

## **Development Checklist – essentials for developing your team and your business**

To remain ahead of your competitors you need to stay at least one step ahead of them and you can do this through continual improvement of your team and yourself... doing so will result in improvements to your business.

Following are some suggestions as to how you can develop yourself, your team and your business:

### **1. Ongoing Performance Management**

Do you just do an annual performance review and base your salary reviews and the entire performance on each employee within your business on this momentous annual event? If the answer is yes, then you could be missing some valuable opportunities to develop and really get the best out of your team.

#### **Weekly/fortnightly catch ups**

These do not need to be prolonged meetings and can even be conducted whilst in the kitchen having coffee with an employee or whilst perched on their desk. The key of these brief catch ups is to find out how your team member is getting on with their work (daily and more specifically their KPIs); to find out any barriers that they are encountering and how you may be able to support them and guide them over any hurdles; it is also an opportunity to show that you care about what you are doing and showing that their contribution is of value to your business.

#### **Quarterly/six monthly reviews**

These are an extension of the weekly/fortnightly catch ups though much more focused on the achievement of agreed KPIs and targets. If you have been meeting regularly with your team members the results of the reviews should come as no surprise and if a team member has been struggling, hopefully you would have been mentoring them and helping to facilitate their success towards any goals.

These reviews also provide you and the employee with an opportunity to discuss whether training and/or development would be appropriate. In addition, they can be a useful milestone for identifying who the high, average and poor performers are with quantitative results and qualitative feedback. Therefore, providing valuable information to be considered during the annual salary reviews (if applicable) and/or when determining bonus allocations.

#### **Annual performance appraisals and performance development plans**

An annual appraisal gives both the employee and their line manager an opportunity to reflect on the employee's performance. All being well, this should be a simple process as weekly/fortnightly catch ups and quarterly/six monthly reviews will have taken place – so it need not be an arduous process, but simply a review of previous information and confirmation of how the employee will move forward in the next 12 months. The appraisal process should cover off major successes in the previous 12

months, achievement or otherwise of goals, areas for further development and an action plan which includes SMART goals for developing the employee further in line with the business goals.

## **2. Building Effective Teams**

Often when building teams we are focused on the skills, experience, abilities and knowledge that a new person can bring to the business. However, if you have a greater understanding of the different personality types and associated strengths of those within your business, you really can leverage on this to enhance your business capability. For example, by putting the 'right' group together they may come up with some exciting and innovative ways to grow the business; they may solve a persistent problem; or together identify how to simplify processes.

Team building activities/workshops are often a good way of identifying individual strengths (and areas for development) and for gaining an understanding of personality styles of different team members. Information that can through effective management be used to create project teams who collectively do great things for a business.

## **3. Leadership/management training**

We know that one of the biggest reasons individuals leave companies is because of poor line management. Strong leadership is critical to business success. The ability of leaders to achieve business success is largely influenced by the extent to which they have their own act together.

- How would you describe your leadership style – what are your strengths and/or areas for improvement?
- How would your team members describe your leadership style or the leadership effectiveness in your team?
- Do you role model the standards, behaviours and ways of working you expect of your team members?

If you believe there is room for improvement in your leadership and/or management capability, training and development would be a logical step and sound investment for you and/or your management team.

## **4. Workplace surveys**

If you really want to know what is working well and not so well within your business, consider undertaking a survey – ask your employees and even your clients to provide feedback. You are likely to learn some valuable insights and taking action and responding to the feedback may go a long way to helping you develop your business further.