

# CHARLOTTE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Executive Coaching

## Are you growing talent as aggressively as bottom line?

Charlotte Business Journal -  
by [Joan Wright](#)

Editor's note: This is the first of a series of columns on leadership and talent management strategies by five Charlotte-area leadership development consultants.

While you can't be certain about today's economy, two things do remain constant:

Growing your people (your talent portfolio) is just as important as increasing your bottom line;

Building the capacity of your people is the way to generate the financial results you're looking for.

Current economic times have rattled even the best business leaders. Fear, confusion and lack of focus have a way of creeping into the psyche and the individuals and the teams you lead. This cloud of self-doubt is something Steven Pressfield refers to in his mystical golf tale, *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, as a loss of our "authentic swing".

Finding that swing again for you and your people is lot easier than one would think. Most encouraging for you as a leader, this process can be very profound, rewarding and actually make a difference to your bottom line and the customers you serve.

To begin your journey back, consider the following key messages about talent management strategies:

1. As a leader, you must juggle the paradox of results and relationships. It is essential as a leader to build in time with your people to involve them in your results strategies. Further, people need to be given room to negotiate when and how something gets done.

You can expect a dramatic shift in how well and quickly a project assignment is accomplished when a staff member and leader envision together the results and how this assignment will get done. Sharing ownership and accountability works to develop both the relationship and manage the results.

2. Each of us has unique talents and they need to be tapped daily. Each of us is conscious of what we do best. We understand how our talents are wired and can see the patterns we create to problem solve. We also feel exhilaration when we make something big happen. As Bagger Vance would say, this is your authentic swing.

Two resources for discovering your unique talents and how to get them used daily can be found in the following books: *The Conative Connection: Uncovering the Link Between Who You Are And How You Perform*, by Kathy Kolbe and Gallup's *NOW, Discovery Your Strengths*, by Marcus Buckingham and Donald Clifton, Ph.D. To take an online talent assessment, visit <http://www.Kolbe.com> or <http://www.strengthsfinder.com>.

3. Face Time is the currency for investing in your people. How are you spending your time with the members of your organization? If you are a leader who is truly managing your talent strategically and as aggressively as your bottom line, you spend time with your high potentials.

Here are some thought-provoking questions to ask that can help you realize the full potential of the members in your organization:

What would really ignite your career now and down the road?

Are you feeling challenged in what you are doing?

What activity would provide more interest and challenge?

What about this company (department) excites you? What is getting in the way?

What would make your job more productive?

Do you feel valued for your accomplishments?

What can I do to support your success?

What keeps you here? What would cause you to leave?

For further ideas on leadership and talent management strategies, look for the rest of the columns in this series.

*Joan Wright is principal of O'Sullivan Wright Consulting, a Charlotte-based firm specializing in executive coaching, leadership development and talent management.*