

What CEOs Should Demand of HR

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Any CEO will agree that talent is crucial for the success of the organization – smart, capable people working hard fuel the growth of companies. Yet many CEOs have yet to ask the tough questions or challenge HR with reasonable demands for building talent systematically. Few CEOs are given the tools they need to manage the most expensive resource they have: people. The following are questions and demands which CEOs should ask of HR:

Where are Our Talent Vulnerabilities?

Given the strategic direction of the company and the strength of our competition, where are our vulnerabilities in our top team? What skills or experience are we missing? Where are the other pockets of the organization where we have the most jobs unfilled? What positions, levels, and business units? What kinds of jobs are these? How do we plan to fill them? How do these jobs relate to our main objectives?

How Prepared are We for Turnover?

For example, in the top ranks of our company, what percentage of executives have viable succession plans in place? What is our confidence in these succession plans? Who are we most vulnerable to losing (because they are likely to leave and there is no successor ready to take over).

Who are My High Potential People?

Don't tell me who has the best reputation, but give me numbers, good solid data to show that these people are high potential. I want to know the full story about the people who someday will be taking on more powerful leadership roles. How are we developing these people? Let me see their action plans. Let me see what they say are their challenges. I want to know how we can support these people.

*Creative Metrics
creates systems
designed to give
CEO's what they need
to build the future of
the organization.*

Are My People Making Progress in their Development?

For example, what percentage of their development objectives have they met? How are they being held accountable for change? Let me see the people who are not making progress.

Do We have Too Many Managers?

What is our ratio of managers to employees? Show me by level and business unit so I can find the pockets where these ratios are the highest.

How Much Effort is being Devoted to My Priorities?

Who is working on them, how are they progressing, how much of their time are they devoting, and what other support do they need? Let me have instant access to this information so I can act on it now. I don't want to wait six months to find out that we're stalled because people are unclear about the objectives or insufficiently supported. Tell me now.

Who is Holding us Back?

Show me who is being a disruptive influence on this organization. Show the plan for dealing with this. Show me what this person plans to do to change.



Is the Right Training being Offered?

Give my top people the training they need, but make sure this is based on our needs as an organization and their needs as individuals. Show that it is making a difference.

The list could obviously go on. The point is that executives who are genuinely interested in the development and management of talent are likely to become increasingly sophisticated and demanding in the types of questions they ask and organizations will have the need for better systems to gather answers to these questions and put them at the fingertips of the organization's leadership.

