

STRATEGY # 3: MAKE YOUR PEOPLE YOUR BRAND

PART 3

Early in my career I thought that a strong brand was the most important thing an organization could have. Many people think of a brand in terms of a product or logo, but I soon discovered that in reality, your *people* are your brand. No matter how good your products and services are, you can't achieve true excellence unless you attract great people, develop great people, and keep great people.

6. Find a good fit. I vow to consider “team chemistry” in every hiring decision I make. In trying to match the candidate's personality with the organizational culture, I turned away many qualified people because they did not have the relationship skills or political sensitivity for a particular environment. My colleagues and I knew that managers and executives who liked being Lone Rangers would not go over well in Disney's team-oriented culture. Candidates who seemed to need. Bottom line: Your organization's culture is the product of the people in it, and every addition and subtraction will alter the chemistry. Do everything you can to keep it harmonious.

7. Hire people that are smarter and more talented than you. No matter how smart or talented you are, there will always be someone who is better than you in at least one important aspect of your work. Insecure leaders run from these people; great leaders seek them out. Let's face it, being in the presence of exceptional talent can be profoundly inspiring, but it can also arouse feeling of resentment and envy. Great leaders don't let personal insecurities get in the way of success. Rather than be afraid to be outshone by a subordinate with exceptional talent, they're proud to be known for recognizing and hiring outstanding talent. I know I owe much of my success to the fact that virtually every person who worked for me was a whole lot better at certain things than I was. Hire the absolute best. Their brilliance will not diminish your reputation; it will make you shine even brighter.

8. Describe the job completely. Candidates should know exactly what they'll be signing up for if they join your organization. You owe it to them, and to your company, to provide every detail about the responsibility, authority, and accountability they'll have if hired and to give them a good sense of the company culture. At the Disney hiring center, a video is shown to all potential hires before they are interviewed. The movie highlights the Disney heritage and traditions; provides an overview of the compensation plan, benefit package, and perks. It also outlines what the company expects by way of professionalism, right down to the strict grooming standards that Cast Members are held to. Some applicants get up and leave without bothering with the interview. The film not only serves as a great orientation for eventual employees but also saves the company the high cost of hiring, training, and replacing people who would ultimately prove to be wrong for the job. What are your standards? Exactly what is expected of your employees? Make sure every applicant gets the full picture before either of you makes a decision you might come to regret.

“Never let a day pass without looking for the good, feeling the good within you, praising, appreciating, blessing, and being grateful. Make it your life commitment, and you will stand in utter awe of what happens in your life.”

Rhonda Byrne

“It's really a wonder that I haven't dropped all my ideals, because they seem so absurd and impossible to carry out. Yet I keep them, because in spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart.”

Anne Frank

“You may say I'm a dreamer, but I'm not the only one. I hope someday you'll join us. And the world will live as one.”

John Lennon