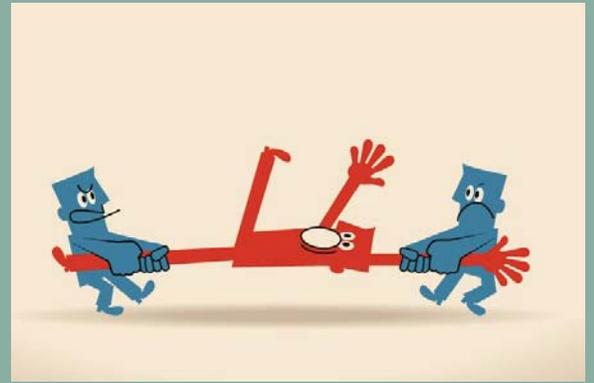


# The War for Talent

The top concern for corporate leaders today is  
**BRAIN DRAIN**



A report released by Deloitte states that over 70% of corporate leaders are highly concerned about retaining critical talent; two-thirds express the same concerns about high-potential employees. As the economy improves and employment opportunities increase, employee turnover is set to accelerate. Average employee turnover rates over the next five years are predicted to rise from 20.6 to 23.4%.\* The increase in employee turnover, along with the shortage of qualified professionals in the engineering and IT industries, is leading to a war for talent.

The shortage of great people is nothing new. Back in 2007 Fast Company published an article titled, “How to Hire the Next Michael Jordan.” The article states, “Great people know that they’re great. They have high expectations for the kind of work they want to do and for the kinds of people they want to work with.” Many of the take-aways in this article still ring true today. And with competition for top talent continuing to increase it is more important than ever to attract, acquire and retain high performers.

An interview with Brightwing’s President George Opitz offers a short lesson on how to combat today’s war on talent.

## Why is the focus on talent so important?

Organizations that take hiring and retaining talent seriously reap the rewards. Highly engaged, quality employees are what differentiate you from your competitors.

Steve Jobs once said, “The difference between using good hardware can be a 2:1 difference for a company. But the

difference between a company with superb programmers vs. average ones is 25:1.” The real secret to success is surrounding yourself with the best people.

**“ Highly engaged, quality employees are what differentiate you from your competitors. ”**

## How do you attract and acquire the best talent?

Take a hard look at your “Employer Brand.” Money generally isn’t the prime motivator, employees are looking for a strong aligned corporate culture, brand recognition and a strong market presence. You must communicate the things that make your organization a great place to work:

- Personal and professional fulfillment
- Work life balance – this does not just mean flex-time, but also how

\*The Hay Group



**“ To Brightwing, hiring someone that possesses all the core values that fit your organization is the most important factor when making hiring decisions. ”**

supportive your company is towards employee's personal endeavors and family obligations

- Growth/advancement opportunities
- The caliber of your current employees, people want to work with other smart and talented people

During the selection process give candidates a preview of what employee engagement looks and feels like at your organization. Think about everything from the job posting description and application process to the first call, interviews and job offer. Does your acquisition process reflect the culture of your company and how you want to be perceived by potential candidates?

**“ Start hiring people whose competencies match the job and match other top performers within the organization. ”**

With the local and national talent shortage it's more important to focus efforts first on a perspective employee's core value match and then skills match.

While you can teach skills and give people experience, you cannot teach core values. Finding people with identical and/or compatible core values that are in line with the mission and goals of your organization is imperative for long term success. I hear hiring managers say all the time, "The employee looked good on paper, but within 5 months we knew we had made a huge mistake." Instead of focusing solely on education, experience and hard skills, start hiring people whose competencies match the job and match other top performers within the organization.

### **How do you retain the best talent and ensure employees continue to perform at their highest level?**

Employee engagement is critical, and again that does start with focusing on the right hires or the "Right Fit" but it doesn't end there. Today according to a number of surveys, a vast majority of employees are disengaged and unhappy with their job. They are either actively searching for new opportunities or not performing at their highest potential for the employer. The 2011 Gallup Employee Engagement Index reported that companies with higher employee engagement have a 3.9x earnings per share growth rate. Employee retention can be broken into 5 main action items:



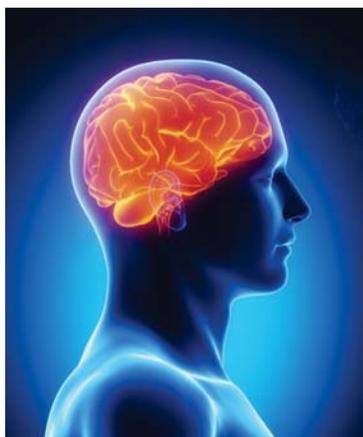
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1. Orientation or the onboarding of new employees. According to the Wynhurst Group, 22% of staff turnover occurs in the first 45 days of employment. However, Wynhurst reports, “New employees who went through a structured onboarding program were 58% more likely to be with the organization after three years.”

2. You must provide employees with ongoing opportunities for growth. Employees who report being less engaged attribute it to a lack of training and/or a lack of career development opportunities (2011 Gallup Employee Engagement Index). Do you have a formal growth plans for each employee that are evaluated on an ongoing basis? At Brightwing we call them ABG (Always Be Growing) plans. Every quarter employees are asked to create a new personal growth plan that can include anything from taking a new class, attending a conference, job shadowing or even getting fit. Career development and succession planning can also make a huge impact.

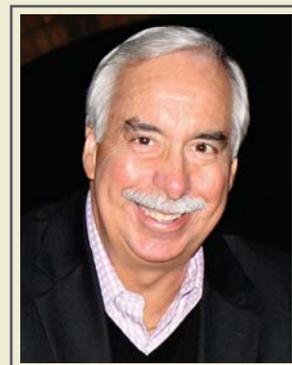
3. Top performers know their worth and expect to be paid accordingly. That does not mean that you need to be aggressively ahead of the market, but you should be competitive.



4. A lot can be done to keep employees happy while keeping costs down. Things like convenient services in the workplace, flex-time, increased paid time off, volunteer time off, tuition assistance, office happy hours, parties and yoga sessions can go a long way.

5. People also want to be recognized for their hard work and have the opportunity to work on projects that really matter.

George Opitz, Brightwing President, is an expert in the recruiting and staffing process as well as delivering organizational alignment, employee engagement and performance management solutions to middle market organizations and second-stage entrepreneurs.



Brightwing is all about creating workplace environments where employees thrive! Brightwing has been named a “Top Small Company Workplace,” by Inc. Magazine, a “Cool Place to Work,” by Crain’s Business, a “101 Best and Brightest Company to Work For,” by the MBPA and Corp! Magazine and a “Best Place to Work,” by Dallas Business Journal. The company represents more than 550 consultants and clients nationwide. Headquartered in Troy, MI, Brightwing has offices in Dallas, TX, and Weston, FL. To discover the Brightwing difference, visit [www.gobrightwing.com](http://www.gobrightwing.com).

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