

How To Cultivate High Potential Employees

Business owners and managers want high performing employees. They're the top 20% of the workforce that really drives your business. They aren't always easy to find, but if you have a diamond in the rough you can nurture and develop these employees with potential and grow your own high performers. Here's how:

- **Appreciate strengths** – One of the best ways to create high performers is to build on employee's strengths. They don't have to be good at everything; being exceptional at even one thing will deliver results. Rather than constantly focusing on what needs improvement and creating a mediocre employee help them leverage their natural gifts and create an exceptional employee.
- **Provide a support system** – Let your potential high performer know you've got their back. Fortify them by providing a network which champions and supports them. Employees get stuck when they feel unsupported. Create a system that empowers, supports and keeps them moving forward, such as review and brainstorming sessions at the end of the work day.
- **Look forward** – When working on multi-process projects, help your potential high performer focus on the next step. Looking forward will avoid hyper-focusing on the current task and create momentum. Celebrate individual victories along the way, keeping the final goal in mind.
- **Align compensation** - Be sure the rewards and compensation you're offering are valued by the employee. People are unique individuals and have personal preferences, so be creative. Find out what makes your potential high performer tick. If they're motivated by monetary gain, design a compensation plan based on performance bonuses or commissions. If "down time" turns them on – offer a vacation bonus or create flex hours. Most employees are motivated by recognition. Keep it individual and keep it coming!
- **Create opportunities for promotion** – You want your potential high performer to stick around when they're a true high performer, so you'd better have opportunities for them to advance and develop within your company. If you don't, you may be grooming them for someone else.
- **Let them know they matter** – It's all too common for leaders and managers to keep their thoughts of appreciation to themselves. If you think an employee shows promise, let them know.

These techniques benefit most employees, not just the jewels you already suspect have potential. Employ them in your day to day business and you may find you're sitting on a diamond mine.

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