

SUCCESSION

A Strategic Decision

by

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Here are some lessons learned from our work in succession...

Three Parts to Succession:

Part One

- The first word in “succession” is “success.” Providing the climate and tools to accomplish the task.

Part Two

- Succession at the top begins when the new person arrives—not when they announce their departure.

Part Three

- Succession throughout. Not just at the top but in each position of responsibility.

How to Decide

Personnel selection and evaluation are a combination of art, science, timing and luck. There are only a few qualified individuals for any given position.

Ask this question—what is needed, next? What competencies are required?

The most important thing to keep in mind as you move through this process is “fit.” The only way to know if someone fits is to know what you need and want in the first place.

What do you want to accomplish? What are the goals? How can you know if the new person will be successful? Lacking a filter by which to make this decision is likely to lead to selecting almost anyone who strikes the search committee's interest.

Or the interest of others.

From a distance almost anyone can look good. Someone who makes a strong impression can be a terrible fit. Appearance, talent and performance are not the same things.

The goal is not the best person but the right person and fit.

Hiring is strategy.

What is the Filter?

- A fit with the organization. Does this person believe in and live the purpose and mission? If a turnaround is needed is there experience to suggest this individual has the emotional strength and discernment for this task?
- A fit with co-workers?
- A fit with the board?
- A fit with the community?

Qualities

As organizational development studies show, human behavior is highly repetitive.

Frequent past behavior and performance are the best predictors of future behavior and performance.

The way someone has acted, their recent past results, their emotional responses—all these behaviors will repeat themselves in the new assignment. Leopards don't change their spots and neither do individuals once they are hired or elected.

Final Thought

Philosophy and chemistry are usually not on anyone's resume'. However when you hire someone you are getting a philosophy, world view, personality and character. Will these be a close match with what is needed next?



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