



Simple, Clear Solutions Focused on Results

Checklist of Questions to Challenge HRP Assessment

When an executive conducts a talent inventory of his or her own team, there is a normal tendency to paint an overly optimistic picture that is usually inaccurate. This is especially true of the initial assessment. The Top Executive who oversees the process should therefore scrutinize the lieutenant’s rationale by discussing the staff inventory in detail. A typical example is illustrated below by comparing a first time assessment conducted by the VP of Client Services to an “Optimal Distribution” indicative of a high performance organization. Then follows a list of probing questions designed to challenge the VP’s assessment and encourage him to reconsider a higher standard of excellence for his department.

Force Ranking and HRP Categories of 22 Employees in Client Services:

HRP Category	VP Assessment		Optimal Distribution	
	Count	%	Count	%
High Potential	4	18%	2	10%
Growth Potential	5	23%	2	10%
Strategic Retain	6	27%	3	10%
Meets	6	27%	11	50%
Too New	1	5%	1	20%
Over or Out	0	0%	3	
TOTAL	22		22	

President’s Questions to VP Client Services:

- How do your top performers compare to your bottom?
- What extraordinary things has each *High Potential* done lately to warrant that distinction?
- Is each *High and Growth Potential* person ready to take an upward job now? What job?
- Of the four honored as *High Potential*, how does High 1 compare to High 4?
- What can you do to seriously challenge this top tier to test their true mettle?
- Who on the *High Potential* list is least likely to pass such a test?
- Why have people in the *High and Growth Potential* group been passed up for promotion?
- How has each *Growth Potential* compared to *Meets* requirements peers?
- For each *Strategic Retain*, what would we lose if he or she suddenly quit? Short term? Long term?
- What specific know how do *Strategic Retains* own that's different from other *Meets* employees?
- How long would it take for a new employee to be an invaluable *Strategic Retain*? What would he have to know?
- Who has more long-term potential—*Meets* 1 and 2 or *Retain* 5 and 6?
- If *Meets* 4, 5 or 6 left the company, what are chances we would hire someone better to replace them?
- When will you know if the new person is in *High, Growth* or *Meets* Category?
- If you had to pick one person for a 20% salary raise, who would it be?
- If you had \$20,000 bonus dollars to allocate to your top 5 people, how much would you reward to each?
- If five of your people had to be selected for no raise and no bonus this year, who would they be?
- If we were forced to layoff 20% of our workforce whom would you fire?
- If you had to pick one person to replace with a new hire, who would it be? Would we be better or worse off?
- Who would your top 4 *High Potentials* identify as the weakest on the team?

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