

Outside the Box

Dedicated to serving the staffing needs of the Corrugated Industry

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Oberg and Associates
HARD RESULTS

Attracting Top Talent ***By Roy Oberg***

Like any other endeavor in life, the Corrugated Industry is made up of all types of people. There are unmotivated, low performance, and low potential people in all areas of the industry. To some degree, the mindset of entitlement exists in every box plant in the country. Conversely, the Corrugated Industry also has its share of intelligent, educated, goal driven, high performance, and high potential people as well. These people have a mindset of performance driven opportunity. They are looking to achieve their career goals through hard work, creativity, strategic planning, and most importantly, results. As a recruiter, I talk with clients everyday that ask me to help them acquire that rare commodity, the stable, high value candidate that can help them achieve their goals. Achieving this is a process that begins before your talent search begins. As with most things in life, a little preparation can make all the difference in the world.

To be truly successful in hiring the right can-



didate, you must first know exactly what you are looking for. This may sound silly but it is not uncommon for a company to focus too much on what they want and not enough on what they need. While your neighborhood pizza parlor might want a 4 color double wall box for their pizzas, they generally purchase what they need, a one or two color RSC. A company, full of high caliber, upwardly mobile and motivated top achievers may be a C.E.O.'s dream. That reality may demonstrate a new set of unforeseen challenges. Those top achievers that do not promote at a rate consistent with their expectations are often the first to leave your company in frustration. These are not the
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Developing Leaders ***by Mark Harris***

The ability to develop leaders is one of the most sought after skills in corporate America. Our world has become over managed and under led. It is the responsibility of the leader to develop leaders. This responsibility cannot be delegated to the Human Resource Department or to the local seminar circuit. The skills required to develop leaders have dissipated as the pace of business has increased accompanied by high turnover in leadership positions and an abundance of "weak" leadership role models. So ... how do we go about developing leaders within our organizations? I believe that there are three key elements in leadership



Attracting Top Talent continued)

types of employees that will wait for years and years for opportunities to be presented. They will be presented with opportunities from competitors. Replacement costs will then be quite high as top achievers expect, and can command, top rate compensation. When a hiring manager is honest in their appraisal of the positions needs, a better hire can usually be achieved. Identify the real experience needed, educational needs, promotional opportunities, compensation, travel, overtime, etc. issues before you begin looking. Failure to do so may cause you to hire the right candidate for the wrong need.

Secondly, the days of leaning back in you chair and waiting to be dazzled by candidates as they stood before you with their hat in their hands are over. In today's tight talent market you must be prepared to sell your company and your opportunity to all that apply. The lower echelon talent is often less discerning and will take a position based on stability and convenience. Top talent, however, will require a more thorough presentation on the true merits and honest liabilities of your opportunity. Candidates appreciate and recognize accurate appraisals on these important elements. You can no longer assume that because you are with a major integrated or successful independent, the candidate is automatically interested in coming on board. Even in great companies, there can be bad opportunities, just as in a bad company, there can be a great opportunity. To land that top candidate, you and your interviewing team have to be prepared to work for it.

Lastly, before you attempt to hire the best the industry has to offer, be sure you don't overlook the talent you already have within the organization. Overlooking internal candidates can be a significant source of salaried turnover within a box plant. Lack of recognition and the lack of consideration for promotion are two of the main reasons my recruiting company gets calls from candidates. The simple recognition of a formal interview for an internal candidate may be all it takes to keep someone from feeling slighted. Appreciating this emotional element in all of us can be as important in retaining the talent you already have as it is in acquiring new talent from a competitor.

Virtually every major integrated company identifies its people as their major asset and the reason for its competitive advantage. If this is true, why do the integrated companies still experience such a high rate of turnover? As this turnover occurs, the need to acquire top talent to fill the vacancies remains a top priority. I would challenge today's corrugated management to pursue every opportunity to develop the talent they already have on board before looking outside their organization. Mergers and acquisitions, price instability, and economic challenges make today's corrugated industry a very dynamic environment. The seemingly seasonal migration of perceived top talent from one company to the next is not the solution. Balancing a continuous program of training and development for internal talent, in conjunction with strategic talent acquisitions may give a company a degree of security and perhaps the industry a less frantic turnover rate.

Meet the Staff—Sheila Cassidy



Sheila Cassidy joined Oberg and Associates in the Spring of 2001 after owning her own business for 21 years in the Health and Wellness industry. She attributes her success with Oberg and Associates to perseverance and strict adherence to the company's operating systems. " I enjoy assisting people with a major element of their life—their careers." She adds, " When people are challenged and passionate about their work, this translates into increased productivity for our clients. That is what excites me" Sheila can be e-mailed at sheila@obergassociates.com

Suggested Reading

"Coaching for Improved Work Performance",
by Ferdinand Fournies. This book has a strong application to the development of leadership skills in a manufacturing environment.

Suggested by Joel Vissia,
Manager of Continuous Improvement, International Paper



Wyatt Oberg, Roy's 3 year old son.

He has just learned to swim, as well as being promoted to VP of Business Development! Congratulations!

“The skills required to develop leaders have dissipated as the pace of business has increased accompanied by high turnover in leadership positions and an abundance of “weak” leadership role models.”

Mark Harris,

(Developing Leaders continued)

1. Choosing the leadership candidates.

Colin Powell is quoted as saying that he looks for “intelligence, judgment, a capacity to anticipate, loyalty, high energy, drive and a balanced ego”. My list includes enthusiasm, motivation, a “can do” attitude, and a person who is a team player and has little concern for “who gets the credit”. You must develop your own list of attributes for choosing your leadership candidates. During this evaluation of your team you are looking for natural talent that can be developed into tangible leadership skills. You will most likely identify those abilities or tendencies through first hand observations of your team. Developing leaders is a “hands-on” activity. Always remember that the people you chose will be developing the next generation of leaders within your organization.

2. Creating an environment and a culture where leaders can develop.

Establish a culture where there is an expectation that team members will develop their leadership skills. This environment encourages people to be willing to take a chance on trying out these skills without the fear that if they stumble it will “tarnish” their careers. Tactful revelation of areas needing improvement, accompanied by clear explanations, examples, and critiques will encourage the new leader to face situations without the fear of failure. We live in the age of the “One Minute Manager”. People have been conditioned to expect immediate, successful results. Growing leaders takes time, patience, and commitment on the part of you as the mentor as well as the people you are developing. New leaders should be encouraged to take on leadership responsibilities in areas that complement their technical skills.

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This knowledge will enable the new leader to maintain their concentration and think more clearly in regards to how they need to lead the team to the successful accomplishment of the goal. Knowledge also enables the leader to listen objectively and to adapt to changes which may be necessary to achieve the support of the team and ultimately to success.

3. Behavior modeling is the most important element of leadership development.

As a leader, you must model the behaviors you want others to emulate. Your team’s observations of how you react under pressure will be a decisive point in the success of their leadership development process. Adversity and criticism are situations that constantly confront those in leadership positions. Mentors must teach that how leaders respond to adversity will determine the success or failure of the leader and many times the team. Through observation of your leadership behavior your team should be able to observe how to build unity and agreement on the goals and vision of the organization.

Ensuring people observe a variety of different leaders and how they handle challenging situations will enable them to have experiences that they can use when they are faced with similar circumstances. As their mentor you must ensure that the new leaders are in a position to be present during these “moments of truth”. There is no substitute for being part of battle, feeling the intensity of the people involved, and investing part of your life in the outcome of a decision.

Leadership development is a contact sport. You must lead from the front and be willing to be judged by the people you are developing. When you boil down what your most important responsibilities are to your organization, I believe you will agree that developing leaders is at the top of the list.

Mark Harris earned his Bachelors of Science degree from North Georgia College and his MBA from Tampa College. He spent 8 years with the U.S. Army Airborne Rangers and attained the rank of Captain. He has spent his last 13 years working for Gaylord Container in both the Multi-wall Paper Bag and Container divisions. He is currently General Manager of Inland Paperboard and Packaging's Greenville, S.C. box plant.

Oberg and Associates is the dominant recruiting firm exclusively serving the North American corrugated Industry. Our client and candidate relationships are based upon three non-negotiable principles:

- Open and honest communication
- Mutual Respect
- Hard Results

For predictable results using our proprietary systems, contact us for all of your recruiting needs.

Oberg and Associates

5495 Beltline Road, Suite 240
Dallas, Texas 75254

Phone: 972-239-3315

Fax: 972-239-2988

Email: contact@obergassociates.com



HARD RESULTS.

Name

Company Name

Address

City, State, Zip



Far and away, the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.

*President Theodore Roosevelt
September 7, 1903*

There are no secrets to success: Don't waste time looking for them. Success is the result of perfection, hard work, learning from failure, loyalty to those for whom you work, and persistence

*General Colin Powell
U. S. Army (retired).*

