

Hr specialist at accountco

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Accountco a small accountancy firm based in the south of England where unemployment is low. The firm comprised of four partners and twenty-five staff. In business for over fifty years the firm boasts of a solid reputation in the local area. Business Norms Work is organized through informal systems of consultation with Adam Smith (founder and senior partner) and his brother playing key roles. There exists as such, an absence of rigid rules and practices. Meetings are therefore informal and likewise communication which is many times ad hoc. In all, the culture is that of a small family where personalities matter more than plans and structures.

Successes Accountco has been quite successful in its business activity having survived over fifty years and building a fine reputation in the local area. It has been able to maintain its clientele and build new ones by offering a quality service. The information in the case suggests a close, trusting, family type relationship between the firm and its clients.

Challenges Its major challenge is in the recruitment of new graduates and the retention of existing staff when large London-based firms offer much better terms and conditions of employment. This is affecting its ability to adequately perform its tasks thus weeding away at its quality service to its clients and will eventually affect its ability to attract new customers. The end result will be a company with only the partners (four in all) having the relevant experience and knowledge to efficiently carry out tasks with the rest as they are, being constantly turned over, continuously needing to be helped in their tasks putting a heavy load on the partners and reducing on their time to attend to strategic management matters.. One could thus

envisage a once profitable company contracting and "dieing" as its ability to attract new and retain trusted clients fall.

Suggested Solutions Tom Steel has suggested some solutions, the focus on the ability of the firm to extend its client base, develop new areas of expertise and generally enhance its reputation in the marketplace. His suggestions are as follows: Tap into university graduate fairs to access the brighter students at the top management schools Develop a more positive profile in Trade Magazines Recruit on-line

However, it is not as simple as this. Accountco's challenge is not simply to attract a large pool of applicants from which to select, but also to retain its experienced and knowledgeable human resource assets. Also, the firm does not have a specialist Human Resources Department to deal with this "crisis" situation, but only a partner to supervise contractors employed by the firm to manage pensions and payroll issues.

Solutions To adequately deal with the drain of experienced staff and the attraction of "bright" accountants, Accountco must therefore seek the services of a Human Resource Specialist. This could be accomplished by either creating a post for this position and hiring a specialist, or by using a consultant. Accountco is a small firm and obviously will not have the kind of capital the large London-based firms are able to wield, as such, the suggestion is that a Human Resource Specialist Consultant be contracted to access and provide solutions and policies to ensure the firm remains competitive in the caliber of human resources it attracts and retains. This will be much more cost effective than having a permanent Human Resource

Specialist. Also, the staff number is much too small to have a specialist Human Resource person permanent on its pay list. The senior partners must however have the business savvy to know when the consultant is needed.

Strategic Human Resource Planning The Human Resource consultant must firstly involve the firm in a more strategic approach to human resource planning. The philosophy of the partners must be based on seeing the employees as a resource for the business development and not a cost. This strategic planning process will involve all and will revolve around the vision and mission of the firm. It is quite possible that Accountco's vision and mission is not clearly articulated to all employees and that they are simply statements formulated some time ago that do not at all pertain to the relevant situation of the day.

Within this context, the strategic planning process for the survival of the firm in today's world must have at its core visioning and the formulation of an appropriate mission statement. This will direct and lead the firm in the accomplishment of its goals and objectives. What is clear is the necessity of a paradigm shift by the partners, to think more strategically and less tactically. They must embrace change and become more proactive and creative in addressing the challenges that flow naturally from it. The vision and mission process will also encourage them to clearly define the firm's culture and if found to be not supportive of the new trust attempts must be made in the planning process to tweak and change it so that it will be more responsive to the firm meeting its goals and objectives

Situation Analysis The strategic planning process will involve a situation analysis where a complete diagnosis of the firm's activities, successes and challenges are appraised. This involves performing a SWOT analysis and should reveal the gaps that exist versus the larger firms in its staff recruitment and retention ability. This analysis will not only highlight the human resource functions weaknesses of the firm but will also highlight the opportunities. Here, the human resource consultant will be able to lead and direct discussions on the specific human resource challenges facing the firm and how these could affect the firm in accomplishing its mission and reaching its vision.

It is expected that priorities will be developed at this stage and that strategies be developed to address them. The partners will then be better able to arrive at a consensus on the company's culture, its target audience and its unique qualities. This information is vital in formulating staff retention and recruitment strategies. **Recruitment Policies** One of the major priorities in pursuit of the mission and vision will be the enhancement of the human resource at Accountco. The human resource specialist will lead the whole team in suggesting solutions.