

Customized Individual Development. A key to becoming an employer of choice - part I



In our January newsletter we talked about the importance of a [“Customized Retention” methodology](#). This month we will discuss about another key adaptability feature of the employers of choice or of those soon to become one - **“Customized Individual Development”**.

Key people customized retention and development is or should be high on the agenda of any business that wants to not only grow but survive in a [VUCA](#) environment - especially in large companies where most of the important investments regarding people are still decided at headquarters and where [fully tailored](#) development (except for the very few at the top) of key people across the organization is still wishful thinking.

As per our research, approximately 50% of the companies we’ve consulted have a structured and customized approach to key people development that is either random or nonexistent; approximately 40% have structured and semi-customized development plans for most employees while some of them even have their own internal academies. However less than 2% of the total is really considering a customized approach for their key people, based on our experience.

Many companies are now struggling to attract and retain talent yet customization still seems a complicated subject and unfortunately is far from being the norm.

Think about yourself:

- How often are you asked about what is important for you in your career or personal life?
- How often is there an action plan from HR or from your line manager to address and try accommodating those desires (who are by the way, often more than decent)?
- How often is the definition of “talent” or “key person” transparent and whoever receives this “qualification” enters a fully customized retention and development program?
- How often does your company encourage you to hire a coach to take you from good to great?

What do I mean by customized development?

I mean a development program that is tailored on your strengths and areas for leadership growth. A program that follows a **thorough assessment** consisting of:

- a **one to one interview** with a specialized consultant using several interviewing methodologies, tools and instruments;
- **interviews made by the consultant with some of the key stakeholders** around you (about your strengths, areas for development etc.), sometimes discussions with your spouse;
- a **360° feedback** using a reliable online tool. Of course reputable online assessments could be added too.

A program to be linked to the future, to the strategy of the company/division, to developing skills, behaviors and mindset needed in the next potential roles and of course, to your plans and purpose.

Below I will share how we do it for the senior managers we develop and coach and I will make a parallel with an example from the medical doctors' world:

We all have experienced a proper diagnosis and treatment only upon thorough blood analysis, upon several consultations and when a good doctor putting things well together, making the right connections and recommendations. In the opposite case, when the doctor did not understand the whole picture and interpreted just part of the information, diagnosis and treatment was usually way wrong and a waste of time, money and unmet expectations.

Now, on our side: how often did we improve our health if the treatment provided was not kept as recommended?

You have the answers by yourselves...

“Blood Analysis & Investigations” Phase

This is a [thorough assessment](#) from different angles where we analyze:

- Character (integrity, ethics, responsibility, compassion, respect, forgiveness, etc.)
- Mindset and potential
- Teamwork
- Communication
- Drive, passion, energy
- Coachability (courage, discipline, humbleness)
- EQ
- Mental agility
- Stakeholder Management, influencing and change management skills
- Digital Transformation Capabilities (Resilience, adaptability, willingness to experiment, tech curiosity, etc.) as well as other very important aspects.

“Diagnosis” Phase

Once the assessment is completed, the info gathered from the above mentioned angles is analyzed and consolidated in an assessment report that includes (besides a **pretty objective radiography of strengths, areas for development, engagement drivers, benchmarking with an up to date leadership profile across industries, career scenarios, etc.**) a **fully customized development plan for 1-2 years.**

We will detail this part (related to what is included in such a development plan) in our next newsletter in March.