

## 7 Talent Tips for a Better Talent Alliance

### Think about your employer-employee relationships as an alliance

Talent management in the 21st century is a whole new game. Lifetime employment no longer exists, technological advancements make competition fierce, and trust between employers and employees is at an all-time low.

The companies that will thrive in this new age are those willing to invest in a new kind of relationship with employees—an alliance where employees are told, “Make our company more valuable and we’ll in turn make you more valuable.”

#### 1. Move from thinking about company as family to company as team

Families are committed for life, whereas employees are committed to specific, finite assignments. Instead of aiming to keep employees around forever, recognize that your employees are like talented players who contribute and add value to the team, but will eventually move on. And that can be beneficial to both parties.

- Think of your company as a sports team, where players come together to win championships and move onto other teams when new opportunities arise.
- Recruit, develop, and retain entrepreneurial talent that will help your company adapt in an increasingly competitive environment.

#### 2. Treat employees like they are on a tour of duty within your company

A “tour of duty” is a borrowed military phrase that refers to a single specific assignment or deployment. When used in the context of work, a “tour of duty” is a way for an employee to fulfill a specific project for a defined period of time.

There are three types of tours of duty:

- **Rotational Tour:** Best for entry-level employees to learn varying functions, learn about the business, and help them find a fitting job.
- **Transformational Tour:** A way for employees to transform both their career and the company with projects aligned with personal goals, objectives, and timelines.
- **Foundational Tour:** Suited to attract, develop, and retain top executives and board members who feel deeply aligned with the company’s values and mission and are in it for the long-term.

#### 3. Build alignment for different tours of duty

Make sure you have alignment from all business stakeholders before you send employees on their tours of duty.

- Executives must establish and disseminate the company’s core mission and values.
- Managers must learn each employee’s core aspirations and values.
- Managers should lead honest conversations with employees to align their goals with the company’s.

#### 4. Implement tours of duty using these techniques

Start the conversation by defining the employee’s overall objective or project, success metrics, and a realistic time horizon for completion.

- Set up regular checkpoints to exchange feedback with employees (i.e. bi-weekly, monthly).
- Define the next tour of duty before the current one ends to remove uncertainty and provide something to look forward to.
- Discuss employee departure honestly and help them transition into their next opportunity. Discuss a transition checklist, confirm who will take the baton, and establish the time horizon.

## 5. Manage through unexpected hurdles

Layoffs and abrupt employee departures happen, but it's important to treat these situations with caution, as they can hurt company and employee credibility, respectively.

- Revisit the goals of the employee's tour of duty when a new manager steps in. See what needs to change, if anything, and commit to realigning any changes with the employee's goals and aspirations.
- Remember that it's a relationship—one bad game is different than a month-long slump. Relieve your employee from a game before you trade them from your team.
- If an employee wants to do a lateral move, help them transition from your team and set them up to succeed on their next mission.

## 6. Invest in employee network intelligence programs

Employee networks are an important source of information for companies, so teach employees how to mine information from their networks via live conversations and social media. Help employees build their networks and enhance their personal brand, thereby enhancing the company's brand.

- Create a networking and conference fund for employees
- Encourage employees to speak at events
- Host events at your company's office
- Ask employees to share what they learn from events with the team

## 7. Create a network of corporate alumni

There are four main reasons why companies should invest in growing their alumni network.

Include ex-employees in your alumni network, or simply create a "distinguished" alumni group. Define the expectations and benefits of the relationship (i.e. alumni referral bonuses, product discounts, whitelist access, alumni events, updates & information).

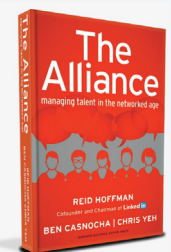
- Alumni refer new hires
- Alumni provide external perspectives and intelligence
- Alumni refer customers
- Alumni are brand ambassadors

## Four steps to attract, develop, and retain great employees, tomorrow!

- ✓ Ensure your company's core values are clearly displayed on your LinkedIn Career Page so your employer brand attracts the right candidates.
- ✓ Teach employees to list the correct company, industry, and job titles and include a professional photo in their LinkedIn profiles so they are searchable by customers, suppliers, and future employees. Include a LinkedIn profile checklist in your next internal communication with employees.
- ✓ Encourage employees to connect with one another and others outside the company. For example, employees at Hubspot have 5.2X higher number of average connections and share, comment, or like updates at 8X the average rate. Hubspot attracts 2X the average number of candidates for jobs and has 18X more followers than the average company!
- ✓ Create a company alumni group on LinkedIn that your former employees can join to receive updates, discounts, and reunion event invitations.

### The Alliance: Managing talent in the networked age

Strategies for employers to rebuild trust and loyalty through healthy employment alliances.



**Reid Hoffman**  
Co-founder & Chairman of LinkedIn



**Ben Casnocha**  
Entrepreneur & Author



**Chris Yeh**  
Writer & Investor

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