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Delta Dental of Virginia and Talent Management

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DELTA DENTAL OF VIRGINIA AND TALENT MANAGEMENT

A Research Report
Presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the Department of
Occupational and Technical Studies
At Old Dominion University

**For Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the
Master of Science Degree**

**by
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October, 2009**

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Talent Management "is a holistic approach to optimizing human capital, which enables an organization to drive short- and long-term results by building culture, engagement, capability, and capacity through integrated talent acquisition, development, and deployment processes that are aligned to business goals" (American Society for Training & Development, 2008, p. 1). David Watkins (2008) of Softscape is credited with coining the phrase talent management in 1998, and talent management has become the new strategic focus in executive circles.

Research by the LBA Consulting Group identified criteria for long-term successful organizations and stated that "the successful organizations focused on proactively and systematically managing their human resources" (Berge, 2004, p. 3). Research also indicated that there is currently no best practice or model identified for talent management, and there is a wide range of opinion regarding what talent management really is, and how talent management should be implemented and managed (Gay, 2006). On the left side of the pendulum is the belief that organizations should take a universal approach and treat all employees equally by providing equal development resources – no differentiation of talent and resource development spending (Thorne, 2007). On the opposite side of the pendulum is an emerging belief that organizations should concentrate on star performers, often referred to as A-players and the hypos, employees with the greatest potential of becoming A players, by investing their development dollars solely for these two talent groups (Huselid, 2008).

Although there is disagreement regarding what a talent management system should look like and who should receive developmental opportunities, there are two important criteria that most resources can agree upon regarding the success of a talent management system. The first criterion is that the organization's talent management program should be aligned with the company's culture (Thorne, 2007). The second criterion is that within the organization there is a clearly defined and agreed upon definition of talent management (Berger, 2004).

Upon participating in a 2008 Strategic Planning Conference hosted by the Society for Human Resources, the Human Resources Director felt Delta Dental of Virginia could benefit from a talent management system (K. Claytor, personal communication, July, 2008). Concurrently because talent management is a buzz word in executive circles, the Executive team at Delta Dental of Virginia expressed a desire to implement a talent management program, particularly a program that emphasizes A-player development; however, this talent management approach appears in direct conflict with Delta Dental of Virginia's current cultural values and norms. Talent management as a practice has not been investigated thoroughly.

This research should be able to support that a well thought out, carefully implemented talent management program that emphasizes working with the company culture will prove to be a successful tool that will streamline development resources and dollars and provide a strategic gap analysis to address current and future talent needs.

Statement of Problem

The problem of this study was to determine the need of Delta Dental of Virginia to establish a talent management system to provide for future business needs.

Research Goals

To solve this problem, the following research goals have been established:

1. Determine the talent management needs of Delta Dental of Virginia.

2. Develop a talent management model to meet Delta Dental of Virginia future business needs.

Background and Significance

In many organizations there are several tools for collecting talent information, but there still exists a gap in using that information to effectively manage internal talent for current and future business needs. Talent management consists of the same functions that are part of the traditional human resources departments; however, a talent management system provides a more synthesized, objective, and ongoing overview of the organization's talent and organizational needs instead of a silo view of the various functions within human resources (Elkeles, 2009). A talent management system can do five things:

1. Allows for a greater understanding of the gap between an organization's current talent and its future talent needs (Buckner & Slavenski, 2000).

2. Allows for a more objective view because it receives information directly from sources instead of being filtered through third-parties.

3.   Provides an on-going review and not a one-time analysis.

4.   Provides an internal resource that utilizes consistent criteria for identifying, analyzing, and benchmarking talent requirements.

5.   Streamlines and oversees resources to ensure the deployment of talent development is meeting defined strategic objectives (Berger, 2004).

The need for this study was derived from two sources. The first was a 2005 Strategic Planning retreat with Wilder Consulting which led to the deployment of a GPTW, Great Places to Work Survey, in November 2006. Delta Dental of Virginia received an 86% employee satisfaction rating, and it was noted that employee development was its weakest link (Wilder, 2006). Delta Dental of Virginia considers itself an employer of choice through its offering of above market compensation packages, below industry turn-over rates of 8%, steady growth, a healthy bottom line, and spends approximately $200,000.00 on talent development per year. As an employer of choice, Delta Dental of Virginia continually strives to not only maintain its standing but to also improve its standards (K. Claytor, personal communication, October, 2008).

It is also important to note that Delta Dental of Virginia invests a significant amount of time and resources into recruiting and hiring employees; however, managing those same employees' talents once they have been hired has been disjointed and inconsistent from department-to-department, and in general lacks a systematic process for continually evaluating talent consistently and effectively throughout the entire organization (J. Sprague & K. Claytor, personal communication, August, 2008).

The second source for this study is the Executive staff of Delta Dental of Virginia. In September 2008 at a strategic team building event held at Virginia Tech, the Executive

staff defined talent management as a key to maintaining its competitive advantage for future endeavors. Delta Dental of Virginia currently has 36% of the dental insurance market share, the largest market share in the state of Virginia, with Anthem at second with 16%. Delta Dental of Virginia is a small to medium sized organization that employees approximately 240 employees and has created a strategy department that is focused on the future of the business (K. Claytor & S. Campbell, Personal Communications, January, 2009).

Limitations

The following limitations have been noted for this research study:

1. The research was limited to Delta Dental of Virginia.

2. Historical data were limited with some performance reviews missing.

Assumptions

The following assumptions have been made in regards to this research:

1. It was assumed that a talent management program was needed at Delta Dental of Virginia.

2. Executives participating in the study were familiar with basic talent management terminology.

3. The Executive staff recognized the need for talent management.

4. Current and historical Delta Dental of Virginia performance statistics were biased in that supervisors and managers were hesitant to provide constructive and/or negative feedback to employees.

5. Culture was not easily changed, and therefore researching a talent management program that aligns itself with Delta Dental of Virginia's culture was needed.

6. Demographics and company information would be readily available for review.

Procedures

To address the two goals the researcher held a series of meetings facilitated with the Director of Human Resources, The Vice President of Strategy, and the CEO to identify initial feelings, perceptions, and expectations. Additionally, a survey was deployed to the Executive team to assess their initial, individual attitudes, and perceptions of talent management. This study specifically addressed the survey results as they provided individual input without group bias.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were defined and related directly to this study:

1. **360 Degree Performance Review** – An annual review that is often conducted for members of management, which includes collecting feedback from peers, direct reports, colleagues, self, as well as the employee's manager.

2. **A Player** – An employee that performs significantly above defined expectations, is considered promotable within the organization, and is an employee the organization does not want to lose.

3. **Competency** – Observable clusters of knowledge, skills, and behaviors, and are often measured annually.

4. **Critical Position** – A position defined in the organization that if the person in that role left the organization, the organization would feel the impact of the vacant role, and it is a role that is not easily filled by other employees.

5. **Differentiated Workforce** – the strategy of grouping employees as A Players, B Players, C Players, and Critical Positions.

6. **Human Capital** – also referred to as human resources. These are the employees within the organization.

7. **Hypo Player** – An employee that performs above defined expectations, and with some developmental work could easily become an A player.

8. **KPI** – Key Performance Indicator. Specific goal identified for each employee, which is reviewed annually and often linked to a bonus and/or merit increase.

9. **Succession Planning** – long-term replacement planning of key positions within an organization.

10. **Talent Management** – the term used for the management of talent inside an organization.

Overview

Chapter I introduced the talent management concept and provided the foundation of the problem of whether Delta Dental of Virginia could benefit from a talent management program, and if so, identifying the best type of program. Chapter II is the review of literature and provides an in-depth review of the current research and literature about talent management. Chapter III defines the methods and procedures used to collect and analyze data that will then be used in Chapter IV to either support or refute the need for a talent management system at Delta Dental of Virginia.   Lastly, Chapter V provides

conclusions as to whether Delta Dental of Virginia could benefit from a talent

management program, and if so, an outline for the type of talent management program

that will be recommended.

Chapter II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of Chapter II, the Review of Literature, is to provide an overview of the current research and literature available on talent management, further define talent management and its importance to organizations, identify the benefits and challenges of implementing a talent management program, and lastly best practices that have emerged within the past two years.

Talent Management Overview and Its Importance

"For many years companies preached that their employees are their greatest asset but only in recent times have senior managers truly recognized this truth" (Kirkwood, 2008, p. 98). Jon Ingram (2006) summarizes that,

> having the right people in the right places at the right time to maximize business opportunities has become the most important factor in ensuring ongoing organizational success. While managing employees effectively is obviously important, it's the acquisition, allocation, development, retention, and succession of the most important value-adding people that can best create competitive advantage (p. 20).

Talent management is important for several reasons. Research demonstrates that the pool of talent is shrinking. Fifty percent of the senior managers in the top 500 companies in America are preparing to exit the workforce in the next five years (HRM International Digest, 2007). There is increased pressure as we compete in a global market for skilled workers especially in developing countries. Additionally, a new

employee paradigm emerged after the downsizing and merger activities of the 1980s; employees, especially talented employees have recognized that lifelong employment with one organization is no longer a reality and therefore they take a more independent approach to their careers, which makes holding on to talent harder now than ever before. The employee's loyalty is to themselves and not to their current employer. Technology has also played a role in the need to retain talent. Technology has driven organizations to do more with less and there is continual focus to improve productivity in order to compete. Talent is needed to drive those initiatives and to operate the sophisticated tools that are developed to close productivity gaps. "C-level managers realize true competitive advantage is not through physical assets or products, but through their people and everything else is simply the result or benefit of employee skill development and creativity" (Pangarkar & Kirkwood, 2008, p. 98). Talent drives innovation. Talent creates, innovates, problem solves, and delivers and without talent, business stops being competitive. One of the last frontiers of strategic advantages for organization is its talent.

Business currency has changed with the entrance of Generation X and Y employees. Large corporations used to retain talent through large compensation packages that included large monetary payouts often referred to as golden handcuffs, but money is no longer the only currency valued in today's workforce. A survey of one thousand professional stated that 52% of them do not think in terms of careers but rather of work that is satisfying, and 29% identified interesting work as a priority, while 18% identified a work/life balance over an increase in salary (Hills, 2009).

Effectively managing talent allows small companies to compete against larger corporations for talent, which is of particular interest for Delta Dental of Virginia. Delta

Dental of Virginia is classified as a small to medium sized organization and competes against Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield, classified as a large company because it employees over 500 people. Over 40% of employees work in corporations with less than 500 employees. These small to medium sized organizations typically have no talent management processes, yet have the same human resources issues as large companies, and further, small businesses can be more flexible in designing compensation packages, which could give them a competitive edge. If these small businesses become more sophisticated and better skilled at managing human capital processes then they will be able to compete for key talent resources with large organizations (Berger & Berger, 2004).

Regardless of the size of the organization, they have a strong need to retain talent. It costs organizations money when talent leaves. The lost investment in recruiting and training of the initial employee; the lost opportunities and delays of key projects; the cost to recruit and retrain the replacement; the cost of allowing the replacement to get up to speed; and the lost knowledge added together can be staggering. There is also an additional hidden cost: "good employees will leave, poor employees will not. We consistently underestimate the impact that under-performers have on those who consistently deliver results" (Morgan, 2008, p. 123).

Benefits of Talent Management

There are several reasons for implementing a talent management program. The first reason is to retain critical experts. It is estimated that 70% of a company's assets are intangible compared to just 20% in 1980 (HRM International Digest, 2007). In addition,

a talent management program can strengthen a leadership pipeline. Leaders holding key positions will be exiting organizations and "progressive organizations recognize that they need a pool of able people who are promotable" (Cunningham, 2007). These leaders often have years of company knowledge and industry experience that is invaluable.

Talent management decreases external recruiting and training costs. Existing employees are already familiar with the organization's culture. Many outside recruits for high-level positions fail within their first year because they are unable to fit in (Cunningham, 2007). Promoting employees from within helps to ensure cultural fit, and it can also help cement some measure of company loyalty with the company demonstrating its willingness to invest development dollars on internal candidates rather than purchasing external talent. It is important to note that longevity should not be misconstrued as loyalty. "Poor performers are equally savvy about their prospects. They can stay in their current organization with an annual review about their lack of results, or risk going to a new company that may not only be more demanding but also less tolerant of their work ethic" (Morgan, 2008, p. 124).

Talent management helps organizations focus on performance and reward those employees that perform above company expectations and can strengthen customers and shareholders perceptions of the organization. The famed Jack Welch, former CEO of GE, was heavily criticized when he initiated terminating the bottom 10% of performers every year, but he moved human resources to the board room, and today, many of his protégés are CEO's in major organizations. Bill Gates stated that "people behave as they are measured" (Berger & Berger, 2004, p. 86). Payroll costs continue to escalate and it is the largest portion of any organizations operating budget. Talent management introduces

a new currency into the organization, therefore compensation is no longer defined strictly in financial dollars.

Talent management allows a more neutral vehicle for employees to share what is most important to them, and how they would prefer to be rewarded. The employee is more likely to stay if he has had the opportunity to define his dream job and be paid in his own currency terms. Lastly, talent management helps the organization identify gaps in critical positions and address the shortages before they become a reality. "Gaps in replacement activity for key positions are highly disruptive, costly, and distracting to the organization" (Berger & Berger, 2004, p. 4).

Challenges of Talent Management

Despite talent management being recognized as a strategic advantage, very few organizations fully understand how to implement and manage a talent management program. "After 70 years of growing sophistication in Human Resource Management, there was no common knowledge espoused, and/or utilized approach for identifying, assessing, and developing a cadre of high-talent people for meeting an organization's current and future needs" (Berger, 2004, p. 5).

One reason is there is much disagreement over the definition of talent, the differentiation of talent, referred to as a differentiated workforce, and how much should be spent on developing star performers versus other employees. Focusing on star performers over all others is controversial, yet some feel that "treating all the same is not good leadership in today's world. Why should we treat all performers like our best performers and expect our "stars" to remain motivated" (Morgan, 2008, p. 120)?

Organizations cannot move forward in implementing a talent management program and expect success until it clearly addresses the issues of identification and support of talent.

Although executives identify talent management as a strategic initiative, most executives do not own the process or are not involved in the process (Ingram, 2006). Most people responsible for talent management struggle with linking strategy and talent because "strategy has never been at the forefront of their mandate or learning plans" (Pangarkar & Kirkwood, 2008, p. 97). Additionally, human resources have not garnered the same respect as finance, operations, and sales in executive circles. Most executives converse in numbers and have difficulty with topics that are not necessarily numbers driven. Talent is difficult to measure, and tying talent management to strategic objectives and establishing realistic financial measures is a challenging task. However, if executives identify talent as a strategic initiative then they must take responsibility and help champion talent management to help move talent forward and keep talent at the forefront of the organization. The executive circle and human resources must partner for success.

Another reason that talent management systems fail is that many programs implemented are an

Incoherent mosaic of unconnected, incomplete, missing and inconsistent assessment, planning and developing tools, and methods. This median that performance appraisals, assessment of potential, competency evaluations, career planning replacement planning, development and training, compensation, and selection (the core elements of human resource management were unlinked and largely irreconcilable (Berger & Berger, 2004, pp. 4-5).

A strategic, on-going process is most successful. If the components are not linked it will

not work, and if the components are not evaluated on an on-going basis, it will not

succeed.

Companies Demonstrating Talent Management Success

While there is disagreement over how best to identify talent and who deserves the

development resources, there have been some key strategies identified for talent

management success in the past two years. First, a clearly agreed upon definition of

talent management is necessary (Ingram, 2006). Additionally, the talent management

criteria must also be clearly defined. For example, will it be company policy to notify

those identified as stars? Or, will all employees be able to voluntarily participate in

development programs or only those identified by the organization? How often will

talent management goals be reviewed? These are just a few of the questions an

organization must address. Many successful organizations begin by first defining the

core competencies that support their strategic goals and initiatives. Once an organization

understands its own competencies needed for success, it can then begin to identify

employees that best exemplify those competencies.

The second defining success point is that company culture is important to the

success of the talent management program. "Evaluating how an individual's values

measure up to those of the organizations – both before people join in and before they take

on more responsibility is vital" (Hill, 2009, p. 5). Recruit people that fit into the culture.

McDonald's believes that "employees need to fit in and see their way ahead" (Develop

Learning, 2008, p. 54). An organization not only wants to recruit and retain the best

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performers, but to also identify people who fit best with the culture and values of the business. Enron was cited as an example of what began as a good, solid company. At one point it was employing 250 MBA graduates, the "best and the brightest" a year and yet managed to breed corruption, malpractice, and illegal attitudes. Enron illustrates why a company should be concerned with not only hiring the best but to also recruit those who will best fit in (HRM International Digest, 2007). Each organization that has been successful at talent management has its own unique culture and further illustrates that for those companies looking to implement a talent management program, it is more important to create a talent management program that more closely aligns with the company's own culture than to try to create an exact replica of some other company's program.

Lastly, the "magic is in the mix" (Hill, 2009, p. 6). Focusing on any one component will not make a successful talent management program. Successful companies have evaluated not only their employees' talents, but the companies have also invested in understanding the overall strategic vision of the organization and how that pertains to future talent needs. They have also carefully evaluated jobs, which are a component of talent management that is often overlooked.

Summary

Chapter II has provided a review of talent management and why it is so valuable to organizations. It also has presented the benefits of a talent management system, items that should be carefully considered in the development and implementation of a talent management program. It has provided examples of best practices of successful

organizations. In Chapter III the employee, organizational and talent demographics are

defined, as well as the methods and procedures used to collect and analyze the data.

Chapter III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

This chapter defines the methods and procedures utilized to facilitate this study. Chapter III also defines the population that participated in the study, the instrument used to collect the data and how it was created, the methods employed to collect the data, the statistical analysis used to analyze the results of the data, and a summary.

Population

The target population of this study was the Executive team at DDVA, which included one Chief Executive Officer, five vice presidents, and nine directors, for a total of 15 management employees. All participants were located at two different facilities within Roanoke, Virginia, approximately two miles from each physical location. The average company tenure for this group was 8.12 years, and the average tenure in an executive position for this group was 7.22 years. All Executives had a background in the insurance industry. The Executive team was comprised of 27% females and 73% males. Six percent of the Executives were under the age of 40, and 94% of the Executives were over the age of 40.

Instrument Design

The instrument used to collect data was a self-designed, 28-question survey, which allowed an opportunity for commentary for each question answered. Its design was based on the study's research goals. The survey was distributed to two outside sources for feedback to help ensure the clarity of questions. The scale used in this survey

was a 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree) Likert scale, with a 0 included to allow

an opportunity for the participant to notate the lack of experience and/or lack of desire to

answer the question. The researcher felt by providing a score to notate the inability or

unwillingness to answer the question would help make the data more meaningful by not

forcing an answer to the question. The researcher also provided the opportunity to write

commentary, which would allow for additional follow-up regarding the clarity of

questions and discussions if necessary. The researcher kept the survey simple and

utilized a Likert scale to gauge feelings regarding talent management concepts. The

simplified style would support the summarized information format Executives are

typically accustomed to reviewing. The Likert scale would help define which concepts

the Executives did or did not support. See Appendix A for a copy of the survey.

Methods of Data Collection

Initially, a meeting was held with the Director of Human Resources and the Chief

Executive Officer (CEO) to discuss the various options that could be utilized to gain

participation in the study and determine which management employees should or should

not participate in the study. After two meetings, it was decided that in order to gain

independent input and because scheduling of Executives is difficult, the survey would be

sent electronically to all Executive level management employees. Executive level

included directors, vice presidents, and the CEO, and it did not include team leaders,

supervisors, and managers. The survey was designed and submitted to the CEO and

Director of Human Resources for approval. Once the survey was approved it was

distributed electronically with an e-mail requesting their input as part of the larger Talent Management project. See Appendix B for a sample of the distribution e-mail.

Statistical Analysis

Data were presented as a number, a percentile output, and a median. The responses were further compared by examining Executive tenure at DDVA to help identify patterns in the data. Tables were used to present the numeric and statistical data and were used to further illustrate the findings.

Summary

The purpose of Chapter III was to explain in detail the methods and procedures utilized to answer the two goals of this study:

1. Determine the talent management needs of Delta Dental of Virginia.

2. Develop a talent management model to meet the Delta Dental of Virginia future business needs.

It was important for the study to gain the Executives input independent of one another and utilize a method that would be the least time consuming for the Executives; therefore, a survey distributed electronically was selected.   Verbal input and support was gained from the CEO and the Director of Human Resources for both the survey and the method of deployment. Chapter IV details the findings of the survey.

Chapter IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of Chapter IV was to present the results of the survey that was
distributed to the Executive team at Delta Dental of Virginia. The problem of this study
was to determine the need of Delta Dental of Virginia to establish a talent management
system to provide for future business needs. To solve this problem, the following
research goals were established:

1. Determine the talent management needs of Delta Dental of Virginia.

2. Develop a talent management model to meet the Delta Dental of Virginia future
    business needs.

Executive Survey Response

Fifteen, full-time Executives (Director, Vice President, and CEO positions) were
requested to complete the survey. Twelve of the 15 Executives responded for a response
rate of 80%. The answers were sorted and compared by each Executive's tenure as an
Executive at Delta Dental of Virginia. Six ranges were established. Range A included
tenure of 0 to 3 years; Range B included tenure of 3.1 to 6 years; Range C included
tenure of 6.1 to 9 years; Range D included 9.1 to 12 years; and, Range E included 12.1+
years of service.

Of the 12 respondents, the average Executive tenure was 7.77 years; and, four or
33.25% of the respondents had less than 3 years (range A). Three or 25% of the
respondents had 3.1 to 6 years of executive tenure (range B). There were no respondents
for range C, the 6.1 to 9 years range, and two or 16.25% respondents for 9.1 to 12 years

of experience (Range D). Lastly, three or 25.25% of the respondents had over 12 years

of Executive tenure (Range E). Of the three Executives that did not complete the survey,

two had 3 years or less of Executive experience (Range A) and one had 6.1 to 9 years

(Range C). See Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. *Executive Tenure Ranges*

Executive tenure at DDVA	Range	Respondent Median by Tenure	Percentage of Respondents
0 – 3 years	A	n=4	33.25%
3.1 – 6 years	B	n=3	25.25%
6.1 – 9 years	C	n=0	0%
9.1 – 12 years	D	n=2	16.25%
12.1+ years	E	n=2	25.25%

The measurement tool used for the survey responses was a five-point Likert

Scale. Each respondent was to use the scale for Questions 1 through 28. A 0 response

was provided to identify and isolate responses that the respondent felt could not be

answered or chose not to answer. This would help avoid forced answers and help

identify questions that might need further exploration during the executive summary

discussions.

Report of Survey Findings

Question 1 was Talent Management is the on-going process that efficiently and effectively identifies and develops employees' competencies to provide maximum value in fulfilling current and future organizational goals and strategies. This question was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2 by identifying a definition of talent management that the Executive group could agree. Establishing a definition provided an initial basis to work from for determining a talent management program and a type of talent management program based upon initial cultural observations. The overall median for Question 1 was 4, indicating that there was agreement on the definition of talent management. Overall four or 33.33% of the Executives strongly agreed, seven or 58.33% agreed, and one or 8.33% neither agreed nor disagreed. One or 25% of the Executives with less than 3 years of Executive experience at DDVA strongly agreed, while the other three or 75% agreed with the definition. All three of the Executives with 3.1 to 6 years of Executive experience at DDVA agreed with the definition. Two of the Executives with 9.1 to 12 years and greater strongly agreed with the definition of talent management and the other two agreed. See Table 4.2.

Question 2 was employees should be classified by their skill set, current performance, and future promotional/lateral advancement potential and it was designed to answer Research Goals 1 and 2. The question sought to determine if executives felt employees should be classified by their skill set, performance, and future potential. The median score for this question was 4.0, which indicated that the executives did agree employees should be classified. Overall 10 or 83.33% agreed, one or 8.33% strongly agreed, and one or 8.33% neither agreed nor disagreed. A hundred percent of the

Executives in Ranges B and E agreed, while three or 75% of the Executives in Range A agreed and one or 25% strongly agreed. Executives in Range D were two or 50% agreed and two or 50% neither agreeing nor disagreeing. See Table 4.3.

Table 4.2. *Talent Management Definition*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	33.33%	58.33%	8.33%			
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.0		100%				
D	2	4.0		50%	50%			
E	3	5.0		33.5%				

Table 4.3. *Classifying Employees*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	8.33%	83.33%	8.33%			
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.0		100%				
D	2	3.5		50%	50%			
E	3	4.0		100%				

Question 3 read employees should be notified about their classification and it was
designed to address Research Goal 2 by determining if Executives agreed or disagreed
that employees should be notified regarding their talent status. The overall median for
Question 3 was 3.0, indicating that there was neither agreement nor disagreement on this
process. Overall five or 42% of the Executives agreed, five or 42% neither agreed nor
disagreed, and two or 16.66 disagreed. See Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. *Notifying Employees*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	3.0		42%	42%	16%		
A	4	3.5		50%	25%	25%		
B	3	4.0		66.5%	33.5%			
D	2	2.5			50%	50%		
E	3	3.0		33.5%	66.5%			

Question 4, an employee's talent status should be reviewed on an annual basis,
was designed to address Research Goal 2 to determine if the Executives felt an
employee's talent status should be reviewed annually. The overall median for Question 4
was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement on the annual review of an employee's talent
status. Overall 10 or 83.5% of the Executives agreed and two or 16.5% neither agreed
nor disagreed. One hundred percent of the Executives in Ranges A, D, and E agreed.

One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range B agreed, while two or 66.5% of them neither agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. *Annual Review of Talent Status*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0		83.5%	16.5%			
A	4	4.0		100%				
B	3	3.0		33.5%	66.5%			
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	4.0		100%				

Question 5, it is important to look 3-5 years into the future and begin preparing today for possible labor changes, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2 by determining if the Executives felt it was important to identify future talent needs three to five years into the future and begin preparing today for those needs. The overall median for Question 5 was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement on the need to look three to five years into the future. Overall four or 33.5% of the Executives strongly agreed and eight or 66.5% agreed. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed, while three or 75% agreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range B strongly agreed, while two or 66.5% agreed. Two or 100% of the Executives in Range D agreed. Three or 66.5% of the Executives in Range E strongly agreed and one or 33.5% agreed. See Table 4.6.

Table 4.6. *Succession Planning Importance*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	33.5%	66.5%				
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.0	33.5%	66.5%				
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	5.0	66.5%	33.5%				

Question 6, it is critical to have people prepared now to step into future roles, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2 by identifying if executives felt it was critical to prepare employees now for future roles. The overall median for Question 6 was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement on preparation today being critical. Overall two or 16.5% of the Executives strongly agreed and 10 or 83.5% agreed that preparation today is critical. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and two or 75% agreed. One hundred percent of Executives in Range B and D agreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E strongly agreed and two or 66.5% agreed. See Table 4.7.

Question 7, it is important to invest resources, including time, to prepare people today for stepping into future roles, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2 by helping to identify if executives recognized an investment of resources would have to make on the company's part in regards to developing employees. The overall median for Question 7 was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement on the investment of resources by

DDVA. Overall three or 25% of the Executives strongly agreed and nine or 75% agreed.

One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and three or 75% agreed. One

or 33.5% of the Executives in Range B strongly agreed and three or 66.5% agreed. A

100% of the Executives in Range D agreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E

strongly agreed and three or 66.5% agreed. See Table 4.8.

Table 4.7. *Critical Roles*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	16.5%	83.5%				
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.0		100%				
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	4.0	33.5%	66.5%				

Question 8, all employees should be treated equally from a talent perspective – no

employee is more valuable than another, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2

by helping to identify if the Executives felt all employees should be treated fairly from a

talent perspective. The overall median for Question 8 was 2.0 indicating that the

Executives did not agree everyone should be treated fairly. Overall two or 16.5% of the

Executives agreed, two or 16.5 neither agreed nor disagreed, seven or 58.5% disagreed

and one or 8.5% did not answer the question. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A

agreed and three or 75% disagreed. One or 33.33% of the Executives in Range B agreed,

one or 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 33.33% did not answer the question. One or 50% of the Executives in Range D neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 50% disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E agreed and two or 66.5% disagreed. See Table 4.9.

Table 4.8. *Importance of Investing Resources*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	25%	75%				
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.0	33.5%	66.5%				
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	4.0	33.5%	66.5%				

Question 9, if an employee were struggling with his/her performance we should spend the money to try and develop him/her – we have an obligation, was designed to address Research Goal 2 by helping to gauge how the Executives felt development dollars should be allocated for an employee struggling with his/her performance out of obligation. The overall median for Question 9 was 3.0 indicating that the executives were neither in agreement nor disagreement with spending development dollars on an employee struggling with performance issues based on company obligation. Overall five or 41.25% of the Executives neither agreed nor disagreed, three or 25.25% agreed and three or 25.25% disagreed, and one or 8.25% did not answer the question. Two or 50%

of the Executives in Range A neither agreed nor disagreed, one or 25% disagreed, and

one or 25% did not answer the question. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range B

agreed and two or 66.5% did not agree. One or 50% of the Executives in Range D agreed

and one or 50% neither agreed nor disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E

agreed and two or 66.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.10.

Table 4.9. *Equal Talent Treatment*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	2.0		16.5%	16.5%	58.5%		8.5%
A	4	2.0		25%		75%		
B	3	2.5			33.33%	33.33%		33.33%
D	2	2.5			50%	50%		
E	3	2.0		33.5%		66.5%		

Question 10, if an employee were struggling with his/her performance we should

spend the money to try and develop him/her – it depends on his/her value to the

organization, was designed to address Research Goal 2 and further vet when development

dollars should be allocated for an employee struggling with performance issues if the

employee were valued by the organization. The overall median for Question 10 was 4.0

indicating that there was agreement on spending development dollars for an employee

struggling with performance issues if the employee were valued by the organization.

Overall 10 or 83.33% of the Executives agreed, one or 8.33 neither agreed nor disagreed,

and one or 8.33% did not answer the question. One hundred percent of the Executives in

Ranges A and B agreed, while two or 66.5% in the Range E agreed and one or 33.5%

disagreed.   One or 50% of the Executives in Range D agreed and one or 50% neither

agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.11.

Table 4.10. *Allocation of Development Resources for Poor Performers*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	3.0		25.25%	41.25%	25.25%		8.25%
A	4	3.0			50%	25%		25%
B	3	2.0		33.5%		66.5%		
D	2	3.5		50%	50%			
E	3	3.0		33.5%	66.5%			

Question 11, if an employee were struggling with his/her performance we should

spend money to try and develop him/her – it depends on how much we would have to

spend, was designed to address Research Goal 2 and continues to determine how

development dollars should be spent on an employee struggling with performance issues.

The overall median for Question 11 was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement that cost

would be a factor in allocating development dollars for an employee struggling with

performance. Overall seven or 58.33% of the Executives agreed, four or 33.33% neither

agreed nor disagreed, and one or 8.33% did not answer the question. Two or 50% of the

Executives in Range A agreed and one or 25% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or

25% did not answer. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in Range B agreed and one or

33.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. One or 50% of the Executives in Range D agreed

and one or 50% neither agreed nor disagreed. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in Range

E agreed and one or 33.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.12.

Table 4.11. *Allocation of Development Resources for Valued, but Poor Performers*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0		83.33%	8.33%	8.33%		
A	4	4.0		100%				
B	3	4.0		100%				
D	2	3.5		50%	50%			
E	3	4.0		66.5%		33.5%		

Question 12, I am willing to invest no more than four hours a month by

participating on a Talent Management Board, was designed to address Research Goal 1

by helping to identify if the executives would be willing to invest at least 4 hours a month

participating on a talent management board. The overall median for Question 12 was 4.0

indicating that there was agreement for at least four hours of executive input. Seven or

58.33% agreed, four or 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 8.33% did not

answer the question. Two or 50% of the Executives in Range A agreed, one or 25%

neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 25% did not answer. Two or 66.5% of the

Executives in Range B agreed and one or 33.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. One or

50% of the Executives in Range D agreed and one or 50% neither agreed nor disagreed. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in Range E agreed and one or 33.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.13.

Table 4.12. *Allocation of Development Resources for Poor Performers based on Cost*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0		58.33%	33.33%			8.33%
A	4	4.0		50%	25%			25%
B	3	4.0		66.5%	33.5%			
D	2	3.5		50%	50%			
E	3	4.0		66.5%	33.5%			

Table 4.13. *Executive Input*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	11	4.0	8.5%	41.5%	33.5%			16.5%
A	4	3.0		25%	50%			25%
B	3	4.0	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%			
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	3.5		33.3%	33.33%			33.33%

Question 13, employees should be rewarded for performance, was designed to address Research Goal 1 and 2 by helping to determine if executives felt employees should be rewarded for performance. The overall median for Question 13 was 5.0 indicating that there was strong agreement that employees should be rewarded for performance. Nine or 75% of the Executives strongly agreed and three or 25% agreed. Two or 50% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and two or 50% agreed. Two or 66.5% of the executives in Range B strongly agreed and one or 33.5% agreed. One hundred percent of the executives in Ranges D and E strongly agreed. See Table 4.14.

Question 14, employees should be rewarded for longevity, was designed to address Research Goal 1 and 2 by determining if Executives felt employees should be rewarded for tenure or how long they have been with the organization. The overall median for Question 14 was 3.0 indicating that there was neither agreement nor disagreement for rewarding for longevity. Overall one or 8.25% of the Executives strongly agreed, four or 33.25% agreed, four or 33.25% neither agreed nor disagreed, and three or 25.25% disagreed. The least tenured of the Executive group (Range A) was split in agreement and disagreement; two or 50% agreed, and two or 50% disagreed. Executives in Range D, the next most tenured Executive group were also split with one or 50% of them agreeing and one or 50% disagreeing on rewarding employees for tenure. One or 33.33% of the Executives in Range E strongly agreed, one or 33.33% agreed, and one or 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.15.

Question 15, employees should be rewarded for conforming to the company/ department culture, was designed to address Research Goal 2 by asking the executives if they felt employees should be rewarded for conforming to the company culture. The

overall median for Question 15 was 3.0 indicating neither agreement nor disagreement for rewarding employees that conform to the company culture. Overall five or 42% of the Executives agreed, five or 42% neither agreed nor disagreed, and two or 16 % disagreed with rewarding employees for conforming to company/departmental culture. Three or 75% of the Executives in Range A agreed with rewarding employees for conforming to company culture and one or 25% disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range B agreed and two or 66.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. One or 50% of the Executives in Range D neither agreed nor disagreed and one or 50% disagreed. One or 33.5% of the most senior executives, Range E, agreed and two or 66.5% disagreed with rewarding employees for conforming to company culture. See Table 4.16.

Table 4.14. *Reward of Performance*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	5.0	75%	25%				
A	4	4.5	50%	50%				
B	3	5.0	66.5%	33.5%				
D	2	5.0	100%					
E	3	5.0	100%					

Question 16, DDVA accurately rewards its employees' performance through the annual review system and merit increase, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and

2 by identifying if the executives felt DDVA's current appraisal system accurately

rewards employees. The overall median for Question 16 was 4.0 indicating that the

executives agreed DDVA employees were accurately rewarded via the annual review

system and merit increase. Overall seven or 58.33% of the Executives agreed, one or

8.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and four or 33.33% disagreed. Executives in Range

A were split; two or 50% agreed and two or 50% disagreed. Executives in Range D were

similarly split; one or 50% agreed and one or 50% disagreed. One or 33.33% of

Executives in Range B agreed, one or 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or

33.33% disagreed. The most tenured Executives, Range E, three or 100% agreed. See

Table 4.17.

Table 4.15. *Reward of Longevity*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	3.0	8.25%	33.25%	33.25%	25.25%		
A	4	3.0		50%		50%		
B	3	3.0		33.33%	66.5%			
D	2	2.5			50%	50%		
E	3	3.0	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%			

Question 17, DDVA accurately rewards its employees' performance through the

annual bonus program, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2 by helping to

identify if executives felt the bonus program accurately rewarded performance. The

overall median for Question 17 was 3.5 indicating that executives neither agreed nor disagreed that DDVA employees were accurately rewarded for the annual bonus program. Overall seven or 50.33% agreed, one or 8.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and four or 33.33% disagreed. Two or 50% of the Executives in Range A agreed and two or 50% disagreed. Similarly one or 50% of the Executives in Range D agreed and one or 50% disagreed. Three or 66.5% of the Executives in Range B neither agreed nor disagreed and one or 33.5% disagreed. One hundred percent or three of the Executives in Range E agreed. See Table 4.18.

Table 4.16. *Reward for Culture Conformity*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	3.0		42%	42%	16%		
A	4	4.0		75%		25%		
B	3	3.0		33.5%	66.5%			
D	2	2.5			50%	50%		
E	3	3.0		33.5%	66.5%			

Question 18 stated star employees should be significantly rewarded over all other employees. For example, if you had $100.00 and three employees, a star, a strong performer, and an average performer, the star would receive $60.00, the strong performer would receive $30.00, and the average performer would receive $10.00. This question was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2 by identifying if executives felt star

employees should be significantly rewarded over other employees. The overall median

for Question 18 was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement that employees' with the

status of star should be significantly rewarded. Overall two or 16.66% of the Executives

strongly agreed, eight or 66.66% agreed, and two or 16.66% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Two or 50% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and two or 50% agreed. Two

or 66.5% of the Executives in Range B agreed and 33.5% neither agreed nor disagreed.

Two or 100% of the Executives in Range D agreed. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in

Range E agreed and one or 33.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.19.

Table 4.17. *Accuracy of Review and Merit System*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0		58.33%	8.33%	33.33%		
A	4	3.0		50%		50%		
B	3	3.0		33.33%	33.33%	33.33%		
D	2	2.0		50%		50%		
E	3	4.0		100%				

Question 19, DDVA increases its risk of losing a star employee if we do not

significantly reward him/her over all other employees, was designed to address Research

Goals 1 and 2 by helping to again determine if Executives felt we would lose star

employees if they were not significantly rewarded. The overall median for Question 19

was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement that DDVA could lose star employees if they

were not significantly rewarded. Overall two or 16.5% of the Executives strongly agreed, eight or 66.5% agreed, one or 8.5% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 8.5% disagreed. Two or 50% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed, one or 25% agreed, and one or 25% neither agreed nor disagreed. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in Range B agreed and one or 33.5% disagreed. Executives in Range D and E, five, agreed 100%. See Table 4.20.

Table 4.18. *Accuracy of Bonus Program*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	3.5		50.33%	8.33%	33.33%		
A	4	3.0		50%		50%		
B	3	3.0			66.5%	33.5%		
D	2	3.0		50%		50%		
E	3	4.0		100%				

Question 20, if a star employee wanted something other than money, such as flex-time, an office, a title change, or additional vacation time we should be open to renegotiating their compensation package, was designed to address Research Goal 2 by helping to identify if executives would agree to something other than a monetary reward for a star employee if that is what the star employee wanted. The overall median for Question 20 was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement that rewards could be flexible based upon the value perceived by the star employee. Overall three or 25.25% of the

Executives strongly agreed, seven or 58.25% agreed, one or 8.25% neither agreed nor

disagreed, and one or 8.25% disagreed. Two or 50% of the Executives in Range A

strongly agreed, one or 25% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 25% disagreed.

Five or all Executives in Range B and D agreed 100%. One or 33.5% of the Executives

in Range E strongly agreed and two or 66.5% agreed. See Table 4.21.

Table 4.19. *Star Performance Fiduciary Payout*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	16.66%	66.66%	16.66%			
A	4	4.5	50%	50%				
B	3	4.0		66.5%	33.5%			
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	4.0		66.5%	33.5%			

Question 21, development dollars (trainings, seminars, conferences, and tuition

reimbursement) should be allocated equally among all employees, was designed to

address Research Goals 1 and 2 by helping to address how development dollars should be

allocated. The overall median for Question 21 was 2.0 indicating that the executive team

did not agree with spending development dollars equally. Overall one or 8.33% of the

Executives agreed, one or 8.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 10 or 83.33%

disagreed. Seven Executives or all Executives in Range A and B disagreed 100%. One or

50% of the Executives in Range D neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 50%

disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E agreed, and two or 66.5% disagreed. See Table 4.22.

Table 4.20. Risk *Factor for Losing Star Employees*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	16.5%	66.5%	8.5%	8.5%		
A	4	4.5	50%	25%	25%			
B	3	4.0		66.5%		33.5%		
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	4.0		100%				

Table 4.21. *Non-Fiduciary Compensation*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	25.25%	58.25%	8.25%	8.25%		
A	4	4.0	50%		25%	25%		
B	3	4.0		100%				
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	4.0	33.5%	66.5%				

Question 22, development dollars (trainings, seminars, conferences, and tuition reimbursement) should be allocated based upon talent classification of employees, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2 by helping to identify how development dollars should be spent on employees. The overall median for Question 22 was 3.0 indicating that executives neither agreed nor disagreed with allocating training dollars based on talent classification. Overall four or 33.3% of the Executives agreed, five or 41.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and three or 25.33% disagreed that development dollars should be allocated based on talent status. Two or 50% of the Executives in Range A agreed, one or 25% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 25% disagreed. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in Range B neither agreed nor disagreed, and 1 or 33.5% disagreed. One or 50% of the Executives in Range D agreed, and one or 50% neither agreed nor disagreed. One or 33.3% of the Executives in Range E agreed, one or 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 33.3% disagreed with this statement. See Table 4.23.

Table 4.22. *Allocation of Development Dollars*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	2.0		8.33%	8.33%	83.33%		
A	4	2.0				100%		
B	3	2.0				100%		
D	2	2.5			50%	50%		
E	3	2.0		33.5%		66.5%		

Question 23, development dollars (trainings, seminars, conferences, and tuition reimbursement) should be allocated for star employees, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2.   The overall median for Question 23 was 3.0 indicating that the executives neither agreed nor disagreed that development dollars should be allocated to star employees only. Overall four or 33.33% of the Executives agreed, five or 41.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and three or 25.33% disagreed.   Two or 50% of the Executives in Range A agreed, one or 25% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 25% disagreed. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in Range B neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 33.5% disagreed. One or 50% of the Executives in Range D agreed, and one or 50% disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E agreed, and two or 66.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.24.

Table 4.23. *Allocation of Development Dollars based on Talent Classification*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	3.0		33.33%	41.33%	25.33%		
A	4	2.5		50%	25%	25%		
B	3	3.0			66.5%	33.5%		
D	2	3.5		50%	50%			
E	3	3.0		33.33%	33.33%	33.33%		

Question 24, most development dollars (trainings, seminars, conferences and tuition reimbursement) should be allocated for marginal performers – they need the most

development, was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2. The overall median for

Question 24 was 2.0 indicating that the executive team did not agree with allocating

development dollars for marginal performers. Overall three or 25% of the Executives

agreed and nine or 75% disagreed. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A neither

agreed nor disagreed, and three or 75% disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in

Range A neither agreed nor disagreed and two or 66.5% disagreed. Two or 100% of the

Executives in Range D disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E neither

agreed nor disagreed and two or 66.5% disagreed. See Table 4.25.

Table 4.24. *Allocation of Development Dollars for Star Employee*s

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	3.0		33.33%	41.33%	25.33%		
A	4	3.5		50%	25%	25%		
B	3	3.0			66.5%	33.5%		
D	2	3.0		50%		50%		
E	3	3.0		33.5%	66.5%			

Question 25 read there are several ways to develop employees. Classroom

instruction is often the first step in introducing knowledge; however, in order for

employees to truly benefit from their knowledge acquisition, they must be allowed to put

into action what they have learned. They need opportunities to develop those skills to

become proficient. Based on this premise are you open to job rotation (job rotation is

taking key pieces of a job and allowing the employee to perform the assignments for a certain period of time under supervision) was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2. The overall median for Question 25 was 4.0 indicating that there was agreement that executives would support job rotation. Three or 25% of the Executives strongly agreed and nine or 75% agreed. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and three or 75% agreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range B strongly agreed and two or 66.5% agreed. One or 50% strongly agreed and one or 50% agreed. One hundred percent or three of the Executives in Range E agreed. See Table 4.26.

Table 4.25. *Allocation of Development Dollars for Marginal Performers*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	2.0			25%	75%		
A	4	2.0			25%	75%		
B	3	2.0			33.5%	66.5%		
D	2	2.0				100%		
E	3	2.0			33.5%	66.5%		

Question 25A stated there are several ways to develop employees. Classroom instruction is often the first step in introducing knowledge; however, in order for employees to truly benefit from their knowledge acquisition, they must be allowed to put into action what they have learned. They need opportunities to develop those skills to become proficient. Based on this premise are you open to mentoring (spending quality

time one-on-one sharing your expertise) was designed to address Research Goals 1 and 2. The overall median for Question 25A was 4.0 indicating that the executive group would support mentoring. Overall two or 16.33% of the Executives strongly agreed, nine or 75.33% agreed, and one or 8.33% neither agreed nor disagreed. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and three or 75% agreed. One or 33.33% of the Executives in Range B strongly agreed, one or 33.33% agreed, and one or 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed. Five or all Executives in Range D and E agreed 100%. See Table 4.27.

Table 4.26. *Employee Development Via Job Rotation*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	25%	75%				
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.5	33.5%	66.5%				
D	2	4.0	50%	50%				
E	3	4.0		100%				

Question 25B read there are several ways to develop employees. Classroom instruction is often the first step in introducing knowledge; however, in order for employees to truly benefit from their knowledge acquisition, they must be allowed to put into action what they have learned. They need opportunities to develop those skills to become proficient. Based on this premise are you open to supervising key assignments

and/or projects and providing feedback? This question was designed to address Research

Goals 1 and 2 by helping to identify if the executive team would support employee

development through the use of key projects. The overall median for Question 25B was

4.0 indicating that there was agreement the executive would support employee

development via the use of key projects. Overall two or 16.33% of the Executives

strongly agreed, nine or 75.33% agreed, and one or 8.25% neither agreed nor disagreed.

One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and three or 75% agreed. One

or 33.33% of the Executives in Range B strongly agreed, one or 33.33% agreed, and one

or 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed. Executives in Ranges D and E agreed 100%.

See Table 4.28.

Table 4.27. *Employee Development Via Mentoring*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	16.33%	75.33%	8.33%			
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.5	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%			
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	4.0		100%				

Question 26, management requires a different set of competencies (skills and

knowledge) than other positions, was designed to address Research Goal 2 by helping to

determine if the executive recognized that management requires a different set of skills

than other positions. The overall median for Question 26 was 4.0 indicating that the executive team did recognize there was a difference between management positions and other positions. Overall three or 25% of the Executives strongly agreed and nine or 75% agreed. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and three or 75% agreed. Five or all Executives in Ranges B and D agreed 100%. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in Range E strongly agreed and one or 33.5% agreed. See Table 4.28.

Table 4.28. *Employee Development Via Key Assignments*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	16.33%	75.33%	8.33%			
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.5	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%			
D	2	4.0		100%				
E	3	4.0		100%				

Question 27 was designed to address Research Goal 1 by helping to determine if Executives recognized the need to differentiate various moves within the organization. The overall median for Question 27 was 4.0 indicating that the Executives agreed there should be differentiation between lateral and management promotions. Overall two or 16.5% of the Executives strongly agreed, eight or 66.5% agreed, one or 8.5% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 8.5% disagreed. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and three or 75% agreed. Two or 66.5% of the Executives in

Range B agreed and one or 33.5% disagreed. One or 50% of the Executives in Range D agreed and one or 50% neither agreed nor disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E strongly agreed and two or 66.5% agreed. See Table 4.30.

Table 4.29. *Management Competencies*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	25%	75%				
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.0		100%				
D	2	3.5		100%				
E	3	4.0	66.5%	33.5%				

Question 28 stated many employees are promoted into management positions because of their existing star performance. The assumption is made that star performers would make good managers and therefore should be promoted into management positions. This question was designed to address Research Goal 1 by helping to determine if the Executive team recognized that many management promotions are based on existing star performance and not on competencies of the management role and the projected performance against those management competencies. Overall one or 8.20% of the Executives strongly agreed, six or 50.20% agreed, three or 25.20% neither agreed nor disagreed, one or 8.20% disagreed, and one or 8.20% strongly disagreed with this statement. One or 25% of the Executives in Range A strongly agreed and three or 75%

agreed. One or 33.33% of the Executives in Range B agreed, one or 33.33% neither agreed nor disagreed, and one or 33.33% disagreed. Two or 50% of the Executives in Range D agreed and two or 50% strongly disagreed. One or 33.5% of the Executives in Range E agreed and two or 66.5% neither agreed nor disagreed. See Table 4.31.

Table 4.30. *Lateral and Management Promotions*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	16.5%	66.5%	8.5%	8.5%		
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	4.0		66.5%		33.5%		
D	2	3.5		50%	50%			
E	3	4.0	33.5%	66.5%				

Table 4.31. *Star Performance and Management Promotions*

Range	Number of Respondents	Median Score	Response Scale					
			SA	A	N	DA	SD	DNA
Overall	12	4.0	8.20%	50.20%	25.20%	8.20%	8.20%	
A	4	4.0	25%	75%				
B	3	3.0		33.33%	33.33%	33.33%		
D	2	2.5		50%			50%	
E	3	3.0		33.5%	66.5%			

Summary

This chapter detailed the responses that resulted from the executive survey used to support Research Goals 1 and 2. According to the analyzed data, the Executive group agreed upon most of the questions, which included 11 or 91.66% agreed to the proposed definition of talent management. Eleven or 91.66% also agreed with classifying employees by their skill set, performance, and future performance. Ten or 83.5% of the Executives agreed that assessing talent should occur on an annual basis. One hundred percent of the Executives agreed that succession planning was critical and it was important to invest resources now for future development. Seven or 58.5% did not agree that employees should be treated equally from a talent perspective. In regards to struggling employees, Executives were undecided how to invest development dollars simply because of company obligations; however, 83.33% of the Executives would support investment if the employee were valued by the organization, and 58.33% agreed that how much money was involved would be a consideration in the struggling employee's development. At least 50% of the Executives agreed to participate at least four hours a month in the Talent Management initiative. One hundred percent of the Executives strongly believed that performance should be rewarded, and they were undecided as to whether longevity and cultural conformity should be rewarded as well. Additionally, 58.33% of the Executives believed the performance review process and merit increase accurately rewarded performance, but 50% agreed that the bonus program rewarded performance. This was further supported by Question 18 in which seven or 83.32% if the Executives agreed that stars should be rewarded significantly, and 10 or 83% of the Executives recognized that stars could leave if they were not rewarded

significantly. Additionally, 10 or 83.5% of the Executives would be open to

compensating stars with other or different compensation. The Executives also expressed

100% agreement on non-classroom development methods, which included mentoring, job

rotation, and key assignments. The Executives also agreed 100% that management

requires a different set of job competencies than other positions, but only 58.4% agreed

that most managers are promoted based on current performance in the existing role.

Two items remain undecided. First, the Executives were undecided as to whether

to disclose talent status to employees or not disclose it. Two or 16% did not agree with

disclosing, five or 42% agreed with disclosing, and five or 42% neither agreed nor

disagreed. The second item that was undecided was the allocation of development

dollars. While 83.33% of the Executives agreed that development dollars should not be

spent equally, they were undecided as to whether to spend based on talent classification,

significantly on star performers or on underperformers. Chapter V provides the

summary, conclusions and future recommendations of this research project in further

detail and concludes this study.

Chapter V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter reports the scope of the research project by reviewing the problem statement, research goals, significance, limitations, population used, and a review of the data collected.

Summary

Talent Management is viewed as a critical strategic initiative and is often used by large organizations. In July, 2008, the executive team at Delta Dental of Virginia expressed a strong interest in implementing a talent management program, however, they were unsure of where to begin or if they even needed it. A talent management system can do five things:

1. Allow for a greater understanding of the gap between an organization's current talent and its future talent needs (Buckner & Slavenski, 2000).

2. Allow for a more objective view because it receives information directly from sources instead of being filtered through third-parties.

3. Provide an on-going review and not a one-time analysis.

4. Provide an internal resource that utilizes consistent criteria for identifying, analyzing, and benchmarking talent requirements.

5. Streamline and oversee resources to ensure the deployment of talent development is meeting defined strategic objectives (Berger, 2004).

Best practices identified three key elements for success: executive support, agreement on the definition of talent management, and the program be aligned with the company

culture. Further feedback from the Human Resources Director and the Strategic Vice President indicated that talent management was needed.

This researcher defined the problem of this study was to determine if Delta Dental of Virginia had a need to establish a talent management system. Two goals were established. Research Goal 1 was to determine the talent management needs of Delta Dental of Virginia, and Research Goal 2 was to develop a talent management model to meet Delta Dental of Virginia future business needs. The limitations of this research were contained to Delta Dental of Virginia and historical data were limited due to missing internal data. Before beginning the study, it was assumed that a talent management program was needed, was recognized as a need by the Executive team, and the Executives were familiar with the basic concept of talent management. Additionally, company information was limited, biased and/or not easily available, and culture was not easily changed, and therefore, researching a talent management model that aligned itself with Delta Dental's culture would be more beneficial than trying to make the culture conform to the most popular talent model.

The first step for this researcher was to gauge the executive thoughts individually without group input or outside biases. A 28-question survey was developed using a Likert scale of 1 to 5, and 0 being unable to answer as a gauge for feedback. The questions addressed key items found from various talent management models. This feedback would help address Research Goals 1 and 2. The results were then calculated using a median output and a percentage output. The results were calculated as an overall Executive group, and then grouped by Executive tenure. The Executive group was

comprised of 15 Executive management staff, which included directors, vice presidents, and the CEO. Thirteen of the 15 or 80% of the Executives participated in the study.

Conclusion

In conclusion the researcher addressed the two research goals: determine the talent management needs of Delta Dental of Virginia and develop a talent management model to meet the Delta Dental of Virginia future business needs.

To address Research Goal 1, Delta Dental of Virginia did not have a talent management program in place but had expressed an interest. Delta Dental of Virginia also did not have a process or tool in place to track performance, skill sets, or succession planning. Eleven or 91.83% of the Executives agreed that employees should be classified by their skill set, performance, and future potential and 10 or 83% believed this process should be reviewed annually. Best practices indicated there be a shared agreement of the definition of talent, and 91.83% of the Executive group agreed to the proposed definition that talent at Delta Dental of Virginia should be defined as the on-going process that efficiently and effectively identifies and develops employees' competencies to provide maximum value in fulfilling current and future organizational goals and strategies. Currently there is no distinction between employees by their skills, performance, and future potential, however 10 or 83% percent of the Executives believed that star performers should be rewarded significantly above other employees. Further, 10 or 83% of the Executives believed that key talent, the stars, would leave if they were not significantly rewarded for their performance. Additionally, 100% of the Executives

agreed that succession planning was important, and it was critical to invest resources now to be prepared for future roles.

Fifty percent of the Executive group agreed to at least four hours of their time in supporting talent management per month, which is another critical component for a successful talent management program – actual involvement by at least one or two Executives. It is this researcher's conclusion that Delta Dental of Virginia does need a talent management model that utilizes a software system that captures skills and knowledge information, performance tracking, and identifies future potential by addressing competencies. Additionally, a succession plan is needed, and all information should be reviewed on an on-going and annual basis.

Research Goal 2 was to develop a talent management model to meet Delta Dental of Virginia's future business needs. It is noted that in Research Goal 1, Executives agreed employees should be classified by their skill set, performance, and future potential, and stars should be treated differently, however they were not in agreement on communicating talent status to employees. Further, the Executives were undecided how to spend development dollars. Eighty-three percent agreed the development dollars should not be spent equally, but it was inconclusive as to whether the development dollars should be spent on stars, underperformers, or by talent classification. The Executives wanted a more competitive type talent management model; however, the culture at Delta Dental of Virginia was one that is not competitive and often minimizes or fails to address performance issues. The undecided responses support this perception, and therefore it is this researcher's conclusion that the Delta Dental of Virginia talent management needs would best be supported by a model that identifies and classifies

skills, performance, and future potential, is reviewed on an annual basis and includes executive input, but does not notify employees of any talent status or delineation at this time.

The proposed talent management model is comprised of the following five elements.

1. The model is inclusive and not exclusive in regards to evaluating talent. Rather than focusing on only one group of employees, the model proposes DDVA understand and evaluate the skill set of its entire employee base and utilize the strengths of each employee.

2. The model is data driven. This will reduce subjectivity, deemphasize the focus on a particular group and begin shifting the focus towards performance, and allow for an on-going talent review.

3. The model is holelistic in that recruiting, training and development, compensation and benefits, succession planning, and the Executive team work together and not independently. This would allow for increased communication and greater visibility of all talent, talent needs, and performance within the organization.

4. The model emphasizes spending development dollars to prepare employees that consistently demonstrate the company's defined core competencies for future positions within the organization.

5. The model provides a vehicle for employees to demonstrate initiative for their own career development within the organization and not wait to be recognized.

Recommendations

It is this researcher's recommendation that a meeting be held with the Executive team to review the survey results, share how Delta Dental of Virginia would benefit from a talent management model, introduce the proposed model, and share the expected cost and return-on-investment for the proposed model. Additionally, a software system needs to be identified that would allow for easier and faster data collection, job competency mapping, and also provide an on-line performance appraisal and goal tracking visibility since it is recommended that this process be on-going and done annually. A future study should also be done to review the impact of underperformers and/or poor performances impact on the employee population and performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Sample of the Talent Management Survey

APPENDIX B. Sample of Introduction Email

APPENDIX A

Sample of the Survey

Directions:
For each statement below you are asked to identify how strongly you agree or disagree with the statement. Please type or write your response in the box beside each question. A comments box has also been included so feel free to type or write additional comments regarding a particular statement.

Response Scale

5	4	3	2	1	0
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Experience N/A

Part I: Talent Definition and Talent Identification

		Response	Comments
1.	Talent Management is the on-going process that efficiently and effectively identifies and develops employees' competencies to provide maximum value in fulfilling current and future organizational goals and strategies.		
2.	Employees should be classified by their skill set, current performance and future promotional/lateral advancement potential.		
3.	Employees should be notified about their classification.		
4.	An employee's talent status should be reviewed on an annual basis.		
5.	It is important to look 3-5 years into the future and begin preparing today for possible labor changes.		
6	It is critical to have people prepared now to step into future roles.		
7	It is important to invest resources, including time, to prepare people today for stepping into future roles.		
8.	All employees should be treated equally from a talent perspective – no employee is more valuable than another.		
9.	If an employee were struggling with his/her performance we should spend the money to try and develop him/her – we have an obligation.		
10.	If an employee were struggling with his/her performance we should spend the money to try and develop him/her – it depends on his/her value to the organization.		
11.	If an employee were struggling with his/her performance we		

	should spend the money to try and develop him/her – it depends on how much we would have to spend.		
12.	I am willing to invest no more than 4 hours a month by participating on a Talent Management Board.		

Part II: Rewarding Talent

13.	Employees should be rewarded for performance.		
14.	Employees should be rewarded for longevity.		
15.	Employees should be rewarded for conforming to the company/department culture.		
16.	DDVA accurately rewards its employees' performance through the annual review system and merit raises.		
17.	DDVA accurately reward its employees' performance through the annual incentive awards program.		
18.	Star employees should be *significantly* rewarded over all other employees. For example, if you had 100.00 and three employees: a star, a strong performer, and an average performer, the star would receive 60.00, the strong performer would receive 30.00 and the average performer would receive 10.00. *(Please use the comment section to elaborate your thoughts on this equation if necessary).*		
19.	DDVA increases its risk of losing a star employee if we do not significantly reward him/her over all other employees.		
20.	If a star employee wanted something other than money, such as flex-time, an office, a title change, or additional vacation time we should be open to renegotiating their compensation package.		
21.	Development dollars (trainings, seminars, conferences, and tuition reimbursement) should be allocated equally among all employees.		
22.	Development dollars (trainings, seminars, conferences, and tuition reimbursement) should be allocated based upon talent classification of employees.		

23.	Most development dollars (trainings, seminars, conferences, and tuition reimbursement) should be allocated for star employees.		
24.	Most develop dollars (trainings, seminars, conferences, and tuition reimbursement) should be allocated for marginal performers – they need the most development.		
25.	There are several ways to develop employees. Classroom instruction is often the first step in introducing knowledge; however, in order for employees to truly benefit from their knowledge acquisition they must be allowed to put into action what they have learned. They need opportunities to develop those skills to become proficient. Based on this premise are you open to job rotation? *(job rotation is taking key pieces of a job and allowing the employee to perform the assignments for a certain period of time under supervision).*		
25A.	mentoring? *(spending quality one-on-one time sharing your expertise).*		
25B.	supervising key assignments and/or projects and providing feedback?		
26.	Management requires a different set of competencies (skills and knowledge) than other positions.		
27.	We must differentiate employees as those who have the potential to move laterally and those that have the potential to move into management positions or higher-level management positions.		
28.	Many employees are promoted into management positions because on their existing star performance. The assumption is made that if they are a star performer then they should make a good manager.		

APPENDIX B

Sample of the Email

Good Morning!

We have been working on a Talent Management program and should be at the point to share the foundation with you in mid-to-late May. In preparation for this meeting it would be extremely helpful if you would complete the attached survey. Your individual answers will remain confidential, and the survey should take no longer than 10-15 minutes at the most.

I appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey, and if you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact me.

survey.com.doc (66 KB)

Thank you,

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