

The Importance of Supplementing Your Skill Sets

By Terry H. Hill

1

It is highly unlikely or unrealistic for one business owner to have all of the necessary skill sets to effectively manage and control a business. While an owner might understand or be proficient in several required disciplines—sales, marketing, management, organizational control, financials, logistics and operations—a proactive business leader realizes that he must surround himself with individuals who have greater expertise in the areas where he lacks experience.

Michael Dell, the founder of Dell Computer, has said, on more than one occasion, that he realized early on that he needed to surround himself with a strong management team that had the skills and experience that he lacked. The success of Dell Computer speaks for itself.

Unfortunately, for most entrepreneurs, the costs associated with hiring and employing a staff of individuals that possess the skills and experience that the entrepreneur lacks, can be high. However, there are a number of cost efficient means that you can use to supplement your lack of experience, to solidify your organization, and to obtain the support that you may need to manage and strengthen your company both tactically and strategically.

The following methods can lower costs and improve your firm's talent shortage.

Interim Management: Interim management is the temporary provision of additional management skills and resources. Interim management is viewed as a short-term assignment with a proven heavyweight executive manager. A variety of business situations that could merit the need for an interim manager are: crisis management, sudden personnel departures, changes or transitions, IPOs, mergers and acquisitions, and project management.

Temporary Employees: Temporary employees are often referred to as "contractual" or "seasonal" or "temps." Depending on the case, this classification of employees may work full-time or part-time. Many temporary employees work for agencies that specialize in a particular profession or a field of business, such as accounting, health care services, general industrial labor, technical or secretarial skills. Businesses that require frequent adjustments of staffing levels are best serviced by the use of temporary employees.

Outsourcing or sub-contracting: Outsourcing is a familiar practice of using outside firms and/or individuals to handle work normally performed within a company. More and more businesses routinely outsource their payroll processing, accounting, distribution and many other important functions -- often because they have no other choice. The decision to outsource is often made in the interest of lowering your firm's costs or to make more efficient use of labor, capital, technology and resources.

Outside Consultants and/or Advisors: These are resources that smaller companies - without experienced management teams - can access. Larger companies can use outside consultants and advisors to supplement their internal management. Securing an outsider's perspective - one that is experienced and impartial - can be an invaluable advantage and may avoid costly mistakes. If you select the right advisor, then the cost of working with the **experienced advisor** can provide a significant return on your investment.

The Importance of Supplementing Your Skill Sets

By Terry H. Hill

2

Board of Advisors: This is yet another strategy employed by both small and large companies alike. Depending on the size of the company, an advisory board usually includes the business owner and a limited number of employees. In addition, there are usually two to four external members of the board—typically the owner’s banker, attorney, accountant, and consultant. Advisory board meetings generally take place monthly or quarterly, last no more than two hours, and incur minimal board fees.

Business owners who realize the importance of supplementing their skill sets and surrounding themselves with individuals who can “see the forest through the trees” are taking the first steps to successful business management and development.

Copyright © 2007 Terry H. Hill

You may reprint this article free of charge in your newsletter, magazine, or on your website, provided that the article is unedited, and that the copyright, author's bio, and contact information below appears with each article. Articles appearing on the web must provide a hyperlink to the author's web sit