

Recrutiment of a star essay sample



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Stephen Connor, who is the director of research, at the investment firm Rubin, Stern, and Hertz (RSH) is attempting to fill a vacancy created when his lead semiconductor analyst, Peter Thompson resigns unexpectedly. Mr. Connor promotes a junior analyst, Rina Shea, to fill the void left by Thompson as a short term solution. He informs her that he will be looking for an external candidate, with the stipulation that if he cannot find a suitable candidate she will receive the position. Mr. Connor then utilizes a headhunting firm to find potential candidates. The headhunter, Craig Robertson, has been a valuable resource for Connor in the past and is aware of RSH's culture and the type of individuals that the company needs to hire. Looking through the potential candidate pool Robertson identifies five possible candidates and relays that information to Connor. Connor also receives information from another recruiting firm on a sixth possible candidate. Connor then pares down the group to a final four set of candidates and begins the research and interview processes. The case ends with Connor still needing to make a hiring decision. (Groysberg, Balog, & Haimson, 2012)

Looking at this case we are asked to utilize the human capital theory and the factors that lead to an individual achieving outstanding performance and how portable this performance is between working environments. (Motley, 2013) According to Gary S. Becker Ph. D., a professor of economics and sociology at the University of Chicago "...economists regard expenditures on education, training, medical care, and so on as investments in human capital. They are called human capital because people cannot be separated from their knowledge, skills, health, or values in the way they can be

separated from their financial and physical assets.” (Becker, 2008) Based off from this definition there are several things that I would consider to be factors for an individual to achieve outstanding performance.

These factors fall into two categories, internal and external. Internal factors include things like intelligence, confidence, motivation, passion, tenacity and any other positive factor that comes from within the person. These internal factors are built over time, as the individual grows up, and are usually very hard to teach. External factors include the things that Dr. Becker spoke of and also include environmental factors, present in the workplace, such as supportive supervisors, mentors, and colleagues. An organizational culture or atmosphere that encourages cooperation and allows the individual the freedom to express themselves and their creativity can also be important factors in fostering high performance. Another external factor is that the individual is constantly able to receive training in order to stay relevant in their job. I personally feel that of these two groups the most important for a person to possess are the internal factors.

When talking about the portability of superior performance, between different environments, I believe that it is highly portable. This is because the internal factors and many of the external factors, such as education, training, and knowledge cannot be separated from the individuals as Dr. Becker pointed out in his definition. (Becker, 2008) Having served in the Navy for twenty years I transferred between working environments every 3-4 years and I was able to maintain my superior performance levels despite changes in the external environment. I have also supervised many individuals who were also able to maintain performance levels despite moving to new

environments. The exception to this would be if the individual was forced to change professions or companies then there would be a drop in performance while they trained and gained knowledge in their new job. This thought is echoed in a study performed by one of the authors of this case study, Boris Groysburg.

He collaborated with Andrew McLean and Nitin Nohria to study the effects of top management transfers. What they discovered was “ Some general management skills such as setting a vision; motivating employees; organizing; budgeting; and monitoring performance have been shown to translate well to new environment.” And conversely “ a second category of management skills—those specific to a given company, such as knowledge of idiosyncratic processes and management systems—don’t transfer as well. Switching employers, it is thought, leads to a short-term decline in a manager’s performance until the individual develops new skills specific to the new company”. (Groysburg, McLean, & Nohria, 2006) From personal experience my primary position, in the Navy, was as an electrical technician. However I was required to perform secondary functions such as training and equal opportunity programs. When starting these new roles my performance was not superior but after I received training and gained experience I was able to bring my level of performance up to a superior level as reflected in my performance evaluations.

While I do feel that an organizations culture and environment can be a hindrance at first, a superior performer will find a way to overcome them. Turning back to the case study Stephen Connor is searching for a replacement for one of his lead analysts. While there is no mention of him

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conducting a job analysis or creating a job description but there are several things that he indicates as characteristics he would like to see. The main thing that he mentions is that he would like to hire an analyst that is already established as a top performer. Other things he mentions are intelligence, superior analytical skills, motivated, personable, ability to work in team environment, good stock picker, good writer, client oriented and have access to upper management at companies. (Groysberg, Balog, & Haimson, 2012). Examining these characteristics would require the recruiting process to include examining a resume, talking with references, behavioral testing, job testing, talking with clients and conducting several interviews with each applicant.

These interviews should be conducted in a 360 degree format, where the individual interviews with superiors, peers, and possible supervisees. Mr. Connor has several problems that he must contend with, during the course of the case. The most obvious one is that he under pressure to quickly replace a senior analyst with someone of the same caliber. This problem is slightly amplified in that there is a small pool of potential candidates he has access to. The second problem is that with a limited number of candidates he has to find the one applicant that has the correct balance of knowledge, skills and abilities. A third problem is that he has limited information on each of the individuals which makes it difficult to determine a stand out among the applicants, they all seem to have strengths and weaknesses that make them a fit for the position. There are four candidates that Mr. Connor is interviewing to fill the vacant position. They are all well qualified for the position and each of them has the ability to perform the job.

Looking at each candidate, utilizing the human capital theory would possibly help to see which would be the best fit. This would allow Mr. Connor to evaluate what characteristics would be portable to the new environment and what each individual would need in order to maintain their success. The first candidate is Gerald Baum. Gerald is an well-established analyst who has the requisite knowledge and experience. However he is not used to working in team environment and from information gathered during the recruiting process it seems he does not tolerate individuals who are less intelligent than himself. He also seems to be driven more by money and less by doing a good job. I think his performance will be hampered by the culture of RSH, specifically the team orientation and mentoring of junior personnel. The next candidate is David Hughs. David is also a very well-established analyst who brings not only a wealth of knowledge and experience he also has a great reputation. There are several things that will have an effect on him though.

The first is that he is hesitant to use technology to his advantage. This is an issue because of the fast pace at RSH, he needs to be able to be flexible and change with new technology. Second it would seem that he is more interested in changing environments to gain personal satisfaction in his job, at the expense of what the company would want him to do. This is evident in two things that were mentioned in his interview. The first is when he says “ I want to focus on stocks I like and think are exciting.” And the second is when he talks about staying on vacation and letting his junior analysts handle a problem that he should have been there to handle. (Groysberg, Balog, & Haimson, 2012) As with Baum I think his performance will decline due to the fact that he has come to a point in his career where trying to reach self-

actualization is more important than the job itself. The third candidate is Sonia Meetha. Sonia is an up and comer in the analyst world, working for a small boutique company.

She has the experience and knowledge and is driven to be the best at her job. This is evident by the fact that she seems to truly care about the job and is always looking ahead as to how she can make herself better and further the interests of the company. She is also very friendly and personable which will help her integrate into the culture of teamwork that is fostered at RSH. I think the biggest hurdle for her will be transitioning to a larger firm that has a faster pace. Also she has two children and is used to working on a flexible schedule to reduce her travel time. She might find that in the new position she may have to travel more and this could be an obstacle to her maintaining her performance levels. Finally she will have to rebuild her client base which could prove to be problematic if she is not able or willing to put in the extra time needed. The final candidate is Seth Horkum. Seth has an infectious personality and seems extremely enthusiastic about his job. He has the requisite knowledge and experience and he has the added bonus of a wealth of contacts.

The only obstacle that seems to exist is the fact that he is looking for a new job so soon after being ranked runner up in the Institutional Investor (II) magazine. This could lead his colleagues to feel that he might transfer to a different company that will help him rank higher. This would cause them to be guarded and less likely to fully engage with him as a team should.

Looking at this case through the eyes of the candidates there are things I would emphasize in order to help me stand out from the other candidates. As

Gerald Baum I would concentrate on my ranking in the II and the fact that after only 18 months I am ranked 11 in the semi-conductor field. I also have a wealth of experience and knowledge and come from a similar sized firm. Interviewing as David Hughes I would definitely emphasize my experience and vast knowledge. I am ranked #2 in the II and I also have a great reputation and a wealth of contacts that I could leverage for the company. I would highlight the fact that as a mentor I would be willing to pass on my knowledge and mentor junior analysts.

Stepping into the shoes of Sonia Meetha I would concentrate on the fact that even though I am working at a small boutique company with limited resources I am able to have the same or better success than that of analysts working at larger firms with more support. I would also point out that even though I have limited travel abilities I have overcome that, to the satisfaction of my clients, by utilizing alternate methods of meetings. I would also highlight the fact that I am always looking for ways to improve the business through out of the box thinking. Finally as Seth Horkum I would highlight my experiences and the fact that I am rising in the II rankings. I would also emphasize that I already have a working relationship with the main company that RSH is getting ready to work with and that as such I would have an easier time coordinating the upcoming relationship. I would point out that I am already a team oriented person who likes to bring peers from other departments to sit in on client presentations so that they can also cultivate relationships with clients.

The main question that was left unanswered in the case was who Mr. Connor finally decided to hire. If I were in his position I would hire Seth Horkum. Seth

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is a proven performer who genuinely seems to care about furthering the company as a whole. This is evident by the fact that he goes out of his way to include the other division in his dealing with clients to ensure that they are able to establish contacts and lines of communications that they normally would have. He is a hard charger and is motivated to be the best he can be. While he may not have the experience and knowledge that the other individuals have he has maneuvered himself into the position of a star performer. I think he would work extremely well within the team culture we have and that given time he would make a great mentor.

He is also reliable and loyal as shown by his 15 years of service with his last employer. Finally looking at the recruiting process at RSH, the only functions that was not mentioned were the job analysis and description processes. I think that these processes are crucial in creating a successful recruiting process. Based on the conversations between Connor and the headhunter, the only thing that was covered were the qualities Connor would like to see in a potential candidate. There was no mention of Connor coordinating with peers or employees that might have work with the new individual. This is something that has to be done to ensure that everyone is on the same page when it comes to candidate selection.

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