

# THE MANAGER'S GUIDE TO MAXIMIZING EMPLOYEE POTENTIAL

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Quick and Easy  
Strategies to Develop Talent  
Every Day

William J. Rothwell

**AMACOM**

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# Preface



What do you, as a manager, have to do with recruiting, developing, and retaining talent? The short answer is simple: *you have everything to do with those activities*. It is not the human resource (HR) department's job to manage talent. Although HR professionals do have parts to play in talent management—and so do CEOs, top managers, and even individuals—it is not the HR department's job to build talent *on a daily basis*. One reason is simply that managers see workers all the time, while HR professionals interact with them on fewer occasions. Because most talent development occurs on the job and not in training classrooms off the job, it just makes sense to conclude that each worker's supervisor bears a major responsibility for talent management. Therefore, this book focuses on the tactical, rather than the strategic, issues involved in how talent is managed and developed.

Of course, many managers claim they are simply too busy getting the work out to recruit, develop, and retain talent. But managing talent is what they should be doing routinely; it should not be considered an additional or onerous task. It is the essence of what management is all about. To do this properly, managers must simultaneously complete the day's work while still preparing employees for the future. Doing that requires skillful juggling.

This book consists of 14 chapters about the manager's role in developing talent. Chapter 1 is entitled "The Importance of Talent Management." It defines talent management and related terms, explains why managers should focus attention on the subject, how they should accomplish their goals in this area, why talent management deserves attention, and how to manage worker expectations. Chapter 2 focuses on grooming a replacement, while Chapter 3 goes right to the heart of talent management by describing how managers can recognize the potential for greatness in people who have not yet shown it. Chapter 4 continues the discussion by describing practical recruiting and selection techniques that can support talent management for your department and the organization of which you are part. Then, Chapter 5 challenges the sometimes prevailing notion that "sending people out" is the best way to develop them. It describes how managers can plan workers' job assignments so as to build their competencies while also getting work out of them. Chapter 6 focuses on career planning and career counseling; Chapter 7 on performance and development coaching; and Chapter 8 on the manager's role in appraising workers and providing real-time feedback.

The next group of chapters—Chapters 9, 10, and 11—deal with managing high potential and high professional workers, transferring knowledge and professional contacts, and working with diverse people. The final three chapters—Chapters 12, 13, and 14—describe how managers should work with diverse people, manage problem performers and decruitment, and set an example for workers through self-development. The two appendixes answer some frequently-asked questions about talent management and offer the start of a daily calendar for planning your efforts to manage and develop talent.

Throughout this book, you will find practical tips. Each is presented as a sidebar and deserves special attention.

# Acknowledgments

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To be effective as talent developers, managers must be more than merely *managers*—they must be *leaders*. Leadership is a term that is bandied about much these days. But, in simple terms, a leader is anyone who influences other people. And managers, as leaders, must influence others to realize their full potential.

Many people have influenced me. Some by being supportive; some by being “difficult”; and, some by simply “being there” when I needed someone to talk to, commiserate with, or get advice from. To all these people, I would like to express my sincerest thanks.

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