Brandon Hall Group

TOOL TO USE

Self-Assessment

Developing Your High-Potential Talent

2022

Introduction

97%

Almost all organizations

believe they must improve high-potential development in the next one to two years, according to Brandon Hall Group's 2022 study, *Developing Your High-Potential Talent*.

Employers are in drastic need of more inclusive and collaborative leaders who can drive business results and help develop and retain top talent. It is critical to identify and develop high-potential employees to be future leaders.

Most organizations (62%) say less than 10% of their employee population are high-potentials. Less than half (44%) formally identify these employees and are transparent about the high-potential development process and the progress candidates are making.

This self-assessment tool provides an opportunity to understand where your organization stands with its approach to identifying and developing high-potential employees who will become your future leaders. It has more than 35 questions you can use to benchmark your organization's efforts and set priorities for improvement. The best way to use this tool is to print it out and mark the boxes and add notes or action items.

IDENTIFY HIGH-POTENTIALS ACROSS THE ENTIRE ENTERPRISE	Agree	Disagree	Priority for Improvement			Notes/Action Items
			High	Medium	Low	
Do you have a standard definition for a high-potential candidate?						
Do you identify high-potentials for subject-matter expert or key individual contributor positions?						
Do you identify high-potentials for frontline supervisor positions?						
Do you identify high-potentials for manager-level positions?						
Do you identify high-potentials for director-level positions?						
Do you identify high-potentials for senior-level positions? (Assistant/Associate VP, VP, Senior VP, Executive VP, etc.)						
Do you identify high-potentials for C-suite positions?						

COMMENTARY

Excellence in needed at all levels of an organization. Therefore, high-potentials should be identified across an organization. Traditionally, a standard definition for high potential is the capacity to move into a role that is two levels or more above the one currently held. That definition can still work but it is mostly focused on management and leadership roles. The definition might need to be adjusted or expanded for critical individual contributor roles or to identify individual contributors for frontline roles.

TAKE STEPS TO ENSURE YOUR TALENT PIPELINE IS DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE			Priority for Improvement			
	Agree	Disagree	High	Medium	Low	Notes/Action Items
Do you have systems or strategies to ensure the diversity of your high-potential talent pipeline represents the diversity of your workforce?						
Do you have systems or strategies to guard against bias in identifying high-potentials?						
Do you have multiple career paths that enable employees with diverse talents and aspirations to understand how they can advance in the organization?						
Do you offer targeted development opportunities – such as team projects, action learning and job rotations -- that enable employees to develop their skills while contributing to business objectives?						
Do you provide coaches and/or mentors for your high-potential talent to personalize their development?						
Do you have programs to train high-potentials to become coaches and mentors?						

TAKE STEPS TO ENSURE YOUR TALENT PIPELINE IS DIVERSE AND INCLUSIVE

	Agree	Disagree	Priority for Improvement			Notes/Action Items
			High	Medium	Low	
Do the managers of high-potentials provide them with opportunities for greater authority or responsibility in their current roles to assist in their growth?						
Do you have a consistent assessment process to understand the behavior traits, work styles, capabilities and aspirations of high-potentials that might be difficult to discern through ordinary conversations or interviews?						
Do you offer high-potentials support related to wellness and work/life balance to aid them in their development journey?						
Do you have programs in place that reward or create incentives for high-potentials who excel in their job roles and development opportunities?						

COMMENTARY

Organizations have a range of issues to address related to the diversity and inclusiveness of their high-potential programs. Six in 10 organizations responding to our research indicated their high-potential identification and development processes are biased and believe significant improvement is needed in developing the diversity of the talent pipeline. In addition, less than half (48%) of organizations believe they are meeting the expectations of their high-potential talent. Employers should have a variety of development strategies for high-potentials, ranging from targeted development opportunities for under-represented populations to coaching and mentoring, on-the-job training and providing rewards and incentives related to meaningful contributions and improvement. Organizations ask a lot of their talent and with flight risks higher than ever, rewards, incentives and attending to the health and wellness of key employees are critical to retaining top talent.

TAKE A MULTI-FACETED APPROACH TO ASSESSING THE READINESS OF HIGH-POTENTIALS TO MOVE INTO NEW ROLES	Yes	No	Priority for Improvement			Notes/Action Items
			High	Medium	Low	
Do you identify high-potential readiness mostly through manager observation?						
Do you use talent reviews to assess readiness?						
Do use a multi-rater feedback system to get the perspectives of a variety of people who work with the high-potential employee?						
Do you use online or live simulations to observe the ability of high-potentials to adjust to new or unfamiliar situations?						
To all or most high-potentials take assessments so you can gain another perspective on their capabilities, behavior traits and work styles?						

COMMENTARY

Most employers rely on manager observation and talent reviews to assess and determine the readiness of high-potentials to move into new roles. Those steps are not enough when promotions have such high stakes in such a volatile business environment. Organizations should leverage as many tools as practical to determine readiness. Multi-rater feedback, assessments and simulations are all good tools. They may not all be needed in every situation, but more organizations should take a multi-modal approach to determine whether high-potentials are ready for more responsibility. In addition, our research shows that most organizations wait until someone is promoted to onboard them or formally train them for the role. Employers should take steps to better prepare high-potentials before they begin a role. This can be tricky, but once someone is considered ready for a move, the onboarding process should begin. Some additional training can and should be provided after the employee assumes the new role, but they should have what they need to be comfortable and productive in the role for at least the first 60-90 days. Part of the readiness process should be working with the candidate to build a 90-day plan for the new role.

ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR HIGH-POTENTIAL IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS ON AN ONGOING BASIS	Agree	Disagree	Priority for Improvement			Notes/Action Items
			High	Medium	Low	
Do you measure retention of high-potential talent overall and for various demographic groups and business units in the organization?						
Do you measure the internal promotions rate overall and for various demographic groups and business units in the organization?						
Do you measure the diversity of internal promotions overall and for various demographic groups and business units in the organization?						
Do you measure/observe whether high-potentials are motivated in their jobs?						
Do you measure/observe whether high-potentials are collaborative?						
Do you measure/observe whether your high-potentials are inclusive in how they work with others?						

ASSESS THE EFFECTIVENESS OF YOUR HIGH-POTENTIAL IDENTIFICATION AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS ON AN ONGOING BASIS			Priority for Improvement			
	Agree	Disagree	High	Medium	Low	Notes/Action Items
Do you measure/assess whether high-potentials appear committed to the organization and are aligned with and supportive of the culture?						
Do you measure/observe whether high-potentials actively identify and develop other high-potential talent?						
Do you measure/observe whether high-potentials are admired by their peers?						

COMMENTARY

Measurement is critical in every type of development strategy. It's no different for high-potentials. Through surveys, feedback and other means, organizations should regularly assess whether their high-potential programs are having business impact. Critical metrics may vary between organizations, but retention of high-potential talent and the rate of internal promotions should certainly be on the list. While 70-80% of organizations use those metrics, only 45% measure the diversity of internal promotions, which is important for understanding how you are building diversity and inclusion in your high-potential programs. Beyond that, organizations should take stock of how their high-potentials are impacting those they work within their current roles and any roles that they get promoted into.

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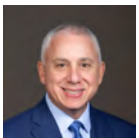
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About Brandon Hall Group

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Individual and Enterprise Membership Options: Includes research assets, advisory support, a client success plan and more.

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Self-paced certification programs. Virtual group sessions for companies. In-person conferences and summits.

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