

## **While Others Are Firing, You Should Be Hiring**

By Jay Forte, Author, Speaker and Performance Consultant. Humanetrics LLC.

In tough economic times, most organizations' first and most predictable reaction is to cut expenses; in today's service economy, the largest expenses are manpower-related. The result is that thousands of talented employees have been released into the marketplace. This increase in talented unemployed workers creates a great opportunity. When others are cutting, now is the time for you to redefine, realign and rehire to pick from the best and create a more powerful and greater performing team.

Most companies are stuck in industrial-age thinking; they feel that any employee can do any job. This encourages their "layoff" and "cut" approach to managing expenses in recessionary periods. However, as our economy moves from the skill-focused industrial age (make things) to today's talent-focused intellectual age (make ideas), we need new and more personalized performance from each employee. There are very few one-size-fits-all roles anymore; each role now requires specific talents and thinking to be done well. And in a period where we need more done with less, it is critical that all roles have the best and highest performing employees.

Our people are our profits, particularly in an intellectual and service workplace. What employees know, and how they use what they know, advances our innovation, efficiency and profitability – but only if employees work in roles that allow them to use their talents and strengths. Performance today is more based on thinking and natural abilities than learned skills or rote procedures. This requires organizations to implement a more significant process to assess employee talents and match them to the talents needed in each role as the method to hire effectively. Today's recession has created the ability for proactive organizations to select from the great amount of newly available unemployed talent in the marketplace. So as others are terminating and cutting, use the three steps of redefine, realign and rehire to attract and hire the best talent now available to improve the performance power of your team.

**Redefine** –In an intellectual workplace, employees make more unique decisions – they think their way through the day. Since each of us thinks differently, not every employee is a good fit for every role. Therefore, it is critical to clearly define the talents and strengths (thinking) needed in each role. Once defined, existing employees and new candidates can be reviewed to determine whether their unique talents and strengths match those needed in the role. The more closely the employee's talents are matched to the talents needed in the role, the greater the potential for significant employee performance. Talent assessment tools will help identify the language and definitions needed to create a talent profile for each role so that the right employees can be sourced. In yesterday's industrial age, skills and experience drove performance. In today's intellectual age, thinking, talents and strengths drive performance. Clearly redefining the talents needed in each role allows for effective employee realignment or a successful new hire.

**Realign** – it is critical to keep great talent; however, talent is only perceived as great if it is appropriate to the role. If I am an extraordinary salesman (my talents encourage relationship building and great personal contact) but I work as an accountant, I will never fully use my talents and the organization will neither notice nor benefit from what I do intrinsically well. It is critical that each role allow the employee to maximize his or her talents. Once all roles have been redefined for talents, assess your existing employees to determine whether they are working in the right roles. Many times you may have great employees whose performance is average or disengaged because they are not working in their talent areas. When properly realigned, they become more connected to their work, more engaged in their jobs and contribute more significantly to results.

An economic downturn, with the focus of doing more with less, is an opportune moment to realign employees to ensure the right employees are in the right roles. Though great organizations don't wait for a recession to realign (they commit to hiring employees into the right roles), a recession more readily allows for personnel changes. Use the recession to realign employees to the right roles and move out employees whose talents do not match the talent needs of the organization. Keep only those who are fully contributing and driving results.

**Rehire** – In the process of redefining and realigning, it is frequently noted that the required talents are not available in the existing manpower. This may be from the assessment that certain employees are in the wrong roles (and that no better match for their talents exist) and therefore must go, or new roles are created requiring an external candidate. In either case, a need to rehire exists.

The starting point for all rehiring is to clearly understand the talents needed in the open roles, then develop a sourcing plan to locate candidates with the required talents. Today's leading organizations source candidates by presenting the role and its required talents. Candidates are encouraged to respond with talent-based resumes, not skill and experience resumes. This better defines the critical thinking needed to be successful in the role and shares this information with the population of available talent. Focusing the hiring discussion around talents naturally encourages more qualified candidates, a more meaningful interview process and a greater likelihood of hiring the right employee.

Today, we face tough economic times. But with difficulty comes opportunity. Now is the time for organizations to redefine, realign and rehire. It is critical to focus on building the best team, in any economy. It is critical to have a team where each employee works in his or her talent areas. It is critical to take advantage of the supply of unemployed talented employees in today's recession to rebuild your team into one that is more connected, more powerful and more focused on performance.

We will work through this economic challenge. When we do, many organizations will be weaker because their recessionary approach was to cut the largest expense –

their workforce. Their cuts and layoffs have now provided you with a great selection and variety of quality workplace talent. Use this opportunity to redefine, realign and rehire the best employees. When the recession is over, your workforce will be more connected, more engaged and well ahead of others.

#### Bio

Jay Forte, a former financial executive and corporate educator, now performance consultant, speaker and author, is a nationally ranked Thought Leader and President of Humanetrics. Jay teaches organizations how to maximize manager performance, ignite employee performance and advance women's performance, all with an underlying focus on first advancing personal performance. He has helped organizations and individuals become more performance-driven, more successful and more passionate in work and life. He is the author of *Fire Up! Your Employees and Smoke Your Competition*, and *Stand Out and Get Hired*. See more information on the website, [www.FireUpYourEmployees.com](http://www.FireUpYourEmployees.com). See his daily blog, called "BLOGucation" (daily power learning), at [www.HumanetricsLLC.com](http://www.HumanetricsLLC.com).