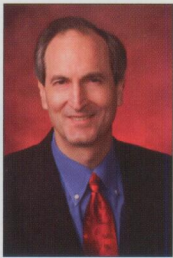


# Forward Thinking, PART II

## Leading edge succession and talent development practices



BY  
TIM MCCARTHY

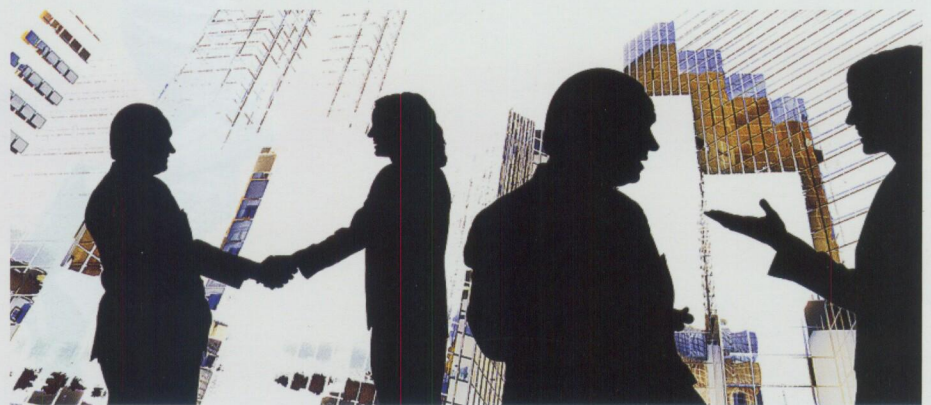
**M**aximizing the development of high potential managers earmarked for advancement/succession is crucial to the success of a growing enterprise. Furthermore, establishing an effective process for building superior, promising leaders represents

a core competency that provides an edge over competitors. There are many possible approaches to talent development, however, and not all are created equal.

### Talent Pool Identification

**A** first level general identification must be conducted to determine the larger pool of those having potential for advancement. Often managers are asked to identify potential candidates using only loosely formulated criteria, often subjective in nature. Using a structured behavioral ratings process can more effectively enhance identification by objectively defining desired competencies and breaking them down into detailed behavioral descriptors of leadership behavior to be rated (e.g. scale of 1-10) by senior managers.

For example, a competency of Communication & Persuasiveness can be assessed by a series of formal, structured interview questions and the interviewer would rate the candidate in four "Direct Behavioral Observation" areas: (1) clear and articulate, (2) word usage and vocabulary, (3) concise and to the point, and (4) persuasiveness. This allows for a more objective common set of criteria for comparison of strengths versus weaknesses among candi-



**Managerial goals are usually too general, lacking specificity regarding exactly which behaviors and daily workplace habits need to be changed.**

dates, reducing subjective bias in making this first cut in the selection process.

### Testing

**T**he next step is to narrow the larger pool of candidates further through more in-depth selection methods and identify strengths/development areas. Assessment centers offer "live" observational evaluation of simulated "in-basket" business challenges but can be time and cost intensive. For expediency, there are many paper and pencil leadership/personality tests on the market but in choosing any one of them it is important to consider the extent of predictive validity research. Namely how well the test does what it says it can do: e.g. predict successful fit for a given succession-advancement position.

The Caliper Test is noteworthy in its research of finding in a 16-month follow-up of managers recommended for hire and matched to a job description that approximately 70 percent performed in the top half of performance among peers as rated by superiors and co-workers. This test has been used by more than 20 professional sports teams with an independent study of NBA draft players showing that professional basketball players recommended by Caliper testing scored more than twice as many points, rebounds steals and assists.

### Co-Worker Surveys

**U**sing a good 360-degree co-worker survey is essential for both assessing potential and for defining specific development areas. The most helpful data from a 360-degree comes from its written com-

ments, giving more specific information regarding exactly where a low rating comes from for any given leadership area. A low quantitative rating, for example in "execution" tells us little, if anything, about where the failing is — in executing meetings? Planning? Goal-setting? Or a low rating in "holding others accountable" does not indicate exactly who, what, when or how one is not holding others accountable? So it's important to select a 360-degree survey having the capability to draw out many comments rich in detail about specific development needs.

### Developmental Goal Setting

**M**anagerial goal setting is certainly commonplace in business; however, it is often executed in less than effective

## "Take more leadership initiative" fails to define in which areas to take more initiative.

ways. Goals are usually too general, lacking specificity regarding exactly which behaviors and daily workplace habits need to be changed. For example, the goal of "take more leadership initiative" fails to define in which areas to take more initiative. This sets one up for failure. A good development plan might instead read: (1) assert opinion

more in senior management meetings, (2) show leadership by facilitating cross departmental meetings with marketing and sales groups to reduce conflict and improve communication, (3) initiate process improvement teams in your department to achieve \$300,000 cost reductions.

The ability to produce great leaders is a strategic business capability as important as producing great products, so make sure to use the best assessment tools and methods available. **MB**

[Editor Note: Look for part three of this series in the June 2005 issue.]

**Tim McCarthy, Ph.D.** (tmccarthy@execperform.com), president of Executive Performance Consultants, is an executive coach and consultant for leadership, sales and business performance improvement.

experience **skin health**  
*Rejuvenation*

**Ideal for men too!**

- ▶ Personalized Skin Care
- ▶ Microdermabrasion
- ▶ Rejuvenating Peels
- ▶ Botox
- ▶ Hylaform · Restylane
- ▶ Waxing/Tinting
- ▶ Massage



Patricia Scherven,  
Owner

*Providing the most beneficial customized skin care services and products to maintain your skin health.*

**Gift Certificates Available**

**Skin Therapeasé**  
A NON-SURGICAL CLINIC

**952-404-0000**

1907 Wayzata Blvd., Suite 120,  
Wayzata, MN 55391  
info@skintherapease.com  
www.skintherapease.com

### STOP WASTING TIME

...changing toner cartridges and clearing paper jams. With **Cartridge Plus**, you get:



- Free cleaning
- Cartridge installed
- All repairs
- Helpful reports
- Free 4-hour delivery

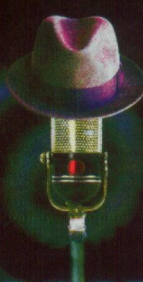
**...all for the cost of a cartridge!**

**612-331-7757**  
www.cartridgecare.com



**Cartridge Care**  
The Toner Cartridge Leader


# SINATRA



## MyWay

A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra

Directed by Casey Stangl



**Ordway Center**  
for the Performing Arts

**Now thru May 28**  
McKnight Theatre  
651-224-4222 ordway.org