

# PRIMING THE LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

## An Eagle's Flight Quick-Reference Guide

Future-proof your company. What does tomorrow look like for your organization? The future of your company hinges on its investment in your high potential employees. If your firm doesn't have an eye toward the horizon, our succession planning quick-reference guide will get you on the right track to developing your future leaders. If you already have a succession plan in place, this six-step guide can help you to identify the areas of your talent management system that might need additional attention to future-proof your organization.

# 1

### CREATE ALIGNMENT

Commitment to succession planning starts at the top and engages every stakeholder in the organization. To build an effective succession plan initiative, your company needs to secure stakeholder commitment and make the succession plan a key part of corporate strategy, weaved into existing human resources systems.

# 2

### DETERMINE LINCHPIN POSITIONS

The long-term health of your organization is dependent upon building "ready now" backups for all key roles, not just focusing on a few positions at the very top. Harvesting corporate-wide talent pools will fill positions efficiently.

# 3

### ASSESS BENCH STRENGTH

Do your candidates possess the knowledge, skills and values expected of the next generation of leaders? Assess their productivity, accountability and leadership potential. These assessments should support existing measurement systems (performance appraisals, 360° assessments, etc.) and allow the organization to rank candidates on a uniform set of criteria.

# 4

### SELECT AND CHART SUCCESSORS

Analyze your pipeline of successors and provide a snapshot of the identified candidates. Then create action plans to address gaps, ensuring the process is transparent to candidates.

# 5

### BUILD LEADERSHIP STRENGTH

Drive personal and leadership effectiveness and create leadership consistency and integration across your entire organization by addressing key leadership behaviors at individual, team and senior levels.

# 6

### MEASURE AND MANAGE PROGRESS

Track who is where and which job they are being groomed for by monitoring the progress of all succession plans being executed. Identify gaps in terms of who is ready for top positions now and make the necessary adjustments to the process.

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### 1

#### CREATE ALIGNMENT

##### ESTABLISH ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STAKEHOLDERS

- Determine who will have accountability for creating the succession plans
- Identify key stakeholders – e.g. CEO, executive, management, staff, HR – and clarify how each will support the initiative
- Confirm stakeholder expectations – the anticipated benefits from the initiative at individual, divisional and organizational levels

##### VERIFY SHORT- AND LONG-TERM BUSINESS PLANS

- Identify short- and long-term business plans for the organization and the potential implications for human capital
- Ensure succession plans outline the human capital required to deliver the business plans
- Uncover organizational/divisional business needs relevant to succession planning to ensure they're addressed

##### REVIEW EXISTING HUMAN RESOURCES SYSTEMS

- Integrate existing nomenclature – mission/value statements, etc. – into succession plans
- Identify how the succession plan can support existing human resource systems

##### COMMUNICATE THE VISION

- Communicate the vision and purpose for the initiative to all stakeholders, and outline how it will impact at the individual, divisional and organizational levels
- Identify those people involved and the plan for moving forward

### 2

#### DETERMINE LINCHPIN POSITIONS

##### IDENTIFY KEY POSITIONS

- Engage divisional leaders and managers to pinpoint the most critical positions below them and prioritize
- Target positions that are critical to long-term success, identified as required human capital, or key from a leadership or technical perspective
- Flag these key positions on your organizational chart

##### VERIFY THE TALENT POOL

- Identify the most likely "backups" for key positions from within your organization – look at past internal movement
- Determine whether you'll manage your talent-pool on a divisional or company-wide basis

##### OBTAIN EXECUTIVE LEVEL AGREEMENT

- Create a venue for executives to discuss and debate all key (flagged) positions and the identified talent pool

### 3

#### ASSESS BENCH STRENGTH

##### DETERMINE TARGET AUDIENCE

- Identify the internal candidates being considered for advancement

##### ESTABLISH THE CRITERIA TO COMPARE CANDIDATES

- Work with executives to discuss, debate and determine the criteria used to compare candidates
- Build from existing tools such as performance appraisals, 360° assessments, competency models, etc.
- Identify the qualities candidates must possess to succeed (values, knowledge, behaviors, skills, etc.)
- Post the finalized criteria for all stakeholders to see

##### ESTABLISH ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Determine who is responsible for assessing which candidates – executives, directors, line managers?
- Communicate the criteria and the process for assessing candidates to all stakeholders

##### ASSESS AND RANK CANDIDATES

- Evaluate all candidates on the same, universal criteria, enabling comparisons to be made across organizational lines
- Rank candidates along two distinct dimensions: current performance and demonstration of values
- Use both dimensions as a matrix to plot and compare candidates
- Consider additional rankings based on potential, career history and training qualifications

### 4

#### SELECT AND CHART SUCCESSORS

##### IDENTIFY POTENTIAL SUCCESSORS

- Based on your assessments, identify the highest ranking potential successors in each of three categories: ready now, ready in 1-2 years, ready in 2-5 years
- Aim for 2-3 potential successors in each category for each position targeted
- Encourage line managers to help identify potential successors below them
- Consolidate all of the identified potential successors into a Succession Depth Chart for your organization

##### OBTAIN EXECUTIVE LEVEL AGREEMENT ON SUCCESSION DEPTH CHART

- Create a venue for executives to discuss and debate your potential successors
- Finalize successor candidate decisions

##### ADDRESS SUCCESSION GAPS

- Identify positions that are either missing candidates and/or light on candidate skill and readiness
- Create action plans to address development opportunities and close identified gaps (see Step 5)

##### ENGAGE POTENTIAL SUCCESSORS

- Inform your potential successors about their status and new expectations of them
- Assist your potential successors in creating their personal development plans to help them prepare for their future positions
- Inform all candidates that were not chosen of their relative status and career potential

##### FILL VACANCIES

- When an identified key position becomes vacant, fill it with the most suitable successor

### 5

#### BUILD LEADERSHIP STRENGTH

##### CREATE STRATEGIC TRAINING INITIATIVES

- Create multi-day, intensive training programs to close development gaps at all leadership levels
- Align your training curriculum to support identified success criteria
- Provide opportunities for successors to develop practical leadership skills and strategies

##### ACCELERATE LEARNING

- Tailor your training content to provide maximum learner relevance
- Appeal to different learning styles through a holistic, multi-format training approach
- Use experiential learning to engage participants, promote uptake and appeal to all generations

##### PROVIDE ONGOING COACHING AND LEARNING TRANSFER OPPORTUNITIES

- Ensure development initiatives are supported, reinforced, applied and practiced
- Move your candidates toward internalization of key leadership concepts and sustained behavior change

### 6

#### MEASURE AND MANAGE PROGRESS

##### ESTABLISH ACCOUNTABILITIES FOR DELIVERING SUCCESSION PLANS

- Identify who will deliver the plans for each key position, and who will hold them accountable
- Communicate expectations for succession plan delivery, and the implications of not delivering as expected

##### ADOPT METRICS TO MONITOR PROGRESS

- Track who is being groomed for what position and how they are progressing against their development plan
- Adopt objective metrics to track the degree of success, such as rate of lateral/upward movement, ratio of potential backups per key position, high potential employee retention rates, hire rate by key position, etc.

##### SCHEDULE REGULAR CHECKPOINTS

- Monitor progress on the delivery of each item in your succession plan (e.g., every quarter)
- Engage all stakeholders – executives through to line managers – to review progress on both a divisional and company-wide basis
- Create action plans to address gaps in terms of plans not being delivered as expected

NEED HELP GETTING STARTED ON YOUR LEADERSHIP PIPELINE?

Give us a call – this is what we do.

# Eagle's Flight™

Eagle's Flight is about sparking transformation. We're about creating flashpoints where change happens, where people are inspired to do their jobs better, and to lead more effectively – all through learning that is rooted in our proprietary experiential design. We don't just go through the motions of corporate training – we're dedicated to unleashing the promise that is present inside every participant, and to ensuring that they are inspired to take their learning with them and pass it on. *Experience the impact that well-designed, well-delivered, well-supported learning can deliver.*

## Journey of Leadership™

### **Create a culture of leadership excellence**

Journey of Leadership is Eagle's Flight's transformational approach to developing leadership strength on an organizational scale. It consists of a tiered series of interrelated training programs that address key leadership behaviors at the individual, team, and senior levels. Independently, each program provides a solid platform for driving personal and leadership effectiveness, but as a whole, the series creates a level of leadership consistency and integration – principles, behaviors, strategies, models, tools, concepts, language, etc. – that creates a powerful business advantage.

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CHANGING BEHAVIOR TO IMPROVE PERFORMANCE

