we build – so I spent much of my time focusing on talent,” he writes in his autobiography. When it comes to talent management; however, most executives know there are problems but they do not have the tools and metrics to help them pinpoint and fix the problems. They need metrics and levers to fix problems.

Creative Metrics advocates the use of integrated talent management systems that can provide executives with a bird’s-eye view of the overall organization and each major business unit. Such systems are used to monitor and probe the entire gamut of talent management, from the moment a job opens up and the search for a hire begins, through the setting of work objectives, evaluation of performance, development of new skills, planning of successors, and so on.

When an organization implements an integrated talent management system executives have access to numerical displays, similar to financial displays, that give them metrics that capture key information such as the following:

- Open positions (seats unfilled)
- Positions with succession plans in place
- People with development plans in place
- Progress in addressing development plans
- Work objectives attained

Executives rely on metrics to find problems and levers to fix them.

Executives can “explore” the entire company, examining metrics in each business unit and level, looking for signs of progress and vulnerability. In this way, the organization is held accountable for driving the development of talent – positions get filled, development plans created, succession plans formed. The process becomes more transparent and a more integral part of the culture.

Metrics such as these help HR speak the quantitative language of the business, they capture the attention of top executives and help them manage talent the way they manage money: with numbers.

