



The Advisory Alliance 60-Second Email™

Are You Paying the Price for Your Slow Burn?

September 29, 2010

In this month's 60-Second Email™, we discuss how the economic crisis has delivered both just desserts and tough medicine to leaders.

Nothing like an economic crisis to bring latent leadership issues to the forefront.

If you were grooming and "weeding" your people during the good times, chances are you're doing better than other leaders during these challenging times.

If you weren't focused on the quality of your people during the good times, changes are your suffering extra now.

As companies have pared back on staffing levels, leaders have assumed greater responsibility and taken on more work. The same is true for their staff: fewer people, more work.

For those leaders who tended to their talent during the good times, they've seen their people rise to the challenge.

For those leaders who didn't, they've seen their own stress levels rocket. Plus, they have the extra problem of trying to develop their people while simultaneously getting them to do more. Or if all hope is lost, they must now replace the people who can't rise to the challenge, disrupting their operations and customers, and adding even more stress to their life as a leader.

Neglecting talent during the good times is a slow burn problem waiting to erupt. Sure, there may be signs of lower than ideal morale levels or higher than desired turnover levels, but good times and good profits have a tendency to cover up a multitude of sins, and facilitate significant denial and self-delusion.



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It's only when the bottom falls out or drops dramatically that the latent consequences are manifest in all their wretched glory.

So it's time to take stock of your talent and of your leadership. To paraphrase the late night news: It's the 11th hour, and do you know where your talent is?

If you don't, it's time to get busy. Invest the extra time now, and begin to develop and weed your people. And don't abandon it when the good times return. (All ant and grasshopper fable metaphors apply.) For those that may complain about the extra time required, I truly don't know any other way around it. It's making up for lost time, time that needs to be replaced now.

If you do know where your talent is, and have remained focused on it throughout, consider your relative peace of mind (notwithstanding the economic tumult) your received dividend for your forethought, diligence, and commitment.

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Do you know where your talent is? Share your thoughts with other readers on our [blog](#).

You can access all of our 60-Second Emails (TM), including the most recent issue, *Real Leaders Don't Watch Movies*, via this [link](#).

Until next month,

*David*

David Harper, Managing Principal  
[dharp@advisoryalliance.com](mailto:dharp@advisoryalliance.com)

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