

KNOWING WHERE THE TALENT IS

By Alan Davis

Would the sudden loss of a key employee have you scrambling? Smart hiring managers are bringing back a favorite pro-active technique – Competitor Talent Mapping.

Whether you are fishing, looking for oil or seeking talented employees, you are more successful when you know where to look.

Competitor Talent Mapping not only tells you where to look for a critical replacement, it tells you who is the best, who is most likely to move and how fast you can fill that spot. And it does this *before* the need arises.

Just what is Competitor Talent Mapping? The recruiting agency undertaking the mapping identifies the best competitive talent and delivers charts of the client's competitors. This might be organization's direct competitors or their competitors for talent. These charts show organizational structure, reporting lines and individual names and job titles. This can be from the "C" level down to the level of individual contributor.

With this knowledge, future hiring can be directed quickly at the best talent available,

When Competitor Talent Mapping Pays Off

The need for Competitor Talent Mapping comes principally from two sources.

The first is when open positions become increasingly difficult to fill – and, today, the "time-to-fill" metric is on the rise.

The second is when an organization conducts a succession planning and succession management exercise and discovers that certain critical skill sets are missing in the organization and cannot be developed in the short to medium term.

In both scenarios, there is no question that the candidate market place is getting tighter. In many cases, short term fixes are being applied, such as encouraging experienced workers to extend their working life or to work shorter hours but postpone their full retirement.



Competitor Talent Mapping can provide a more lasting solution with a minimum of disruption to the organization.

Other Advantages

There are several other advantages to completing a mapping exercise.

It can be used as part of a competitive intelligence gathering initiative.

Organizations can benchmark their talent pool in terms of experience, qualifications and skills against those of their competitors.

They can conduct an employment branding exercise to assess a candidate's perception of their attractiveness as a potential employer. They can benchmark competitive compensation, title vs role, promotability and other strategic measurements.

Getting Started

The starting point is when a company recognizes that certain positions are becoming more difficult to fill or that there are significant gaps in the succession plan. Either of these two scenarios will prompt the company and the consultant to identify individual skill sets for each position to be included in the mapping exercise.

The consultant will then identify the target organizations where the best competitive talent is currently residing.

From there, the consultant must identify the location of specific skill sets and establish by geography and department where the best competitive talent is currently working.

The consultant ultimately will identify specific target people by name and job title and where they fit in the organizational structure.

Once all of this data has been collected, the consultant will draw an organigram of the competitor's organizational structure, including the name and title of all of the individuals.

This is the first of three deliverables to the client.

To move on requires making an individual approach to each of the potential candidates to establish their skills, their career aspirations, their choice of work



locations and their potential as future hires as well as their perception of our client as a potential employer at some point in the future.

This will establish which of the competitor staff represent high potential or best-in-class employees. It is quite different to a traditional recruiting call, the sole objective of which is to fill a current job requirement.

The second deliverable, then, consists of individual profiles which are written up and shared with the client for discussion of each as a potential hire, either immediately or in the future.

The next step is to address those candidates who truly represent high performing individuals. These would be defined as industry leaders or individuals who have been designated as “high potential” by their present employers, and are attractable. These candidates are then regularly contacted and their records continuously updated using the very latest CRM technologies.

In this way, when they are ready to make a career move in the future, a path to the door of the client has been firmly established.

The third and final deliverable is thus a pipeline of high quality, high potential, pre-qualified and exceptional candidates. This will not only raise the quality of hires, but will also reduce the time to hire.

Alan Davis & Associates Inc. Experience in Competitor Talent Mapping

Alan Davis & Associates Inc. is a recognized industry leader in the field of Strategic Talent Acquisition and Management. Our clients are branded companies in multiple business sectors and include progressive organizations such as Pfizer, Pratt & Whitney Canada, Bombardier Transport, Ontario Power Generation and Suncor Energy.

We are part of a worldwide search organization, Cornerstone International Group, and our reach is global.

We believe organizations with highly specialized or critically important roles in their structure should engage in Competitor Talent Mapping. Competitor Talent Mapping is not a new product, but there has been a surge in demand for this service in recent years as talent related issues are becoming more acute. It is a relatively low-cost means of managing the risks associated with key positions on which the company’s business depends.

All of our articles, including our Recruiting Best Practice Series, can be found on our website at www.alandavis.com/htmlsite/articles.html



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Alan Davis is founder and President of Alan Davis & Associates Inc., a specialized recruiting practice based in Quebec, Canada. He has 29 years experience in recruiting and has managed many recruiting campaigns, both in Canada and overseas. Alan was the Program Manager of the 1992 Canadian Astronaut Recruitment Campaign. His company provides specialized services in executive search, strategic recruitment & selection, succession management, and interview training. Alan is a regular conference speaker and a frequently published author on recruiting and selection topics.

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