

Taking Stock: Succession Planning in a Recession

A recent CBI survey on Education and Skills suggests that whilst the UK's senior managers are seen to be effective, weaknesses exist in the middle to lower management tiers. Many middle managers lack appropriate development and research by the Hay group reported that two thirds (68%) of business leaders felt their middle management tier was inadequately trained for their current role.

With the current round of redundancies and changing demographic patterns meaning that more people are leaving the workforce than are joining it, there are significant implications for succession planning. It is now vital that organisations invest in their lower tiers of management as today's middle managers will form tomorrow's senior management team.

At a time of economic uncertainty, firms need to maximise performance of their products and profitability and to achieve this they need to be able to maximise the performance of their staff and their managers. Worryingly, over half of companies are concerned about being able to recruit in the future to fulfil vital roles in their organisations.

Effective UK firms are not being complacent, even in these difficult times. They recognise that "satisfactory" is not going to be good enough to take them out of the doldrums and weather the current economic storm. Chief executives have put people skills as one of their main priorities, incorporating customer care, communications skills and improving leadership and management skills. Many organisations, both public and private sector, have identified the need for development of these key skills and have started to invest in them via both internal and external training.

And for those firms who are investing in training, the benefits are paying off. Nearly 32% of firms saw real business benefits for employers, employees and customers. Employees' value training and feel valued when they are given the opportunity to attend training events. Organisations see this reflected back in a boost to morale and reductions in staff turnover.

Reducing staff turnover, increasing the value of your staff and improving morale in times of uncertainty will help your organisation to stay ahead and give you the opportunity to create successful succession planning.

Ref: Taking Stock: CBI education and skills survey 2008

