

HOW TO PLUCK A HIGH PERFORMER OUT OF THE RESUME PILE

WOULDN'T YOUR LIFE BE EASY if the right resumes leaped to the top of the heap the way those high performers, themselves, do once you've hired them? It's possible to spot the high performers who can help your organization excel - just by reading their resumes. The fall is the busiest hiring months with more candidates looking for work than any other time of the year. Here are five surefire ways you can screen the pile quickly to find the high performer resumes.

TIP ONE

High Performers Have Had A Lot Of Jobs

Don't be surprised, dismayed, or deterred by the number of jobs or positions that a high performer has had. First of all, the days when people stayed in one company their entire careers are long gone. Second, high performers, because of their drive to succeed, are always looking for new opportunities to move up and if an employer is not giving those opportunities, they will not hesitate to look elsewhere.

As long as a resume shows a constant progression upward in terms of position and responsibilities and shows evidence of the other key indicators of a high performer, a candidate who has switched employers a lot is probably worth interviewing. Keep in mind, however, that if your company can't provide an



upward career track for a high performer, you may find yourself needing to fill this job again in a few years when the high performer you hire decides to it's time for another move up.

TIP TWO

High Performers Have Been Promoted

Similarly, when high performers have been with the same company for a long period of time they most likely haven't stayed in any one position for very long. They usually get promoted every one to two years. If they leave a company, it's generally for a job that's a step up. They leave only for a better opportunity that involves more responsibility, power, and status.

High performers tend not to be interested in lateral moves; they want positions that will take them to the next level. For example, if you have the resume of someone who was a project director, then became a manager, and within a few years moved into a VP slot, you may well be looking at the resume of a high performer.

TIP THREE

High Performers Have Held Leadership Positions

Even if they work within a team, high performers tend to assume a leadership position or play some sort of leadership role in most of **▶ continued on page 2**



NOTE FROM
KATHI GRAHAM-LEVISS

You've heard me preach the same message for years: top performers are a special breed. They can be the single greatest assets your company has. They can also - if not managed properly - be your greatest source for headaches. Don't shy away from top performers thinking you won't be able to handle them. Like any other personality type, top performers have specific traits and characteristics. When you learn how these people tick, you will hold the keys to giving them what they need so they can, in turn, use every ounce of talent and skill they possess to help your company succeed.



Tool of the Month

The TriMetrix Job Report Plus

Businesses must stop benchmarking people. Businesses must benchmark the job, especially when it comes to top performers. High Achievers need continuous improvement and, thus, continually progressing goals in order to stay focused and motivated.

The TriMetrix Job Report Plus defines key accountabilities for any job based on a 37-factor analysis and lists those requirements into three talent categories: rewards/culture, behavioral traits and job attributes.

The TriMetrix Job Report combines the attributes (people talents), behaviors (DISC), and values (PIAV) necessary for top performance. It also contains customized interview questions to ask candidates in each of the three sections (attributes, behaviors and values).

Contact XB Coaching, Inc. today for additional information on TriMetrix Job Report Plus and how they can substantially improve your talent management efforts

Distribute guidelines of minimum performance to new recruits that the employee and manager both sign off on. By using this method, you ensure top performers understand what goals they are responsible for meeting and you give managers a benchmark for accountability.

THE RESUME PILE

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the jobs they've had. High performers tend to step naturally into leadership because they are goal driven and want to make sure that the task at hand gets done successfully.

Contrary to conventional wisdom, it doesn't always matter how long a person has been in the workforce. You might want to look for leadership capabilities rather than experience. If a young applicant has not had much work experience to tout on a resume, you may find clues about his/her leadership potential in the description of college activities. Someone who was involved in multiple extra-curricular activities and took leadership positions in these groups is probably a high performer.

TIP FOUR

High Performers Emphasize Goal Achievement

High performers tend to focus their resumes on the goals they've achieved. For example, the resume might include how they achieved sales or revenue goals, completed project goals, or reached or contributed to an organization's goals.

A word of caution: since resume writing guidebooks and other resources that people use to help them craft their resumes emphasize the importance of talking about goals and achievements, you can't rely

totally on this information to identify a high performer. In other words, some so-so candidates may simply have learned how to write an outstanding resume. However, if the resume fits this characteristic as well as most of the other four discussed here, you can safely prescreen the candidate as a high performer.

TIP FIVE

High Performers Are Involved In Many Activities

While the current school of resume writing discourages activities and accomplishments outside of the workplace, when they are included and show that someone is involved in lots of activities and has accomplishments, this candidate is likely a high performer. High performers don't "turn off" when they leave the workplace. They're involved in their communities, continuing education, and highly devoted to their hobbies and personal interests. For example, if someone lists gardening as a hobby and mentions that they have taken that interest to the max by achieving the designation of Master Gardener that might indicate a high performer candidate.

While not all of these indicators may be present on every high performer's resume, if you find many of these characteristics present then you're almost certainly looking at someone who fits this category. Use a screening call before bringing your the candidate in for an interview and see if your resume sleuthing is on target!

WHAT TO DO WHEN TOP PERFORMERS ARE NOT TEAM PLAYERS

TIM, A SALES VP at a large manufacturing company, was frustrated because he wasn't getting the results he needed from his top performers. His staff seemed incapable of working together to achieve the company's sales objectives. They were driving Tim crazy with their arrogant, demanding and egotistical ways. As a result, Tim felt like a failure and began to doubt whether he was cut out to be a manager.

Does Tim's situation strike home with you? Do you have people who are star performers on their own, but who also cause constant turmoil and conflict within your team? Then you probably have a lot of high maintenance high performers. These are people who are very intense and extremely task-focused. They tend to operate independently of the team. If you offer information that has no direct impact on them, they don't want to get involved. This includes meetings, associated projects, or any team-oriented action items. This results in a lack of communication within your team. The star performers seem to make up their own set of rules to play by, causing resentment among other team members.

In short, these individuals are not team players. So no matter how great their skills and experience are, they wreak havoc in your operation and often fail to achieve their full potential because of the mayhem they create around them.

How do you turn top performers into team players? Here are two solutions that have proven successful for other managers, including Tim:

- ▶ Put your high maintenance high performers in charge of a team. Being in charge of a team means driving the team goals and being placed in a situation where they can lead and have some control over achieving the results. High maintenance high performers don't necessarily want to be leaders. But as highly goal-oriented people, they will use the position if they see it as a faster, more efficient path to achieving their goals. Their commitment to achieve will also help you drive the other members of the team more quickly to success.

A way to hold top performers accountable for leading the team is to have them report the team's progress directly to you, their manager. Such updating is best done in regular face-to-face meetings. This will enable you to know where your high maintenance high performers are in their strategy and their thinking

without bogging them down with creating written reports, something they will feel only slows them down.

- ▶ Create simple processes and structures so high-maintenance high-performers have the support they need from their team and other departments. Giving high-maintenance high-performers structure - for example, the goals, the budget, the deadline, and the staff to achieve the goals - is important to ensure that they give you the outcomes you need. It is important to set up the structure from the beginning of the working relationship, but they need to view this structure as if you, their manager, are not telling them what to do.

When you involve your high-maintenance high-performers in designing the standards up front, you have a greater likelihood of getting their commitment and buy-in. High-maintenance high-performers are creators and innovators; they're results driven, so by involving them in the creation, you have a better chance of getting the needed results.

Tim was a skeptical about putting the employees who seemed the most detached from their team in charge, but when he worked with them to define their role, the goals of the team, and the expected outcomes, he immediately saw a difference in their interactions with the team. What he had called "teams" actually turned into teams. They worked cohesively, they were not divided, and they all had the same goals. Once Tim discovered what his top performers really needed and gave it to them Tim said, "The results were phenomenal." By understanding what they need, Tim created an environment for the high-maintenance high-performers where they could realize their goals and operate efficiently. As their boss, he ran interference and removed roadblocks to their success.

Follow Tim's lead and take time to understand how your top performers behave and make a few minor adjustments to allow them to operate in an environment that supports their best work. You'll soon find that these individuals can be easy to work with if they are given the right working situation. They will be able to accomplish more, and you'll reap greater, long-lasting rewards as they turn into all-star team players.

WHY IS IT THAT HIGH-PERFORMERS ARE SO OFTEN THE MOST DIFFICULT TO MANAGE?

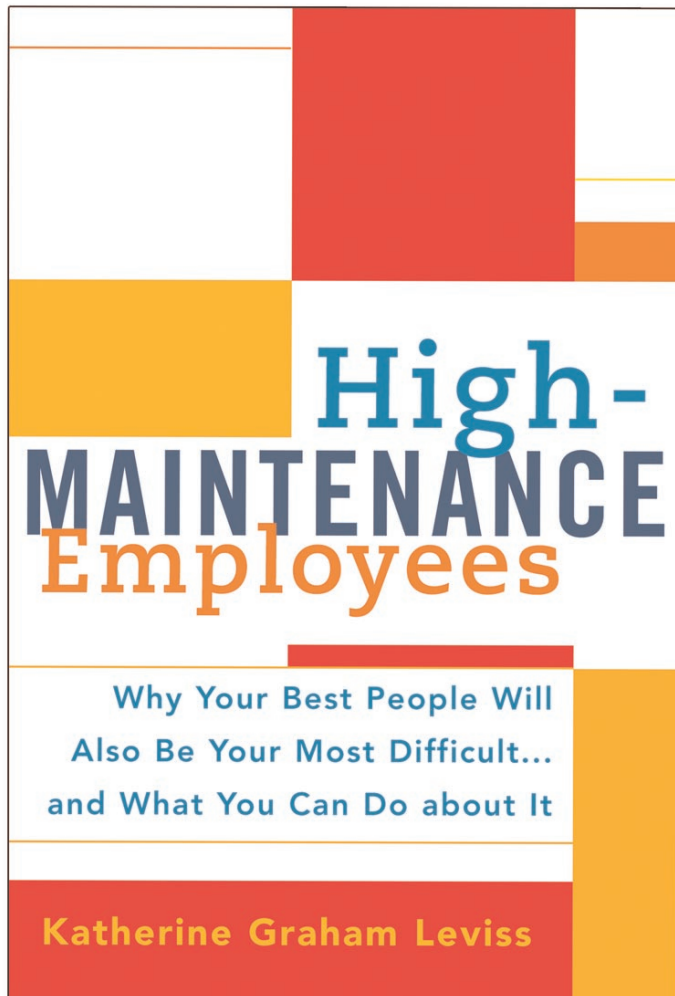
High-Maintenance Employees is the first book to give managers detailed guidance on how to get the best out of high-maintenance high-performers - those visionary, goal-driven employees who are difficult to keep on track but so important for today's changing and adapting businesses.

These are the strategies Katherine Graham-Leviss has been using for the last 20 years coaching thousands of chief executives, front-line managers, and sales groups to develop employees into organizationally minded

problem-solvers and create highly productive work teams so companies improve their results. Realizing that the number one problem facing companies is how to retain and manage these essential employees, *High-Maintenance Employees* takes the reader on a step-by-step process that includes:

- Identifying and appreciating high-maintenance high-performers
- Understanding their behavior and communication style
- Creating the best work environment
- Rewarding and leading high-maintenance high-performers
- Integrating them into teams.

By following these steps, managers will learn how to maximize their employees' performance and job satisfaction, increase the ease of managing, and thereby maximize their business results.



Available online at XBCoaching.com and at bookstores everywhere.

Encourage top performers to design their own plan. Top performers are highly goal-oriented people who love being in control of producing results "their way." By giving them the opportunity to design their own plan, you offer a method of producing results and also the motivation to do so.