

“It’s not the CEO, it’s the leadership strategy that matters”

Author: Josh Bersin

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John Bersin, a contributor to *Forbes Magazine*, discusses his research on leadership strategies as related to long term business performance. His research focuses on many different companies over a period of time and correlated their business performance with a variety of different people and talent practices. His findings highlight the need for strong leadership development driven from within, regardless of the CEO.

Our Digest

There are four key ways in which the top performing companies in this study achieve long term business success, as described below:

1. Directly link leadership strategy to business strategy

When individuals understand clearly what the overall business strategy is and what their role is within this they thrive and therefore so does the business. This is reflected most clearly in operational roles and mid-level/supervisory roles where key business execution takes place.

High performing organisations understand this and actively promote/train and support these execution focused individuals who will strengthen the culture of execution within the company.

2. Develop leaders at all levels

There is a clear recognition in high performing companies that it is those managers at the grass roots level who enable and actively foster this culture of execution. The most successful of these companies develop leaders from the bottom up.

3. Invest in leadership development

The research shows that companies who rank top in leadership development maturity invest 30-40% more money in leadership than their peers. Fortune Magazine’s ranking of top leadership programs also reflects this.

4. Develop a company specific leadership philosophy

Top ranking leadership development organisations typically sculpt their own leadership programmes which match their own unique model. You can of course hire a consultant to come in and put this programme together but as the author states, “none can replace you taking the time to figure out what matters in your own company.”

Although the CEO plays a crucial role in attracting and developing leadership, in order to ensure the long term sustainability of the business as a whole, there needs to be a sustained focus on leadership strategy. Companies need to focus and nurture this culture right from the bottom, so that even if the CEO leaves, a strong, lasting culture remains.

To read the full article, please click on the following link:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/joshbersin/2012/07/30/its-not-the-ceo-its-the-leadership-strategy-that-matters/>

