

## Developing Your Human Resources Capacity

By Andrew Leach, MBA

Does your organization lack qualified personnel? Here are three practical tips to develop human resources (HR) capacity.

### Tip #1: Get Good Managers

Having good managers makes everyone's job easier. Not having them will lead to lots of problems. So, first and foremost, hire good managers.

Finding good managers is easier said than done. It involves many steps: recruiting, screening, interviewing, selecting and hiring. And each step has potential pitfalls. For example, recruiting from too shallow a pool and developing poor interview questions are two common mistakes employers make.

Are you in a situation where you feel stuck with a few weak managers or employees? If so, keep reading the next two steps below.

### Tip #2: Combine Training and Work

One common mistake is to throw lots of money into training and expect to solve all of your HR problems. Remember training is the start, not the finish. In reality, most people develop skills best through a combination of training and practical experience. And the best place to develop practical experience is on the job.

For example, consider the employee who just completed introductory supervisor training. Here are some possible on-the-job projects that could complement her training:

- Review and make recommendations on updating your personnel policy
- Develop and participate in an employee evaluation
- Participate in recruiting, hiring and orienting a new employee

Maybe you don't have any new projects for staff to work on. Not a problem. Create a project! The project should be challenging, doable and add value to your organization. For example, don't create a project that only involves inputting data for three weeks straight. Rather, develop on-the-job projects that will develop a variety of skills.



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### Tip #3: Evaluate, Evaluate, Evaluate!

Evaluating human resources is often extremely challenging, especially for Aboriginal organizations. This is because Aboriginals often have close personal relations with their coworkers. For example, in many Band offices it is not uncommon to have a close relative as your boss or subordinate. Can you imagine trying to evaluate or discipline your spouse, and then going home together? Good luck!

My experience is that many Band managers dread conducting employee evaluations. However, by not conducting evaluations, supervisors miss an excellent opportunity to develop HR capacity.

There are a variety of employee evaluation tools for supervisors. Some may be useful; others are not. Remember, any evaluation system is only as good as the people who execute it. So make sure your supervisors have the capacity to evaluate.

In summary, developing human resource capacity is probably the most important job facing Aboriginal leaders and managers. To be successful, you need to have both good HR systems and good people.



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