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Talent Management in a South African Non-Profit Organisation

Carolyn Awuor Awitty

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration

Johannesburg, 2010

ABSTRACT

Effective talent management within an organisation will simultaneously facilitate the identification and successful nurturing of those individuals who have historically been identified as the enhancers and differentiators of all organisational value, high corporate performance, and sustainable competitive advantage. Given this context of the critical and strategic value of any organisation's talent, the purpose of this research was to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African non-profit organisation and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives.

A single case study was conducted at Right to Care yielding results on the organisation's recruiting, developing, managing and retaining of suitable talent. The specific activities that constitute the talent management practices at Right to Care were compiled and results from twenty-four interviews were analysed and evaluated against the theory findings from the literature review.

The case study findings indicate that Right to Care applies effective talent management processes and has not only identified but also invests in the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives. The elements of talent management identified through this study are defined in the report and illustrated in Figure 17. The fundamental factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives are suggested in Table 14 along with recommendations to non-profit organisations management and workforce. Recommendations are also suggested to the Right to Care management and staff on the basis of the research findings.

To achieve extraordinary organisational performance and sustain a source of enduring competitive advantage for the organisation, the key message from this study is that non-profit organisations require excellent talent management which has to begin with the leadership and then filter through the entire organisation.

DECLARATION

I, Carolyn Awuor Awitty, declare that this research report is my own work except as indicated in the references and acknowledgements. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Business Administration at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at this or any other university.

Carolyn Awuor Awitty

Signed at ……

On the …….. day of …… 2010

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Most importantly, I would like to thank my sister Pauline who made this entire process possible. I will be eternally grateful to you dear sis for your love, support, encouragement, understanding, and for being there for me throughout the duration of the MBA programme. To my brothers Raymond and Tony, thank you for your unconditional support and patience through the long days and nights. I would also like to extend my sincere gratitude to:

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African non-profit organisation and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives.

1.2 Background to the research problem

Employee performance and the cumulative quality of an organisation's workforce have conventionally been considered the preserve of human resources professionals (HR). However, changing demographics, globalisation, and digitisation (Boudreau and Ramstad 2005; Guthridge, Komm and Lawson 2006) have resulted in the evolution of talent and intellectual capital emerging to take a pivotal position for any organisation intent on pursuing maximum success and sustainable competitive advantage (Ulrich 1998; Heinen and O'Neill 2004).

Consequently, the vital importance of talent management can be described as the organisation's ability to attract, develop, manage, and maintain suitable employees (Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Heinen and O'Neill 2004). Talent management has become the single most important force, and the strategic driver for creating organisational value and enhancing corporate performance (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007).

Despite the recognition of the important role that talent plays in organisational success, few organisations are strategically managing their talent (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). The HR function is critical for effective talent management but best practices involve a crucial connection between core business management processes and talent management processes (Boudreau and Ramstad 2005; Guthridge, Komm and Lawson 2006). Ideally, this begins with all leaders up and down the line embracing a talent mindset and developing a talent culture throughout the

organisation. People cease being the responsibility of HR and the organisation invests in building distinctive talent management capabilities to produce extraordinary performance and sustain competitive advantage (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Ready and Conger 2007).

1.3 Problem history

South African (SA) organisations are experiencing debilitating skills shortages due to the apartheid legacy of unequal education, the emigration of skilled people and the employment equity requirements (Crush 2002; Kingdon and Knight 2007; Kock and Burke 2008). Although aspects of the limitation of skilled workers are unique to SA, organisations worldwide grapple similarly with the task of accessing and managing the talent they require (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; McCauley and Wakefield 2006).

As a result, organisations are engaged in competing for talent in what is called the "war for talent" (Johnson 2000; Axelrod, Handfield-Jones and Welsh 2001; Doyle 2001; Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Rynes 2001; Tulgan 2001; Dwivedi and Bali 2002; Hay 2002; Teare 2002; Sturman, Trevor, Boudreau and Gerhart 2003; Gandossy and Kao 2004). According to Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008), this "war for talent" is not enough for competing effectively or creating lasting competitive advantage. Their research points to the necessity of transforming the organisation into a "Talent Powered Organisation" (TPO) (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:10) as the secret to sustained competitive success. A TPO is an organisation which excellently manages its talent force and develops all the skills it requires to manage talent well, thereby maintaining lasting and growing competitive advantage.

Good governance is important and necessary for all entities regardless of their structures, operations, and reasons for existence (King 2006). Non-Profit Organisations (NPOs) are those aspects of society that extend beyond the realm of the public sector and the private sector and are commonly referred to as Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) (Charlton and May 1995; Lewis 1998; Smith 2000; Teegen, Doh and Vachani 2004; Paralegals and advice

offices 2009). In SA, non-profit organisations are defined under the 1997 Non-Profit Organisations Act as a "not-for-profit company" or "association incorporated not for gain" (Paralegals and advice offices: 606 2009).

Any surplus within non-profit organisations is not used for enriching the shareholders or owners but is reinvested to advance the organisation's purpose (Eadie 2001; Hopkins 2003). Non-profit organisations are typically characterised by a philanthropic instinct and are sometimes driven by volunteers who not only believe in the NPO missions but are also willing to give of their time and money on an on-going basis (Charlton and May 1995; Lewis 1998; Smith 2000; Teegen, Doh and Vachani 2004). The researcher who has had six years of working in this field has observed that employee motivation and drive for accomplishing NPO objectives tend to be high. However, the skilful care and nurturing of the people who fulfil NPO mandates exceptionally well is lacking. This phenomenon leads to the research question of an NPO's ability to successfully foster the skills necessary for managing its talent force and achieving the rewards of maximum organisation success and lasting competitive advantage.

1.4 Impact of the current financial crisis on the problem

The majority of non-profit organisations work among the poorest and under-served communities who will suffer the most as this economic downturn adversely affects several non-profit organisations. Grants have been reduced or withdrawn by NGO funders, companies have cut down on their Corporate Social Investments (CSI), and even individuals have either halted or reduced their donations (The Non-Profit Quarterly 2008; National Council of Non-profits 2009; The South African Civil Society Information Service 2009). The effects of this financial crisis are further worsened by the fact that it severely impacted the final quarter of the year and the holiday season when several NGOs hold their major year-end fundraising efforts in a bid to gain from the generous and benevolent spirit that the season tends to bring out in most people (The Non-Profit Quarterly 2008; Washington Post 2008; National Council of Non-profits 2009; The South African Civil Society Information Service 2009).

As a result of the decrease in cash flow, NGOs have reduced employee numbers, cut down on hours of operation, halted some of their projects, and even reduced employee benefits as part of their survival initiatives to avoid failing due to their currently dwindling resources and, in some cases, non-existent income or funds. There is, however, a recurring opinion of the importance of continued NGO operations especially as the numbers of affected and needy people grow with job losses and other adverse effects of the financial crisis (New York Times 2008; Washington Post 2008; Herald Tribune 2009; The South African Civil Society Information Service 2009).

The organisation chosen for the purposes of this study is one that is funded chiefly by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), specifically, United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR Funds) which is America's initiative to combat the global HIV/AIDS pandemic. This organisation does not experience the funding shortages that sometimes plague other NGOs. Consequently, the organisation used for this research will not be forced to abandon any of its planned projects, or employ any of the aforementioned survival measures as the monies required for PEPFAR-partnered funding have not only been budgeted for, but are also pledged through to the financial year 2013 (The U.S. President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief – PEPFAR 2009). Therefore, the past, present, and future talent management practices of the NGO chosen for the study of this problem will not, in the short-term, be affected by the current global financial crisis.

1.5 Problem statement

1.5.1 *Main problem*

The purpose of this research is to analyse how non-profit organisations apply talent management processes and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives.

Given that talent management is documented to be crucial for creating value and sustainable competitive advantage for organisations, the research delves to

appraise a non-profit organisation's talent management strategy and its ability to effectively recruit, educate and develop, manage performance, retain, and succession plan for a suitable workforce to produce extraordinary corporate performance.

1.5.2 *Sub-problems*

The research problem is broken down into five distinct sub-problems:

- The first sub-problem is to establish the organisation's definition of talent and subsequent talent management strategy.
- The second sub-problem is to analyse the organisation's ability to attract and hire individuals who have the skills and attributes they require or would like to develop.
- The third sub-problem is to evaluate the training and development of people within the organisation.
- The fourth sub-problem is to assess the effectiveness of the organisation's performance management.
- The fifth sub-problem is to appraise the success of the organisation's long-term employee retention and succession planning.

1.6 Significance of the study

Different researchers describe NPOs as civil society organisations which are not part of the government and do not operate specifically to make profits or enrich shareholders. Non-profit organisations typically have some public purpose within the non-profit sector that extends beyond serving the personal interests of the NPO members (Charlton and May 1995; Lewis 1998; Smith 2000; Swilling and Russell 2002; Teegen, Doh and Vachani 2004).

The South African non-profit sector is a comparatively larger sector than the average in most developed countries (Swilling and Russell 2002). It is a major

employer and has been recorded to employ more people than most major economic sectors in SA. Despite this, by 2002 there was, astonishingly, not one Masters or Honours teaching programme in SA designed specifically for guiding graduates on the non-profit sector (Swilling and Russell 2002). A widening of conceptual horizons on the non-profit sector in SA is therefore deemed of great necessity especially on the academic front (Swilling and Russell 2002). Furthermore, a search using Google Scholar on the 7th of January 2009 did not yield a single scholarly article with a title on, or relating to, people management within South African non-profit organisations.

A serious problem described by Habib (2002) and documented by Swilling and Russell (2002) in their book "The Size and Scope of the Non-profit Sector in South Africa" arises from the fact that most leaders of NGOs would attest to the fact that the bulk of employees entering the sector were not suitably trained to function efficiently in these organisations.

The study will provide guidance to leaders, employees and graduate students involved or interested in the people management aspect within non-profit organisations. The research will add to the body of knowledge focused on addressing, directing and guiding excellent talent management practices within organisations in general while analysing successful talent management practices in a South African non-profit organisation and giving guidance to NGOs seeking to improve or excel in their talent management functions.

1.7 Definition of terms

1.7.1 *Definition of talent*

The basic definition of talent as given by Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod (2001) in their book "The War for Talent" is:

> "Talent is the sum of a person's abilities – his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgement, attitude, character, and drive." (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001: xii)

The term “talent” for the purposes of this research is used comprehensively to refer to high-performing employees whose contributions are vital to the organisation’s exceptional performance (Morton 2004).

The nature of work today has shifted away from reliance on manual work towards an economy based primarily on adding value through processing existing knowledge to create new information for defining and solving problems. As far back as 1959, the term “knowledge workers” (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:41) was coined by Drucker (1959) to describe the people who perform the knowledge work. He cited as examples managers, lawyers, doctors, diplomats, bankers, marketing experts, law makers, and generally work which might reflect a bias towards people with specific professional skills (Davenport, Thomas and Cantrell 2002). Davenport (2005:10) describes “knowledge workers” as individuals who “think for a living”. Knowledge workers are defined as the cerebral skills responsible for an organisation’s growth as well as the greatest determinant of an organisation’s worth (Martel 2003; Davenport 2005; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). Knowledge workers are therefore included in this study to refer to talent.

Talent are employees whose performance is above average and who, consequently, should be managed with particular care because they do a lot for the organisation (Peters and Smith 1996; Pollitt 2004). In business, talent encapsulates all the various attributes that people have and bring to work as well as their ability to learn and grow (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). Although talent management is crucial to the organisation holistically, the study focuses on the strata of employees whom management should pay special attention to so as to attain sustainable unique organisation performance.

1.7.2 *Definition of non-profit organisations*

The term Non-Profit Organisation (NPO) is used in the report to refer to any organisation registered as a “not-for-profit company” or “association incorporated not for gain”. Non-profit organisations are also commonly known as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) and collectively form the non-profit

sector that extends beyond the realm of the public sector and the private sector. The two terms are used interchangeably in the study to refer to civil societies that are not part of the government (Charlton and May 1995; Lewis 1998; Smith 2000; Teegen, Doh and Vachani 2004; Paralegals and advice offices 2009).

In South Africa, non-profit organisations are defined under the 1997 Non-Profit Organisations Act. The act provides for the voluntary registration of a non-profit organisation under Section 21 of the Companies Act as a “not-for-profit company” or “association incorporated not for gain” (Paralegals and advice offices: 606 2009).

1.8 Delimitations of the study

Although the report analyses comprehensive talent management practices suitable for all organisations, it does not appraise their application within all aspects of the South African non-profit sector. The study of the effectiveness of these talent management practices was focused on and limited to a humanitarian developmental NGO in South Africa. The use of a single case study yielded results that may not be representative of other NGOs.

1.9 Assumptions

When gathering information for the study, the researcher assumed that all interviewees within the NGO would give honest and accurate responses with regard to the organisation’s talent management.

The talent management paradigm presented by Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008) was assumed to provide a sound talent management framework to assess the management of talent in the organisation studied. The framework is further elaborated on in chapter 2 of this report.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The history and development of talent management

The advent of the industrial revolution and the ensuing market expansion of the late 1800s led to the creation of staff departments and the birth of a form of structured personnel control resulting from the evolution of a practice of free choice employment. Prior to this, indentured servant hood, slavery, and small businesses characterised by compulsory labour were at the centre of most commercial activities (Hinrichs 1966; Langbert 2002). The personnel control function became the founding pillar for modern-day human resource management and is identified as the first of the three progressive talent management approaches illustrated by Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008:84) in Figure 1 following.

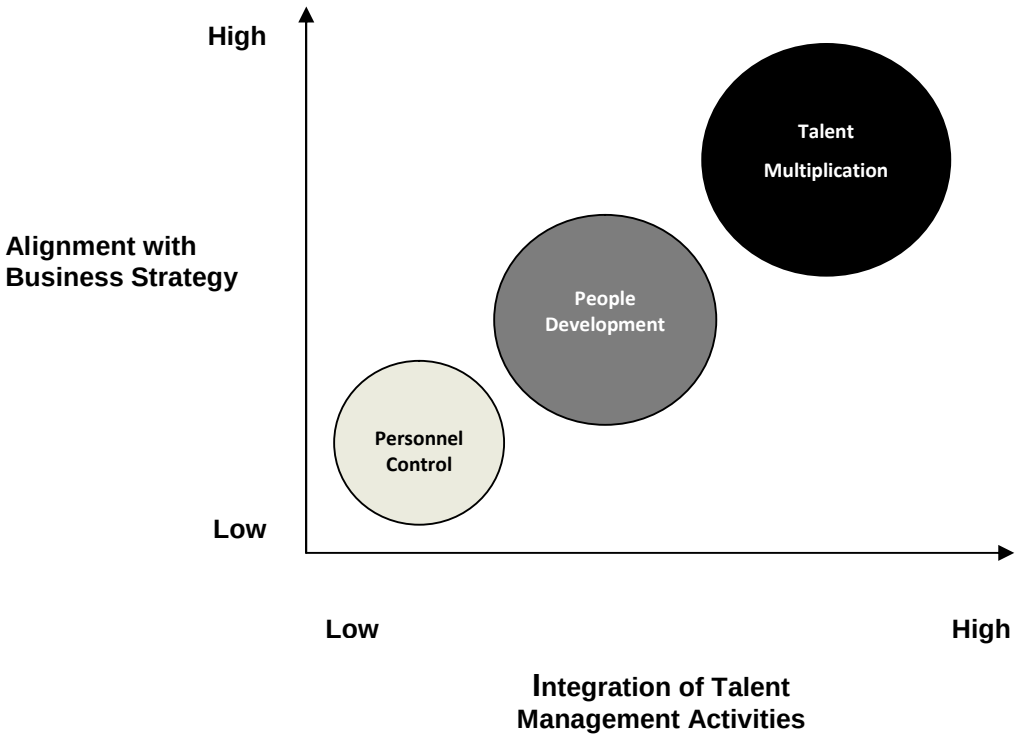


Figure 1: The evolution of talent management models (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:84)

The new personnel control department was initially formed to recruit the multitudes required to work the machines in the then developing industrial age. Personnel work was considered a minor organisation function to be tolerated and was operated on a trial-and-error basis. Employees were regarded as parts to be used in the production process while the personnel control was considered to consist of inventory clerks who monitored the growing stock of employee records (Hinrichs 1966; Fitz-enz 1984). An attitude also formed over this period that viewed labour as an adversary to management due to the increasing influence of trade unions (Hinrichs 1966; Fitz-enz 1984; Langbert 2002). Following the personnel control stage, the 1960s and 1970s saw the evolution and diversification of labour resulting from myriad social changes as well as the baby boom of the late 1940s and early 1950s (Fitz-enz 1984; Langbert 2002). The human resource function employed a system of internal talent development that focused on management development practices which were unable to address the increasing uncertainties of the marketplace and as a result collapsed in the 1970s. Consequently, formal human resource management practices have a relatively short history (Fitz-enz 1984; Langbert 2002). HR in the latter years of the twentieth century went through a period of learning via experimentation by gradually focusing on developing people and managing their performance. However, these processes, which Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008) identify as the people development stage, were not really integrated to any organisational goals and seemed more like tick-box exercises to justify rewards or penalties (Frank and Taylor 2004; Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Cappelli 2008).

"Talent multiplication" (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:57) has grown from the realisation that talent is an essential part of business strategy and a valuable asset to the organisation. Consequently, talent management becomes of high importance within the organisation and should be tracked at every level of business strategy across the organisation with HR playing an important support role and not seen as the sole custodians of talent management activities.

Successful talent management hinges on the organisation's ability to effectively link talent strategy to the organisation's business strategy, and perform the

talent management vitals of discovering talent, developing talent, deploying talent, motivating and energising talent, and retaining talent to achieve the organisation's goals (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). These elements of talent management form the following topics to be reviewed from the literature:

2.1 Talent management as a strategic business priority

2.2 Attracting and recruiting talent

2.3 The training and development of talent

2.4 Managing talent performance

2.5 Talent retention

Effective talent management becomes even more important in the face of increased global competition, demographic changes, deregulation, the expected global talent shortage as experienced leaders approach retirement, and in South Africa, the ongoing skills crisis (Crush 2002; Frank and Taylor 2004; Guthridge, Komm and Lawson 2006; McCauley and Wakefield 2006; Kock and Burke 2008).

2.2 Talent management as a strategic business priority

Talent management as defined in the literature today does not exist to simply develop employees or create succession plans. Its purpose is to support the organisation's overall objectives, produce extraordinary results for the organisation, and provide a source of enduring competitive advantages for the organisation (Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Cappelli 2008). Organisations that are successful in their talent management view it as a critical business activity and a developing strategic priority. Talent management is not relegated as an administrative HR task but is linked to organisation strategic planning processes as a key organisational capability. Such organisations consider existing as well as expected business challenges and forecast their talent needs accordingly (Ridderstrale and Nordstrom 2002; Heinen and O'Neill 2004).

Cappelli (2008) in his article “Talent Management for the Twenty-First Century” goes a step further and proposes the development of a “talent-on-demand framework” (Cappelli 2008:77) based on similar innovative approaches as the just-in-time (JIT) process within supply chain manufacturing. The feasibility of this proposal is beyond the scope of this research but, for organisations already linking their business strategy and their talent strategy, the process followed breaks down into six ongoing steps (Heinen and O’Neill 2004:71) reproduced in Figure 2.

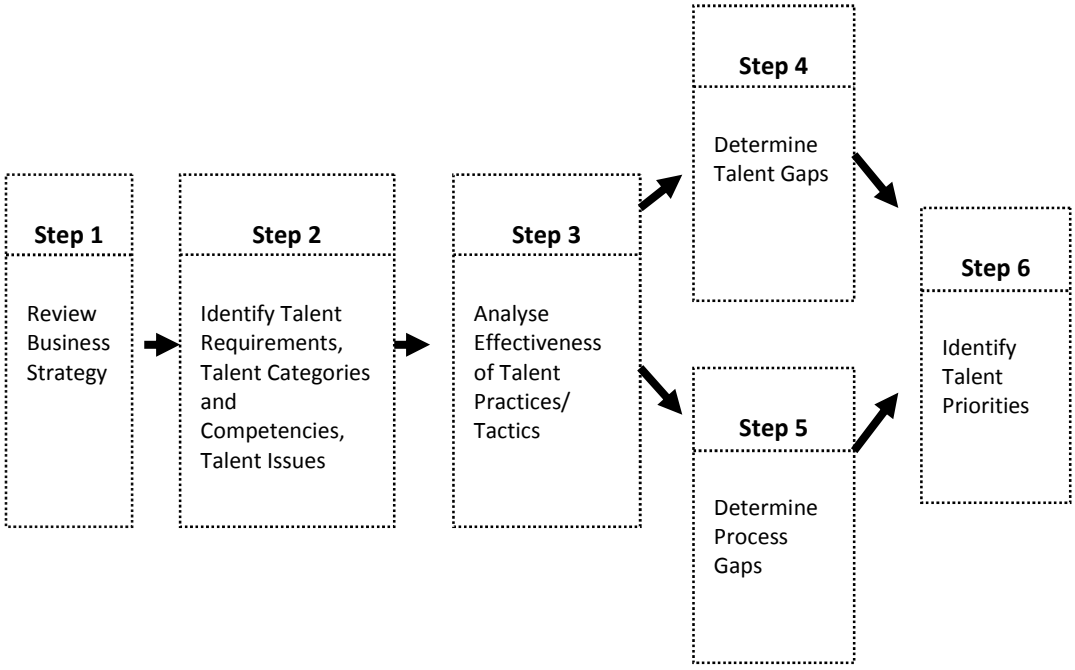


Figure 2: Linkage of talent strategy to business strategy (Heinen and O’Neill 2004:71)

The steps in Figure 2 form the linkage of the organisation’s talent strategy to the organisation’s crafted or adopted business strategy. Connecting talent strategy to business strategy begins with an annual review of the organisation’s objectives and long-term strategy to pinpoint areas where the skills necessary for success need to be addressed in both the short and the long term. Once talent needs have been identified, a thorough assessment is required to ascertain the adequacy of the current talent practices in supporting the business strategy (Heinen and O’Neill 2004). This analysis should lead to the

identification of talent gaps and process issues. Talent gaps provide a projection of the head count of critical talent that an organisation requires for sustaining or developing high performance (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). The process gaps define the effectiveness of the organisation's talent management practices to facilitate the successful filling of the talent gaps (Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). The outcome of these steps will set the topics for the ensuing talent review discussions and identify both talent categories and practices that need attention and improvement (Heinen and O'Neill 2004).

2.2.1 *The challenge of talent management in the organisation*

Issues pertaining to talent management have risen to the top of executives' business concerns and retain this key position to date (Cappelli 2008). This task of talent management has become even more turbulent and complicated following the advent of talent winning the famous global "war for talent" and becoming the predominant currency for an organisation to escape business as usual and be unique (Ridderstrale and Nordstrom 2002).

Central to an organisation's success is its ability to build a strong pool of talent. However, most leaders are unaware that they hold talent-building levers in their hands and that though HR is a key enabler in the process, talent management is ideally everyone's concern in the organisation. An organisation's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) should personally drive the planning and development of the organisation's talent, and be the ultimate owner of the talent management system (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001; Heinen and O'Neill 2004).

The basics of talent management as described by Morton (2004) are to have a full understanding of talent within an organisation and develop a talent mindset. Some organisations focus on their leadership as talent while others include high-potential employees in their approach. Ideally, talent should be defined at all levels of the organisation (Peters and Smith 1996; Morton 2004; Pollitt 2004).

> "Talent: Individuals who have the capability to make a significant difference to the current and future performance of the company." (Morton 2004:3)

Once the critical issue of talent definition has been established, effective and sustainable talent management begins with senior leaders developing a talent mindset. This is essential because the real barriers to talent management are formed and set in the mind (Morton 2004; Guthridge, Komm and Lawson 2006). A talent mindset is the fundamental belief in the importance of better talent and management of that talent at all levels of the organisation to produce extraordinary results and outperform competitors (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001; McCauley and Wakefield 2006). Such a mindset goes beyond the mantra of people being the most important assets in the organisation to meaning it and acting accordingly on it (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

The management team of an organisation from the CEO to the first line supervisor will collectively make or break talent management within their organisation (Guthridge, Komm and Lawson 2006; McCauley and Wakefield 2006). Reid and Crisp (2007) argue this point by quoting an old truism: "People don't leave companies, they leave bosses" (Reid and Crisp 2007:1). Employees can overcome obstacles and achieve exceptional results if they are managed well, challenged, and afforded appropriate support (Reid and Crisp 2007).

2.2.2 *Sustainable principles of talent management*

Along with effectively linking talent strategy to the organisation's business strategy, the organisation also needs to develop sustainable talent management practices (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). The concepts of talent management as defined by several authors include attracting top talent, strategic recruiting of the right fit, emphasising employee training and development, engaging well-performing employees, effectively managing performance, retaining talented employees, succession planning, and continuous reviewing of the entire talent pool (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and

Axelrod 2001; Frank and Taylor 2004; Heinen and O'Neill 2004; McCauley and Wakefield 2006; Ready and Conger 2007; Reid and Crisp 2007).

The basis for integrating talent management from recruitment to development to performance management and ultimately to retention lies within the organisation's understanding and appreciation of the set of skills, knowledge and attributes required for excellent organisation performance (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). The comprehension of the crucial competencies required within the organisation facilitates the development of a competency framework that directs the managing of talent as illustrated Figure 3 detailing the Competency processes (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:92)

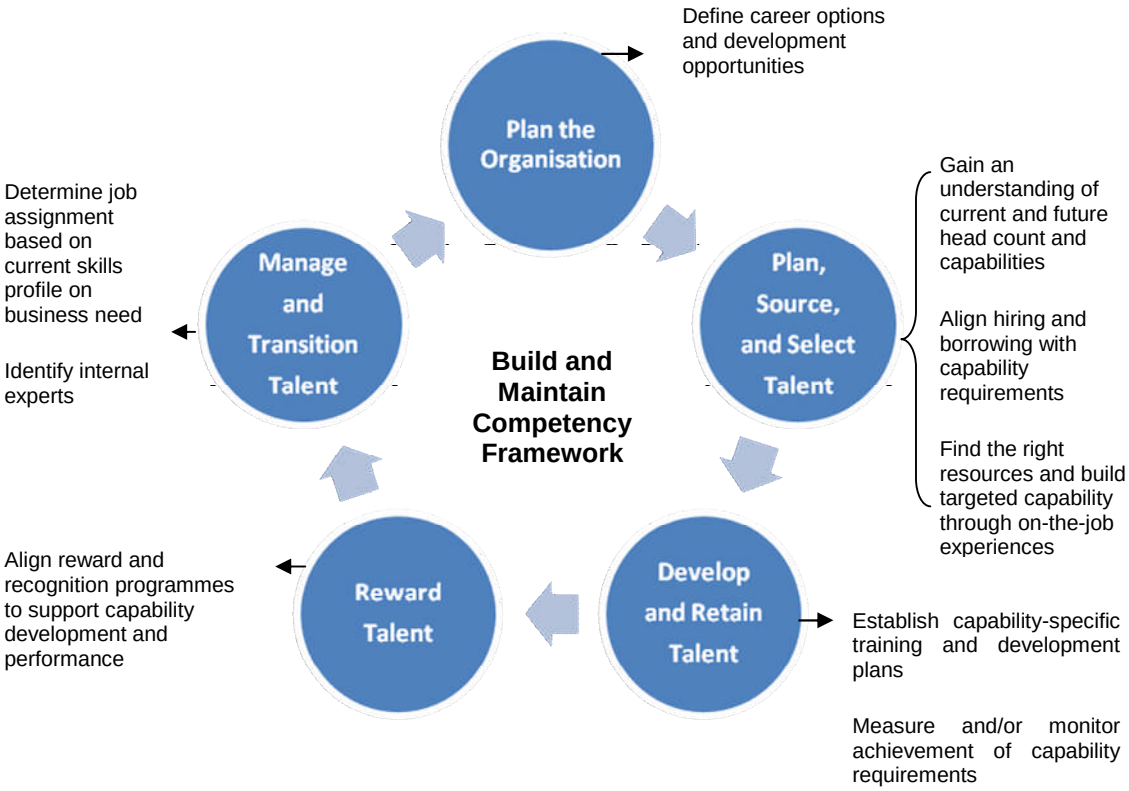


Figure 3: Adaptation of Cheese, Thomas and Craig's (2008:92) competency processes

The competency processes defined in Figure 3 are gradually moulded over time to become the basis for a logical circular connection across the talent management activities. The competency framework begins by setting the

organisation standards, which guide the mapping of the organisation's core competencies that are required across the various work groups to attain a sufficient yet pragmatic talent force with the ability to perform their tasks to the set standards (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). Successful planning for specific competencies and managing of the organisation's talent is dependent upon the organisation's definition and establishment of talent as a critical part of the organisation's business strategy (Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Morton 2004; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

2.2.3 *Research questions*

The following research questions have been formulated following the literature review pertaining to talent management strategy:

1. How is talent defined within the organisation?

2. Does the organisation have a talent management strategy?

2.3 Attracting and recruiting talent

The starting point of managing talent is getting the right talent in (Martel 2003; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). Pollitt (2004) argues that recruiting has become more complicated over the years. Organisations realising the strong correlation between high-performing, committed employees and good corporate results are compelled to compete for good talent in rapidly changing talent pools (Martel 2003; Pollitt 2004). This situation is further aggravated by the fact that the power of selection which once lay with organisations has shifted to talented people who are not only aware of their value, but are also more easily enticed to take the next better offer (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004).

2.3.1 *The employee value proposition (EVP)*

The employee value proposition (EVP) is the complete sum of all that people experience and receive while working with an organisation. Essentially, this is

everything from the intrinsic satisfaction of their work to the compensation and rewards they receive, to the holistic work environment, and much more (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

> "A strong EVP attracts great people like flowers attract bees. A strong EVP excites people so that they recommit daily to give their best – so that they are jazzed and feeling passionate about their work and their company." (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001:43)

An organisation's EVP will either strengthen or weaken its external appeal and ability to attract the talent it requires. Each employee's personal mix of hopes and fears will keep him or her individually happy or unhappy with the organisation. Every organisation should therefore customise its EVP to attract talent by offering different experiences and values to identified distinct employee segments (Wellins 2001; Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001). Different employee demographics will require different propositions to be attracted to an organisation. Basically, for example, to attract older workers for retention or hiring purposes, benefits with greater bias towards health insurance and support, part-time working or job sharing, or job support that is focused on their capabilities, will all be important towards crafting a compelling EVP for them (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

Recruiting talent as a strategy may provide a solution, but ideally the long-term strategy should be to build, develop and maintain an organisation's pipeline of talent, especially with regards to having prepared leaders from within (Drotter and Charan 2001). High quality employees look for organisations where they not only participate in great achievements but where they can also feel like they are a part of something special (Herman and Gioia 2001). This means that the employee value proposition (EVP) has to be strong and consistent with the organisation's brand as an employer of choice (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

The best recruiting practice is therefore a never-ending process of being appealing to new and, most importantly, existing talent. This will be achieved by ensuring that the promises made to recruits are fulfilled and the projected organisation brand values are delivered. The organisation will have to actively persist in attracting its employees and developing a mindset that re-recruits the existing workforce on an almost daily basis (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

2.3.2 *Identifying talent needs*

A sound hiring system begins with being clear about the employee competencies that matter (Wellins 2001). A successful hire is not about knowing the required workforce head count and filling in the slots, but rather about understanding the knowledge, skills and attributes that drive the organisation's success and filling the gaps identified with people who will contribute to the strategic goals (Wellins 2001; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007). Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008), using the analogy of soccer managers, argue that for high performance at every level, the best managers carry a detailed picture constantly of the blend of talents they need, seeing the gaps and planning how to meet them by either developing available talent or recruiting new talent, always preparing for future opportunities and uncertainties.

Before rushing out to recruit, managers should give internal candidates a chance to apply or demonstrate their ability to fill a given post (Pollitt 2004). It could well be that the individual competencies that could be developed to satisfy the existing need already reside within the organisation and simply require some assistance, training and development (Pollitt 2004; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007).

2.3.3 *Recruiting for talent*

Today, recruiting is not just about placing; it is about recruiting talented people. As a result, organisations have to rebuild every part of their recruitment strategy if they want to be effective recruiters of talent. The talent war in the 1990s forced companies to come up with creative new recruiting approaches. Table 1,

below, compares the old versus the new strategies necessitated by the “war for talent” (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001:70).

Table 1: Old and new recruiting strategies (Michaels Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001:70)

Old Recruiting Strategies	New Recruiting Strategies
Grow all your own talent	Pump talent in at all levels
Recruit for vacant positions	Hunt for talent all the time
Go to a few traditional sources	Tap many diverse pools of talent
Advertise to job hunters	Find ways to reach passive candidates
Specify a compensation range and stay within it	Break the compensation rules to get the candidates you want
Recruiting is about screening	Recruiting is about selling as well as screening
Hire as needed with no overall plan	Develop a recruiting strategy for each type of talent

Organisations seeking to win today’s hiring war need to develop the competencies that will enable them to attract and recruit great candidates (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Wellins 2001). The recruiting strategies listed in Table 1 that may be developed by organisations are:

- **Pump talent in at all levels**: Organisations experiencing talent shortages, especially within their management ranks, may need to bring in new people with fresh perspectives, new ideas and new skill sets to address key gaps (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007). This strategy is, however, not viewed as being consistent with the talent management principle of internal employee development. It is not unusual for organisations to glorify outsiders and conclude in the event of a vacancy that the candidates initially pinpointed by the succession plan are no longer suitable, thereby giving credit to the adage that "familiarity breeds contempt". The organisation's goal needs to be of getting the right talent while maintaining alignment with the overall talent strategy (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Pfeffer 2001:251; Cappelli 2008).

- **Hunt for talent all the time**: Continuously searching for talent is about capacity building for the future by recruiting for people and not for positions (Pollitt 2004; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007). The chances of landing top talent when specifically recruiting for a vacant position are not high. The best approach would be to court the desired talent before they are ready to make a move. Essentially, for example, if the organisation were a basketball team, they would need to approach the basketball legend Michael Jordan while he was still playing for a rival team and not hope that he would be coincidentally available when they were ready to recruit (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001).

- **Tap many diverse pools of talent**: With organisations facing global competition, dynamic labour markets, and unforeseen events today, it is unlikely that they would be able to source required great talent in the same limited traditional labour markets (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; McCauley and Wakefield 2006). Globalisation and demographic shifts have resulted in new and changing sources of labour which yield a global, ethnically diverse and multigenerational but limited talent pool from which organisations can recruit (Martel 2003).

- **Find ways to reach passive candidates**: Talented people are generally passively looking for new job opportunities. To be able to lure key prospects, recruiters need to be creative about the different ways of attracting great talent (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Wellins 2001). These include but should not be limited to the use of the internet, campus recruiting, advertisements, traditional head hunters, employee referral programs, staffing agencies, and in-house recruiters (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Wellins 2001; Pollitt 2004). All recruitment channels whether internal or external, formal or informal, traditional or unconventional, need to be tailored to attract the talent the organisation is targeting and not put them off. Pollitt (2004) argues that organisations need to ensure that their recruiters are part of the solution and not part of the problem. He goes on to quote Davidson (2004), a senior recruiter with more than 18 years experience, who says "most senior-level recruiters are pale, male and stale" (Pollitt 2004:25), which despite not making them bad recruiters is hardly representative of the society at large or of the rapidly changing talent pool.

- **Break compensation rules to get the candidates you want**: Once organisations have successfully wooed a great candidate, if the said candidate is expecting more remuneration than the organisation had planned for then two issues need to be considered before a decision is taken. The cost of acquiring the candidate and the expected return to the organisation in value generated (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001). The net result could be higher than anticipated but research has shown that higher performing organisations are ready to pay what it takes to take on the desired talent. Organisations need to be attentive to the fact that there is a strong correlation between good hires and good corporate performance especially the savings generated through reduced turnover costs (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Martel 2003).

- **Recruiting is about selling as well as screening**: In the past, organisations had the upper hand and recruiting was focused on

screening candidates for as long as it took to select a suitable employee. In today's talent market, however, any organisation that wants to get the best people needs to sell itself to prospective applicants. The organisation brand matters a great deal in recruitment especially because applicants want to align themselves with the reputations of the organisation's brand. Since the balance of power in recruitment has shifted from organisations to talented people, the organisations that are more likely to attract and hire top talent are those that emphasise talent development as talented people want to be developed (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Pollitt 2004; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007).

- **Develop a recruiting strategy for each type of talent**: Unlike the seemingly haphazard recruiting of the past, divisional talent recruiting strategy is considered to be somewhat analogous to a marketing strategy where each customer segment is identified, profiled and its unique needs provided (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001). Today organisations need to develop talent recruiting strategies that are not only focused and detailed but that also go through continuous evaluations to maintain their effectiveness. For talent recruiting strategies to be successful, the entire organisation needs to work in partnership, especially with regards to giving informed advice on the diverse specialities so that ultimately, everyone in the organisation becomes an active recruiter (Pollitt 2004; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007).

The critical issue for organisations is not just getting people in or where the people come from but rather, developing the right competencies to attract and hire the right talent (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Wellins 2001; Pollitt 2004).

2.3.4 *Research questions*

The following research questions have been formulated following the literature review pertaining to the attracting and recruiting of talent:

3. How does the organisation's employee value proposition appeal to talent?

4. Does the organisation have the competencies necessary to identify suitable talent, and consequently, attract and hire them?

2.4. The training and development of talent

Training and development of talent facilitates performance more effectively while lack of the same results in talent leaving organisations (Martel 2003; Herman 2005). Given the increasing talent shortages, the organisation's basic response should be exerting more effort in developing as well as retaining the skills and resources at its disposal. Education and training can improve employee performance, increase organisation productivity and contribute towards better corporate results. Consequently, both organisations and employees need learning and skills development (Martel 2003).

Regrettably, although organisations are aware of the importance of training and developing employees, most do not do this very well. Some organisations maintain, as a tick-box exercise, traditional training methods which are rarely appropriate. Few organisations have taken into account the changing needs in terms of today's talent (Peters and Smith 1996; Martel 2003; Herman 2005).

> "The standard secondment to a backwater operation or overseas subsidiary, for example, aimed at developing "experience" in some vague manner, is likely to be seen by sophisticated graduate fast-trackers for exactly what it is in all too many cases – 'they do not know what else to do with me'." (Peters and Smith 1996:7)

Knowledge workers' value lies somewhere in the recesses of their brain and several organisations, to manage that knowledge, adopt the "hire smart people and leave them alone" (HSPALTA) policy (Davenport, Thomas and Cantrell 2002:26). There are yet other organisations that choose to not develop their people, preferring to poach on talent that has been developed by their competitors (Peters and Smith 1996; Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod

2001; Cappelli 2008). This training and development shortfall is twofold as some employees are not keen on learning and are more comfortable doing what they believe they are employed to do which is to work and not to learn (Peters and Smith 1996; McCall 2008). In spite of these difficulties, the fact remains that training and skills development is one of the most important capabilities for the organisation and, though not everyone can be developed into a superstar, organisations that want to win in the talent war must develop their people (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001).

High-performing organisations view employee training and development as a key element of talent strategy. This is due to the fact that identified career development within an organisation is a prime factor in attracting and recruiting top talent which in turn contributes to outstanding performance within the organisation resulting in branding of the organisation as an employer of choice for high performers (Martel 2003; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007). These organisations recognise the cost advantage of developing talent to impact the organisation rather than poaching established talent that could be rejected, despite their skills, because they represent a poor cultural fit (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007).

Employee learning and development should be based around the specific skills, knowledge and attitudes the organisation needs to succeed, and be geared towards filling essential competency gaps and sustaining the organisation's objectives. Seeing their organisation invest and assist in building their skills and competencies is one of the most highly valued propositions by employees today. Training and development of people is therefore both an ongoing and strategic aspect of talent management in any organisation (Soupata 2005; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

2.4.1 *High-performance training and development*

Cerebral skills have overtaken manual skills as the dominant skills in the workplace making continuous training and development unavoidable for organisations in pursuit of high performance (Martel 2003; Davenport 2005). The best organisations have mastered how to use investments in learning,

development, and knowledge capabilities to accelerate skills building, resulting in improved competitiveness in the organisation's workforce. Employees are encouraged to pursue ongoing education and training, focusing on innovations through continuous capability development (Martel 2003; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

The objective for training and developing people is not simply pouring money into any and all available learning programmes. The priority is to make sure that such programmes are tailored to meet specific competency gaps and critical workforce needs. Employee development should be pursued with a purpose, aligning the training and development initiatives with the organisation's strategic objectives. It is important to adopt an approach that supports the strategy and not have processes that pull the organisation in different directions (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Martel 2003). The best training and development practices are aimed at improving performance and at the same time encouraging employee retention. Good training and development should link into well-defined career paths focused on developing talent in the competencies that are most crucial to the organisation's success. This principle will also assist the organisation with timely succession planning, developing capable executives, and designing successful leadership courses for the entire organisation (Martel 2003; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007). Organisations cannot effectively maintain high performance if the leadership consider the training and development as a soft target for cost reduction programmes and the talent as costs to be managed, with no understanding of the resulting impact (Cantrell, Benton, Laudal and Thomas 2006).

Although the training and development of employees is a vital talent management practice which enhances organisation growth, it is only feasible if the talent to be improved already exists. Training refines abilities but cannot create talent in people or make them into what they are not. Lunn (1995) likens the willy-nilly training of employees to the futility of attempting to teach a pig to sing, which inevitably results in wasting the tutor's time and in annoying the pig. The essential lesson is that an organisation must hire for the characteristics

desired as training and development cannot change an individual's personality characteristics.

> "Selecting and recruiting talented employees is like a marriage. Marry as is and if you get a change, it's an unexpected bonus." (Lunn 1995:10)

Successful organisations typically brand their career growth opportunities to communicate their commitment to developing their employees. This acts as a magnet for attracting high quality talent that can be successfully developed for future organisation growth (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007).

2.4.2 *Research questions*

The following research questions have been formulated following the literature review pertaining to the training and development of talent:

5. How does the organisation train and develop talent?

6. What is the impact of the organisation investing in talent development?

2.5. Managing talent performance

Historically, organisations that achieve the best financial performance do so by adhering to proven people management practices. In the late 1990s, however, most organisations got so caught up in fighting the war for talent through relentless recruiting that they neglected nurturing the talent they already had (Cantrell and Benton 2007). The challenge after recruiting the best talent lies in managing the talent in ways that will maximise their contribution to the organisation. Unfortunately, performance management efforts generally fail because they are not connected to what ideally would be a robust talent management system within the organisation. Organisation practices and policies should be geared towards enabling talented people to do their best and make a difference, utilising and not debilitating the full potential of the available workforce (Bacal 2000; Pfeffer 2001; Reid and Crisp 2007).

The concept of managing talent performance is built on the notion that better organisational performance is the direct result of raising the performance levels of individuals within the organisation.

> "Performance management aims to make the good better, share understanding about what is to be achieved, develop the capacity of people to achieve it, and provide the support and guidance people need to deliver high performance and achieve their full potential to the benefit of themselves and the organisation." (Armstrong and Baron 2005:2)

The critical purpose of managing performance is to achieve shared meaningful organisation objectives by systematically improving both individual and team performance as efficiently and as effectively as possible (Bacal 2000; Armstrong and Baron 2005). To successfully manage talent performance, managers in partnership with each employee should embark on a progressive process involving the following crucial activities:

1. Strategic performance planning for clarity of the employee's purpose with regards to required competencies, work expectations, responsibilities, accountabilities, objectives, and goals (Bacal 2000; Armstrong and Baron 2005; Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005).
2. Ongoing performance communication for integrated year-long monitoring of performance tempered to give talent the latitude necessary to achieve optimal results (Kinnear 1999; Bacal 2000; Armstrong and Baron 2005).
3. Development planning to facilitate continuous improvement of individuals and teams by cultivating the skills and abilities required to accomplish the organisation's goals (Kinnear 1999; Bacal 2000; Armstrong and Baron 2005).
4. Periodic rating of performance improvement for the rewarding of good performance as well as the correcting of poor performance to enhance career progress and organisational effectiveness (Kinnear 1999; Bacal 2000; Armstrong and Baron 2005).
5. Managing talent behaviour through coaching and mentoring to ensure that individuals are encouraged to behave in a way that allows and

fosters better working relationships (Bacal 2000; Armstrong and Baron 2005; Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005).

Good performance management is taking a sincere interest in the welfare of the organisation's workforce and developing useful ways to distinguish and generate the highest returns possible for the available human capital. Talent-driven organisations create expectations of high performance from their employees and apply best practices to provide the employees with the opportunities to excel while continuously giving them constructive feedback on their performance. In the long run, these organisations seek to create the best possible match between their employee talents and their strategic business needs on a daily basis (Soupata 2005; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

2.5.1 *Deploying talent for optimal performance*

The problems experienced by organisations with regards to skills and job performance have been traced to having skilled personnel in unsuitable positions or matching the right people to the wrong jobs, rather than a lack of available skills. Some organisation systems bring out the best in their people while others, though filled with talented employees, interfere with the ability of these individuals to perform (Pfeffer 2001; Stevens 2008). To counter this under-utilising and misuse of talent, Stevens (2008) suggests the use of a "talent audit" (Stevens 2008:17) based on the six sigma approach of total quality management to eliminate defects and enable the organisation to identify job performance skills and competencies, improve the job match of talent, and reduce unwanted turnover.

To strategically deploy the right people to carry out the right tasks at the right time requires a good understanding of the skills and competencies resident within the organisation's workforce (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). Organisations achieve higher performance by differentiating and effectively managing their high, average, and low performers (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001). Differentiation involves assessing the performance and potential of the organisation's talent so as effectively to manage the "20-70-10" (Finnie and Early 2002:25) also referred to as the "A, B and C players"

(Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001:127). The A players comprise the top 20 percent who perform exceptionally and lead change in the organisation. The B players are the middle 70 percent while the C players define the bottom 10 percent who make achieving superior long-term results more difficult (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Finnie and Early 2002).

Once assessment and differentiation of the workforce is done, the decisions have to be taken on the specific actions to be employed on each individual. This important exercise can be performed quite basically with the aid of a simple assessment tool like the performance/potential grid illustrated in Figure 4, which an organisation can customise to suit its particular needs (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001:149).

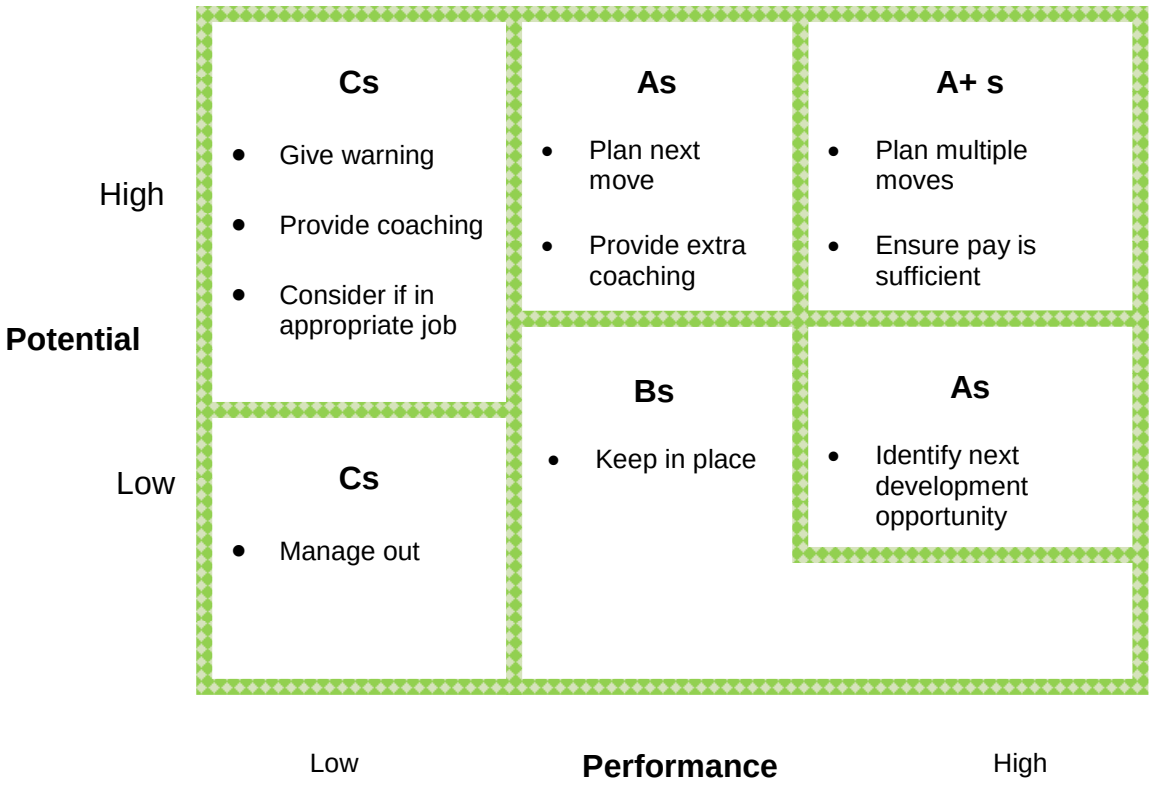


Figure 4: Performance/Potential grid (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001:149)

As illustrated in Figure 4, the decisions taken would typically include developing, investing in and retaining the A players, training and affirming the B players, and either helping the C players perform better or taking decisive actions against

them (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001). In response to a question on managing organisation performance by removing low performing individuals, Ulrich (2002) is quoted by Finnie and Early (2002) in their article “Results-based leadership: an interview with Dave Ulrich” stating that:

> “The most strategic human resource decision a company could ever make is to help place its poorest performers with a competitor – and hope they stay a long time!” (Finnie and Early 2002:25).

The bottom 10 percent should ideally leave the firm within two years if they show no improvement during that time while the middle 70 and the top twenty should get pay increases or bonuses pro-rata to their performance (Finnie and Early 2002).

The underlying purpose of assessing and differentiating performance is not to pass judgement or a permanent verdict on the employees but rather to assist individuals to improve their performance and enable the management team deploy the staff suitably (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Finnie and Early 2002). Deploying talent is not just about getting the work done. It is a critical part of talent management and a strategic organisation capability. The organisation’s effectiveness in deploying talent has a huge impact on employee engagement which is the secret ingredient for organisations which manage talent excellently, building and sustaining all the skills necessary for lasting competitive success (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

2.5.2 *Engaging employees to facilitate high performance*

Kahn (1990), who introduced the concept of engagement to management literature, defines personal engagement as “the simultaneous employment and expression of a person’s “preferred self” in task behaviours that promote connections to work and to others” (Kahn 1990:700). Engagement is the measure of the level at which people express who or what they are, and also who they would like to be at work. It is a complex phenomenon whereby

employees are focused on the job with their mind and their feelings, and with the people around them (Kahn 1990).

> "Talent is the engine of the modern organisation, and engagement is the mystery ingredient that can transform the engine's output." (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:152)

For an organisation to achieve and sustain an objective of high performance, the supporting objective of having highly engaged staff is paramount. Neither of these objectives can be sustained at the expense of the other. Engagement of employees is dependent upon several critical activities such as:

- good supervisory/management relationships
- high level of communication on the part of management; trust and integrity
- aligning of individual effort to organisation goals and results
- cultivating pride in the organisation
- cultivating pride in the nature of the job
- recognising, valuing, rewarding and supporting people
- providing developmental assignments and career growth opportunities
- achieving job satisfaction and healthy relationship with co-workers

Relative to these critical activities is the meaning of engagement which incorporates several subsidiary definitions including motivation, ambition, inspiration, passion, dedication, empathy, solidarity, desire, selflessness and trust (Martel 2003; Reid and Crisp 2007).

There is a strong link between employee engagement and performance. Maslow (1943 cited in Stum 2001 and Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008) developed the famous "hierarchy of needs", a concept that Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008:163) built on to develop a similar hierarchy of six Cs of

employee engagement. These six Cs illustrated in Figure 5 below are the drivers of engagement and are not mutually exclusive. Ideally, they should function harmoniously within an organisation to facilitate the building of a highly engaged workforce.



Figure 5: Drivers of engagements: the six Cs (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:163)

In Figure 5, the first C, which is content, basically refers to the actual subject matter of an employee's job, including the demands, development, achievement, and satisfaction it offers. The second C, coping, relates to the worker's ability to cope with the demands of the job and achieve the set objectives. Compensation, the third C, is about whether the individual feels fairly rewarded financially for his or her contribution. The fourth C, community, is about the degree of positive social interaction and connection that the employee feels. Congruence, the fifth C, relates to the alignment of the organisation culture, core values and objectives to the individual's expectations and objectives. The final C, career, is about the alignment between the career and the individual's short and long-term life expectations and aspirations. The key point to these building blocks is that the employee's immediate boss or

supervisor influences all six of these engagement drivers either positively or negatively (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

The management of the organisation and, more crucially, line managers, have a strategic role in building employee engagement and should therefore be the first to be trained and developed to fulfil this responsibility. The building of an engaged workforce will begin with cultivating a highly engaged management team, then cascade to the entire organisation (Martel 2003; Reid and Crisp 2007).

2.5.3 *Adapting performance appraisals/reviews to enhance talent management*

Performance management efforts typically fail because of the erroneous belief that performance reviews or appraisals do not need to be connected to employee development, organisation goals, job success, the organisation work force, organisation systems, and most importantly to organisation talent management objectives (Bacal 2000; Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005). Ideally, talent reviews should not just be for the purpose of appraising individual performance. They should also involve a comprehension of the entire team performance against organisation objectives to provide the line manager an aggregate assessment of the organisation's talent workforce (Bacal 2000; Heinen and O'Neill 2004). Performance reviews should therefore start at senior-leadership levels within the organisation and be used as a tool for learning about employees for the purpose of successful employee deployment and engagement (Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

The performance review process should be well planned and should involve ongoing stepwise communication from the individual employees to the highest levels of organisation leadership (Bacal 2000; Heinen and O'Neill 2004). This process as defined by Heinen and O'Neill (2004:77) in their "talent review process" as detailed in Figure 6 below.

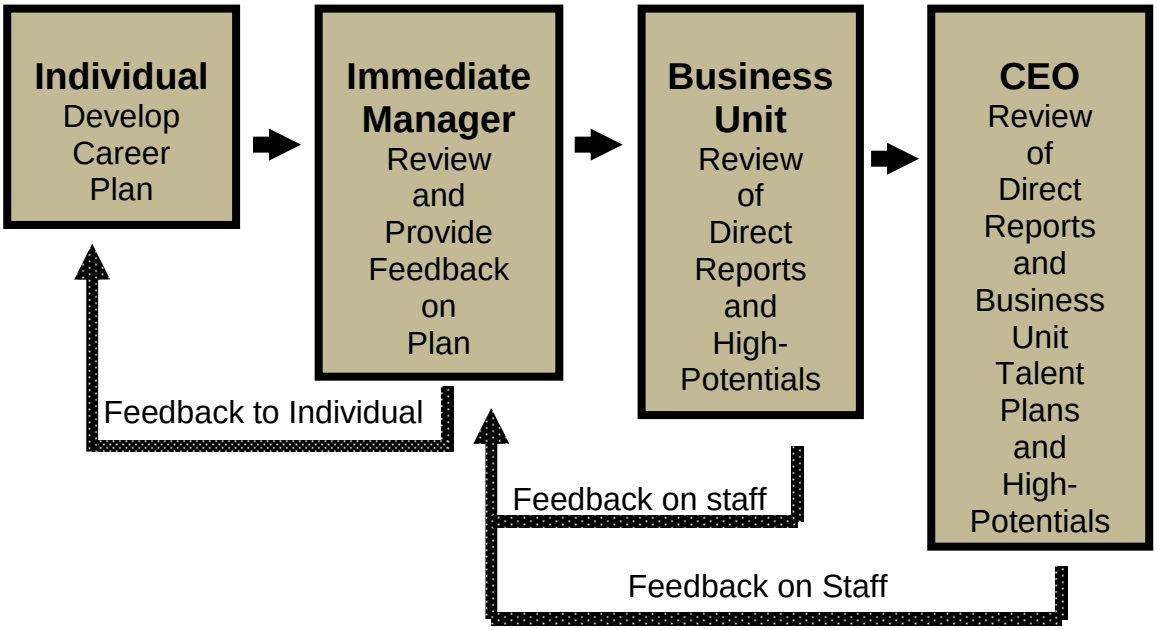


Figure 6: Talent review process (Heinen and O'Neill 2004:77)

Typically, employees provide a summary of their accomplishments and development needs over a period of 12 months and managers in turn gather relevant data to assess employee performance and also assist with employee growth and career plans. This process provides the primary source of development for most employees. Reviewing performance therefore provides an avenue for effectively deploying talent and identifying future organisation leaders (Bacal 2000; Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Heinen and O'Neill 2004).

2.5.4 *Research questions*

The following research questions have been formulated following the literature review pertaining to the managing of talent performance:

7. How effective is the organisation's overall performance management especially in relation to effective employee engagement?

8. How does the organisation's performance review system relate to talent management?

2.6 Talent retention

Several authors (Peters and Smith 1996; Ulrich 1998; Butler and Waldroop 1999; Kinnear 1999; Cappelli 2000, 2008; Herman and Gioia 2001; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Frank and Taylor 2004; O'Connor and Fiol 2004; Herman 2005; Stevens 2008) agree that the loss of talent weakens organisations making employee retention an imperative of talent management. The poaching of other organisations' talent, which was a rare thing in the past, is now the common practice among most executives. "To poach is fine; to be poached is not" (Cappelli 2000:103). Keeping good people is much tougher than hiring them and several organisations are plagued with haemorrhaging of talent, which is typically a sign as well as a cause of an organisation in serious decline (Peters and Smith 1996; Butler and Waldroop 1999). It is very likely that no other talent management issue will be of greater importance in the future than workforce stability (Herman and Gioia 2001; Frank and Taylor 2004).

> "Increasingly, the wealth of companies is their intellectual capital, and much of that – from a perfume's secret ingredient to a big customer's favourite dessert – resides between the ears of a company's knowledge workers." (Branch 1998:101)

Today, talent and brainpower are the driving forces behind an organisation's performance and therefore by retention an organisation can maintain its high performance and competitive advantage (Stevens 2008; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

2.6.1 *The effect of talent turnover*

The issue of employee retention is a global one (Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Stevens 2008; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). This phenomenon becomes even more serious than ever due to significant, far-reaching and continuously rising turnover costs (Cascio 1999; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Stevens 2008). Today these costs are being quantified in terms of the loss of skills and company knowledge, resultant low staff morale, reduced productivity and customer loyalty, reduced earnings, falling stock prices, and the

considerable time and money required to hire and train new personnel (Kinnear 1999; Cappelli 2000; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Stevens 2008). Organisations lose a resource in which they have invested time and money whenever an employee leaves. If the employee is one classified as talent and the turnover of good people is recurrent within the organisation then the damage is all the greater (O'Connor and Fiol 2004; Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005). Talent turnover could have long-lasting negative effects with regards to the organisation's customers and its image in the labour market, especially if good workers move to work for the competition (Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005).

Turnover costs do not only arise when the employee walks out the door. Once an employee has decided to leave and is simply waiting for the right opportunity, the organisation will suffer due to psychological disengagement when the employee ceases to perform well as before (Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Stevens 2008). Cascio (1999) and Torrington, Hall and Taylor (2005) identify the major talent management costs resulting from the organisation losing people as:

- Separation costs, which include the costs incurred for administrative functions related to termination such as exit interviews, and any costs related to unemployment compensation such as severance pay.
- Replacement costs, which include the costs incurred from initial attracting to final acquiring of talent replacement.
- Training costs, which include both formal and informal training costs and begin at induction.
- Performance differential, which recognises the difference in productivity between the talent who leave and their replacements.

Employee loyalty has been weakened by necessary layoffs during the slow economy of the past years and the developing off-shoring phenomenon. Further aggravating this situation are pension policies which are unfavourable towards older employees carrying on working (Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Frank

and Taylor 2004; Herman 2005; Stevens 2008). Some organisations in a defensive move to avoid losing valuable employees will defer payment of bonuses over the number of years that they hope to retain the employee. This strategy may work in the short run but is not a guarantee that the employee will not leave. Cappelli (2000:105) refers to this type of employee retention incentive as “a form of golden handcuffs” to which rival organisations could offer targeted talent “a big golden hello”. Conventional strategies adopted for retaining employees in the past are not conducive for use today in a world where the workers have the upper hand and it seems like every employee is poised to walk out of the door at the first opportunity (Cappelli 2000; Frank and Taylor 2004). Organisations that succeed in achieving lower turnover rates than their industry average are likely to enjoy greater competitive advantage while organisations suffering from high turnover rates argued to be symptomatic of poor management (Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005).

2.6.2 *Talent retention strategies*

As discussed in the previous section, the negative impact of talent turnover can be very high. Therefore, organisations should craft talent retention strategies (Cappelli 2000; Frank and Taylor 2004; Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005; Stevens 2008).

The primary causes of talent turnover are dissatisfaction with bad bosses or the result of a poor job fit (Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005; Reid and Crisp 2007). Giving people the freedom to grow, advance, and even move in several speciality areas across the organisation is one way of instilling and motivating job satisfaction. As a result, employee retention will be generated on a “quid pro quo” (Reid and Crisp 2007:6) basis with employees getting the opportunity to develop and become engaged. The organisation in return will enjoy long-term productivity, innovation and excellent business results (Reid and Crisp 2007; Stevens 2008).

Butler and Waldroop (1999) in their article “Job Sculpting: The Art of Retaining Your Best People” argue that merely because people are good at their jobs and display competence as well as contentment in the rewards does not mean that

they are engaged by them. Their years of research on the strange phenomenon of talent leaving organisations when seemingly satisfied with their jobs resulted in the conclusion that the key to retention is motivating employees with their deeply embedded "life interests". Life interests are "long-held, emotionally driven passions" which determine the kinds of work that people love (Butler and Waldroop 1999:148). "Job sculpting", they argue, is the art of matching people to activities that make them happy. Happiness at work often translates into commitment and keeps talent engaged (Butler and Waldroop 1999). Managers therefore have no choice but to work at understanding the psychology of job satisfaction and forging a customised career path to keep employees from leaving the organisation (Ulrich 1998; Butler and Waldroop 1999). Recruiting of the best talent should, however, be weighed against the next best talent with a better retention record. In addition, fostering the development of social ties among team members as well as key employees will lead to a deep loyalty among colleagues binding employees to the organisation (Cappelli 2000; O'Connor and Fiol 2004).

> "In these days of talent wars, the best way to keep your stars is to know them better than they know themselves – and then use that information to customise the careers of their dreams." (Butler and Waldroop 1999)

Maslow (1943 cited in Stum 2001 and in Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008) hypothesised that every person has a "hierarchy of needs" that motivates them to work towards "self-actualisation" at the top of the pyramid of needs where "a sense of fulfilment allows the individual to maximise their own growth and make a contribution to that of others" (Stum 2001:6). Research on workforce commitment carried out by Aon Consulting (Stum 2001) identified five levels of hierarchical workforce needs that explain employee commitment and consequent retention. These motivational workforce needs are analogous to Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" and are the commitment drivers which form the hypothesised "Aon Consulting's Performance Pyramid" (Stum 2001:6) illustrated in Figure 7. The resulting employee commitment is further defined as forming a "Workforce Commitment Index" (Stum 2001:8) illustrated in Figure 8.

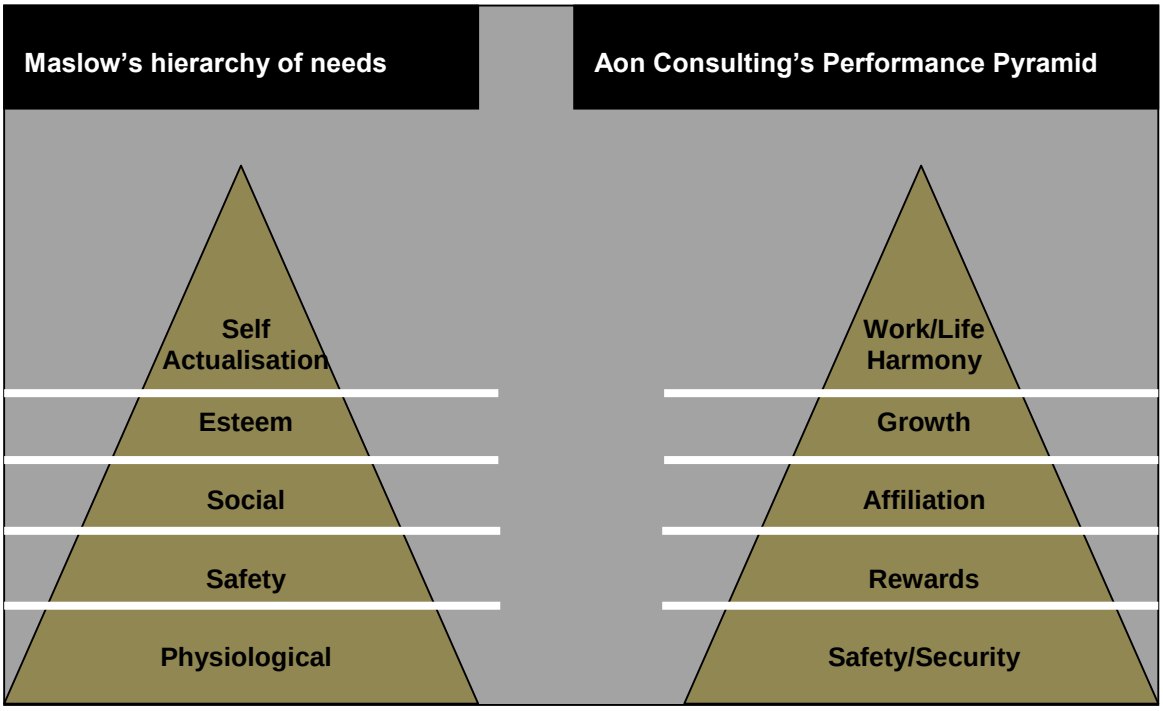


Figure 7: Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Aon's performance pyramid (Stum 2001:6)

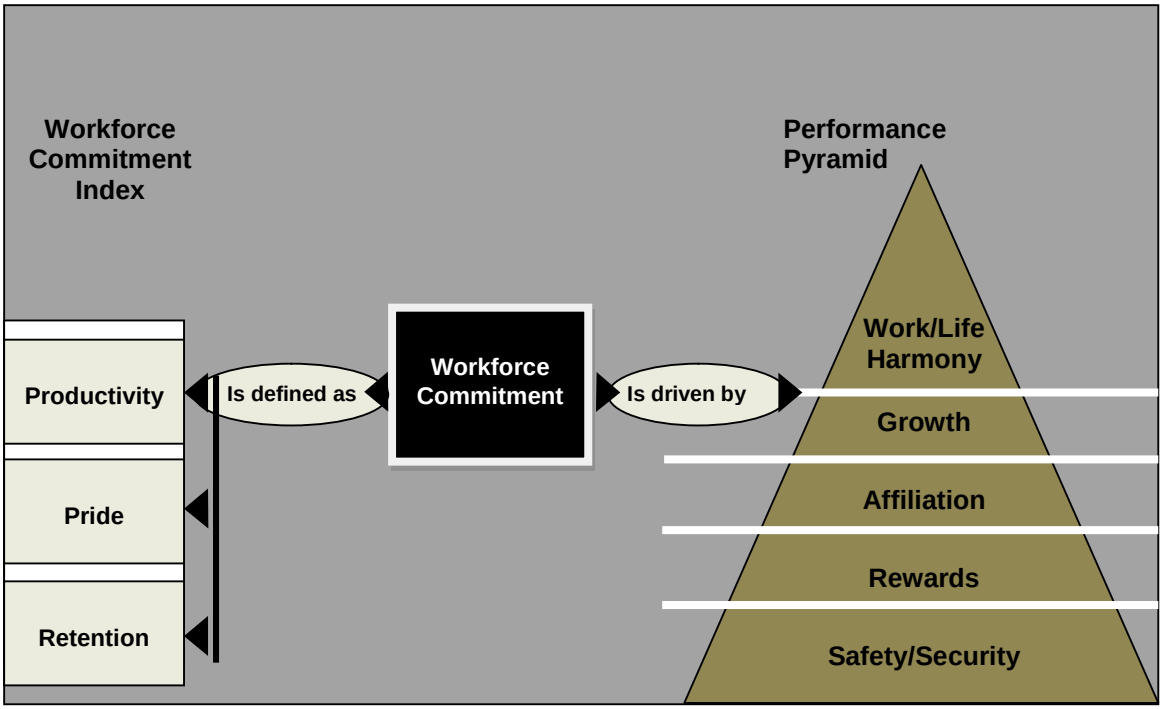


Figure 8: Aon's research model on workforce commitment (Stum 2001:8)

Summarising on Stum (2001), Figure 7 illustrates the five levels of human needs and identifies synonymous five levels of employee needs. At the lowest level, human beings need water, shelter and food for survival. These form the physiological needs at the bottom of the pyramid, and likewise at the most basic level, employees need to feel physically and psychologically safe at their workplace to begin to be committed to the organisation. At the second level, humans need to feel safe from external danger whereas employees at the second level require rewards for their labour in the form of compensation and benefits. The third level that Maslow hypothesised is of social needs whereby humans require affection and seek to build relationships once the lower needs are met. The employee at level three seeks affiliation, a sense of belonging and being a part of a team or the organisation if the lower levels have been satisfactorily met. Humans are next driven to pursue the feeling of self-worth at the esteem level while employees at level four need positive individual and organisational change which fosters their personal growth. The highest level for humans is motivated by a sense of fulfilment and likewise, the highest level for the employee is driven by the desire to achieve a sense of fulfilment in balancing work and life responsibilities (Stum 2001). If all of the employee needs are satisfied within the organisation, then the resulting workforce commitment illustrated in Figure 8 will be evidenced by increasing employee productivity, visible employee pleasure and pride in the work, and consequently, genuine commitment to the organisation even in the light of seemingly better external offers (Stum 2001; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

Knowledge workers have a high need for reaching personal achievement, individualism, independence and the feeling that “management recognises the importance of my need to balance work and life” (Kinnear 1999; Stum 2001:8). Research of Kinnear (1999) gives an indication of what organisations need to do to retain knowledge workers as:

1. The freedom to plan and execute work independently.
2. Adequate remuneration, financial reward and recognition.
3. Availability of developmental opportunities and growth potential of the industry.

4. The access to leading technologies and challenging work assignments.

The talent retention challenge for organisations is to review traditional retention strategies against employee needs and structure these strategies to the desired needs of each employee. Failure in employee retention is mostly due to an erroneous assumption by management that people are satisfied simply because they excel at their jobs (Ulrich 1998; Butler and Waldroop 1999; Kinnear 1999). The realisation that the organisation is interested in employee needs will encourage talent to pursue better opportunities within the organisation rather than outside (Cappelli 2000, 2008; Martel 2003).

On the other hand, Cappelli (2000) argues that:

> "It is futile to hope that by tinkering with compensation programs, career paths, training efforts, and the like, a company can insulate itself from today's freewheeling labour market." (Cappelli 2000:103)

However, other authors (Martel 2003; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Frank and Taylor 2004; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008) who agree with Ulrich (1998), Butler and Waldroop (1999), and Kinnear (1999) argue that diligence in engaging employees, and a commitment to their customised career paths, development, advancement, and achievement of their work/life harmony are the secret key ingredients to retaining employees in the long run.

2.6.3 *Research questions*

The following research questions have been formulated following the literature review pertaining to talent retention:

9. What is the organisation's labour turnover rate?

10. What are the organisation's retention strategies?

2.7 Conclusion

The war for talent is over and talent has emerged victorious (Ridderstrale and Nordstrom 2002; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). To effectively manage talent, an organisation's leadership should align its business strategy with the four talent management capabilities detailed in the "talent multiplication model" (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:57) in Figure 9 below.



Figure 9: Talent multiplication model (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:57)

The talent multiplication model illustrates the four talent management vitals discussed in the literature review. Successful talent management is dependent upon the organisation's ability to align its talent strategy to its business strategy, and perform the talent management imperatives of discovering talent, developing talent, managing talent, and retaining talent (Lunn 1995; Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Frank and Taylor 2004; Reid and Crisp 2007; Cappelli 2008; Stevens 2008). The talent topics reviewed from literature are:

1. Talent management as a strategic business priority
2. Attracting and recruiting talent
3. The training and development of talent
4. Managing talent performance

5. Talent retention

Consequently, the following research questions arise from the literature review and are formed to fundamentally aid in resolution of the main research problem and the five sub-problems.

2.7.1 *Research questions*

The purpose of this research is to analyse how a non-profit organisation applies talent management processes. The researcher, following the order of the talent management topics as presented in the literature review, made every effort to ascertain that salient issues were evaluated to facilitate the construction of the respective research questions.

The research questions which were formulated during the literature review are:

1. How is talent defined within the organisation?
2. Does the organisation have a talent management strategy?
3. How does the organisation's employee value proposition appeal to talent?
4. Does the organisation have the competencies necessary to identify suitable talent, and consequently, attract and hire them?
5. How does the organisation train and develop talent?
6. What is the impact of the organisation investing in talent development?
7. How effective is the organisation's overall performance management especially in relation to effective employee engagement?
8. How does the organisation's performance review system relate to talent management?
9. What is the organisation's labour turnover rate?
10. What are the organisation's retention strategies?

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The research objective is to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African non-profit organisation and deduce factors that promote the successful performance of talent management. The qualitative research method is found to be particularly suitable for the study is an exploratory one and will allow the research to focus on a single complex phenomenon (Creswell 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

Although talent management is multifaceted, it needed to be assessed holistically leading to broad research questions which are suitable for use in qualitative research (Merriam 1998; Creswell 2003).

3.1.1 *Assessment of the qualitative research paradigm*

Qualitative research studies, according to Leedy and Ormrod (2005), typically suit the following purposes:

- Describing and revealing of the basic qualities or characteristics of processes, systems, relationships, or situations.
- Verifying claims and existing theory.
- Evaluating the effectiveness of particular practices or policies.
- Gaining new insights pertaining to the phenomenon being studied.
- Discovering previously unknown problems that may exist within the phenomenon.

In addition, the qualitative approach allows for the overcoming of any preconceived notions enabling the effective use of interpretation to develop new concepts or theoretical perspectives (Miles and Huberman 1984; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

On the other hand, the qualitative approach has been criticised as lacking objectivity, structure, numeric data, large samples, statistical analysis, predetermined methods, established guidelines, and experimental precision (Miles and Huberman 1984; Yin 1994 and Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

Given that the framework of this study suited the qualitative approach and specifically, the case study design, the research was conducted with due care to mitigate the above shortcomings by adherence to the recommended case study protocol which is discussed in the following chapter (Merriam 1998; Creswell 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

3.2 The case study methodology

The nature of this research led to the case study approach being chosen as the most appropriate method.

As mentioned earlier, the researcher's goal was to investigate and gain an in-depth understanding of talent management application in the chosen organisation from participants' perspective and to assess if practice supported the imperatives identified in the literature reviewed. The case study approach encourages great attention to detail and assesses the whole as being more than a collection of the parts in the analysis. It is a thorough methodology which enables the studying of processes (Chetty 1996; Merriam 1998), making it perfect for the analysis of talent management processes within a South African NGO.

> "Case study is when a 'how' or 'why' question is being asked about a contemporary set of events, over which the investigator has little or no control." (Yin 2003:9)

The research questions arising out of the literature review were "how" questions which typically lead to the use of case study as the preferred research strategy. In addition, the researcher had no control over the happenings at the organisation but simply sought to collect and analyse the findings objectively.

3.2.1 *Evaluation of the case study design*

It has been argued that the case study method advantages outweigh its limitations (Chetty 1996; Merriam 1998). It should be noted that the merits and weaknesses of the qualitative method mentioned in the preceding sections (3.1 and 3.1.1) are all relevant to the case study methodology and will not be repeated here.

The case study method can be intensive, particularistic and rigorous (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003). The case study insights also play a useful role in aiding the structure of future research while advancing the knowledge base of the field being researched (Merriam 1998). The use of this methodology for understanding how humans engage and interact within contexts of various settings makes it attractive for research in applied fields (Merriam 1998; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

The researcher aware of weaknesses in the case study method endeavoured to attentively make the best use of the following:

- Case study protocol: Drawing on Yin (2003), the researcher stringently followed a research protocol as outlined in Table 2.

Table 2: Case study research protocol

Overview of the case study	• Define case study objectives, issues and questions • Prepare the theoretical framework – Literature review • Organise case details and prepare for the line of inquiry
Field procedures	• Select the case site and identify contact persons • Present relevant credentials to ensure access to case study site • Obtain general information and procedural requirements
Case study questions	• Prepare the research instrument using the research questions formulated during the literature review
Data collection	• Prepare a data collection plan covering time for site visits • Review relevant documentation in preparation for site visits
Data analysis	• Organise, categorise, compare and contrast, interpret single instances, identify patterns, use synthesis, generalisations and triangulation as well as relying on theoretical propositions
Case study report	• Adhere to recommended outline or format using the template

- Ethical issues: In anticipation and consideration of various ethical issues, the researcher effected the following actions:
    - In respect of the case site (Creswell 2003), the researcher sought the necessary permission from the NGO's leadership to conduct the study and to make contact with the selected interviewees.
    - The NGO's leadership participation was limited to enabling the researcher to gain access so as to avoid situations where "power can be easily abused and participants coerced into a project" (Creswell 2003:65).
    - The researcher ensured that each respondent's participation was both voluntary and given through informed consent.
    - The researcher informed the participants of their right to ask questions and assured them of their privacy rights keeping all their responses anonymous as described.
    - To minimise intrusion on the flow of the activities at the case site and reduce possible disruptions (Creswell 2003) at the hospital where some of the respondents are based, the researcher prepared an interview appointment schedule described in section 4.4 of the following chapter that enabled the participants to select suitable time slots for their respective interviews.
- Interview protocol (refer to Appendix 1): The researcher adhered to the case study interview protocol and guidelines for conducting effective interviews both during the preparation and actual performance of the research interviews (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003).
- Triangulation Concept: The researcher relied on multiple sources of evidence as well as matching responses from several interviewees. Adherence to this procedure produced some inconsistent data (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005) addressed in the study results (refer to chapter 4). Furthermore, the researcher constructed all the

research questions from the literature review findings to limit the influence of any biases. Research results were compiled using data triangulation, recurring themes, theory triangulation and methodological triangulation namely interview, questionnaire, and survey (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

3.3 The research population

3.3.1 Case site

The literature reviewed yielded a clear set of research questions on talent management. The case study site chosen to explore the questions was Right to Care. Right to Care describe themselves on their Internet Home Page as:

> "Right to Care is a non-profit organisation (Section 21) that builds public- and private-sector capacity for the provision of antiretroviral therapy to HIV-positive individuals." (Right to Care 2009)

The primary case site was Right to Care's Johannesburg headquarters at the Helen Joseph Hospital. Face-to-face interviews were conducted here while interviews for staff based at other Right to Care branches were conducted telephonically. All interviews at Right to Care took place in either the participants' offices or the various rooms allocated within Right to Care premises. The case site is further described in section 4.2 of the following chapter that deals with the presentation of the research results.

As described in section 3.2.1, Right to Care's leadership involvement in this research was restricted to only providing the researcher with access to the organisation and its workforce.

3.3.2 Sample and sampling method

In a single site case study research the population for the study is the staff at the case site. If the topic being researched is not bounded so as to present a

fixed number of possibilities with regards to the data collection then the study is not a case (Chetty 1996; Merriam 1998).

Right to Care has three executive directors and approximately 500 staff members distributed across five provinces in South Africa (Right to Care 2009). The researcher “purposefully” chose the participants that would best satisfy the objectives of the research based for the most part on the judgemental sampling approach (Creswell 2003:185). The staff members selected either exercised control over or were dealing directly with talent management.

It should be noted that the researcher, while relying upon judgemental sampling, requested the assistance of the organisation’s managers in pin-pointing employees who are classified as Right to Care talent. The comprehensive list of the case study respondents is presented in section 4.4 of this report.

3.4 Data collection

3.4.1 Procedure for data collection

The case study method typically allows for the use of various data collection techniques namely interviews, questionnaires, documents and archival records analysis, direct and participant observations (Eisenhardt 1989; Merriam 1998; Yin 2003).

In the study, face-to-face interviews with some participants as well as some telephonic interviews with other participants were employed. Note recording and reviewing before, during, and after each interview was applied for data collection purposes. In addition, important quotes and comments were specifically captured verbatim during each interview.

The researcher, while primarily reliant on the data captured during the interviews also used relevant documentation, archival records, and organisation reports collected from Right to Care as well as direct observations to corroborate the findings and adhere to concept of triangulation (Yin 2003) as described in section 3.2.1.

3.4.2 The interviews

The interviews were structured to yield a guided conversation through the use of open-ended questions. While adhering to set questions, flexibility was sought in pursuit of unbiased responses allowing for deeper exploration of the set lines of inquiry. Objectivity was maintained through strict adherence to the prescribed case study and interview protocols (Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

The 12 interview questions (refer to Appendix 1) were constructed to resolve the 10 research questions. The questions were structured to be simple and clear and to flow smoothly form one to the next.

Each interview process was supported by the use of a short questionnaire giving the researcher a chance to review and regroup. The questionnaire which was Question 8 (refer to Appendix 1) of the interview schedule consisted of 10 factors to be rated by the respondents using a verbal rating scale.

The final activity of the interview was the use of a “Talent Development Survey” (TDS) (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007:26) to provide verification of the results as well as a holistic assessment of the organisation’s talent management. As was the case with the questionnaire, using the survey gave the researcher a chance to ensure that all the set case study questions had been adequately responded to during the discussions.

The TDS (refer to Appendix 1) adopted for this study is from Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich’s (2007) article “Developing your organisation’s brand as a talent developer”. The article discusses organisations that are typically known to be talent developers. These organisations are defined as having so deeply entrenched their career and developmental opportunities that they can use their commitment to talent development as a source of competitive advantage. The authors argue that an organisation’s consistency in strategically recruiting, engaging, managing, and retaining employees facilitates its earning and preserving of status as a branded talent developer. The TDS is used by the authors to gauge an organisation’s success in building its employee value proposition by accomplishing the elements of talent management identified as the five study sub problems of this research. The instrument was therefore

applied during the study to holistically verify RTCs ability to successfully perform these five elements of talent management.

The advantage of this instrument is that it has been used successfully to assess organisations talent development efforts (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007). Furthermore, it is quite simple and easy to understand and the authors provide suitable judging criteria for the purposes of analysing and interpreting the responses.

3.5 Data analysis and interpretation

Case study methodology requires gaining a deep understanding and familiarity of the case to adequately analyse the data intensively, consistently and holistically (Eisenhardt 1989; Merriam 1998). The strategies and techniques suitable for case study analysis are not yet well defined and dependent upon the investigator's thinking and interpretation (Yin 2003). Once data was collected the following steps were employed for the purposes of analysing and interpreting the data:

- Reviewing and focusing of the raw data
- Collating and organising the data for analysis
- Categorising, arranging, and displaying of information into different suitable arrays to enable systematic and thorough examination of data
- Noting regularities, recurring patterns, possible configurations and also identifying unique instances
- Drawing explanations, propositions and conclusions
- Reviewing, synthesising the outcomes and verifying the conclusions

To attain excellent analysis, the researcher endeavoured to attend to all the evidence collected, addressed the rival interpretations and the aspects significant to the study employing the use of the knowledge gained from the literature reviewed as well as the supervisor's expertise. Recurring themes and

patterns were sought based on frequency and matched allowing for presentation, content analysis and interpretation of the results (Miles and Huberman 1984; Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

For the TDS, once the total organisation scores were obtained the following suitable judging criteria provided by the authors was applied:

1. Above 50, the organisation is a talent developer and should keep it up.

2. Between 40 and 49, the organisation is on track but needs to define priorities for development.

3. Below 40, the organisation needs a lot of work to be a talent developer.

The given criteria facilitate a holistic understanding of how the respondents perceive an organisation's overall talent management efforts (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007).

3.6 Limitations of the study

The main limitation of the study is that it involved a single case study and a finite number of participants which constrains the application and suitability of the findings to other situations. Furthermore, the methodology is limited by and to a researcher's abilities, integrity, sensitivity, and the results are consequently open to misinterpretation whether accidental or intended. However, measures were taken as described in the preceding sections of this chapter to ensure the researcher's objectivity (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

Case studies typically need a lot of time and sometimes money (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003), a drawback that the researcher in the pursuit of this study experienced. They can be quite lengthy but despite these disadvantages, the case study methodology continues to be an extensively suitable albeit challenging research strategy (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005). In addition, the single case study is suitable for corroboration of specific

propositions and represents a critical test of significant theory as was the case in this study of talent management application (Eisenhardt 1991; Yin 2003).

3.7 Validity and reliability

Validity refers to how well an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. This goes hand in hand with reliability which is the extent to which the findings or data collected can be replicated. The validity and reliability of research are important because they judge the quality of the study and the extent to which the findings can be relied upon. The concepts offered for this judging criterion include trustworthiness, credibility; confirm ability, accuracy, meaningfulness, and data dependability (Merriam 1998; Creswell 2003; Yin 2003).

Yin (2003:34) lists four tests commonly used to establish the quality of research, and the recommended case study tactics for ensuring validity and reliability of the methodology. The tests, suggesting case study tactics as well as the phase of case study research in which they are to be implemented are illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3: Case study tactics for four design tests (Yin 2003:34)

Tests	Case Study Tactic	Phase of research in which tactic occurs
Construct Validity	• Use multiple sources of evidence • Establish chain of evidence • Have key informants review draft case study report	data collection data collection composition
Internal Validity	• Do pattern-matching • Do explanation-building • Address rival explanations • Use logic models	data analysis data analysis data analysis data analysis
External Validity	• Use theory in single-case studies • Use replication in multiple-case studies	research design research design
Reliability	• Use case study protocol • Develop case study database	data collection data collection

The case study tactics listed in Table 3 were adhered to as a guide during this study. The use of the recommended case study tactics aided in ensuring consistency with regards to the research construct validity, external validity, and internal validity while simultaneously facilitating the case study reliability (Yin 2003).

3.7.1 Construct validity

Construct validity refers to defining the right strategy for measuring the concepts being studied. This is a particularly problematic test for case study investigators who have been criticised of failing to develop suitably operational measures, and resorting to using subjective judgements to collect data (Yin 2003).

Construct validity was not a deterrent to the credibility of this study as the results were not dependent on the researcher's personal opinions but rather on the collation and assessment of evidence from multiple data sources within the case site. Furthermore, the interview questions employed to collect data during the study were all compiled from the results of the theory research.

3.7.2 Internal validity

> "The internal validity of a research study is the extent to which its design and the data it yields allow the researcher to draw accurate conclusions about cause-and–effect and other relationships within the data." (Leedy and Ormrod 2005:97)

Internal validity is primarily a concern for the credibility of explanatory or causal studies. However, for case studies, it typically arises where the investigator makes inferences that particular events are a result of earlier occurrences based on evidence collected as part of the case study (Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

To ensure that the study findings were congruent with reality, the concept of triangulation was applied ensuring basic enhancing of internal validity through the use of multiple sources of data to converge at a judgement by pooled or

matching data. Triangulation during this study produced some inconsistent data which were addressed to gain a holistic comprehension of the rival explanations (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

The researcher also applied both peer and expert supervisory examination of the emergent findings. A collaborative mode of research was employed to involve the participants, and confirm the results as well as the logic against the literature (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003).

3.7.3 External validity

External validity deals with the extent to which a study's results are applicable to situations beyond the immediate case study and can be generalised to other contexts (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003; Leedy and Ormrod 2005). Although samples are generalised to a larger universe in survey research, critics contrast this situation to single case studies which they view as a weak basis for generalising. On the other hand, the rigorous approach of single case studies can produce significant contribution to the building of knowledge and theory (Yin 2003).

The decision to use a single case study provided the opportunity for the discovery of new and relevant information which can be used for future guidance in altering or modifying the research design to multiple case studies. The pertinent issue in this case was not whether the study of more cases is better than the study of one or fewer cases, but rather, the appropriateness of the case chosen and the amount of new and relevant information likely to be generated from incremental cases (Eisenhardt 1991; Yin 2003).

The organisation that was chosen for this research is one that has a prior history of striving to excel in talent management. There has been no evidence suggesting that the organisation suffers from any talent management barriers or differs from a typical South African NGO. The organisation, however, is funded chiefly by grants from the government of the United States of America (US) and therefore did not at the time of this study suffer from the funding shortages that sometimes plague some NGOs (Viedge 2008; Right to Care 2009).

The choice to use a real-life NGO scenario yields results with broader applicability to other NGOs as opposed to the results that would have emerged if the study been carried out in a more controlled environment (Leedy and Ormrod 2005).

3.7.4 Reliability

This test of credibility demonstrates that the operations of the research can be repeated to yield the same results (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003). The researcher sought to minimise errors and biases in the study by adhering to the case study protocol (Yin 2003).

> "The protocol is a major way of increasing the reliability of case study research and is intended to guide the investigator in carrying out the data collection from a single-case study." (Yin 2003:67)

In addition, the researcher also developed and maintained the recommended case-study database which facilitates reviewing of the evidence gathered directly minimising dependence on the written report for verification purposes.

CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 A single case study report

The nature of this research led to the selection a single case study approach as the most suitable method for analysing talent management practices within a non-profit organisation. The case study results were derived from a series of questions and answers following interview sessions at the case site. The approach adopted in completing this report is that of the classic single-case study report format defined by Yin (2003) which entails using a single narrative augmented with tabular and graphic displays to present, describe, and analyse the findings. The theoretical propositions from the literature review were applied for analysing, interpreting, comparing and contrasting similar themes and patterns to explain the research results as demonstrated in this chapter.

The case site chosen for this research is introduced and briefly described in Section 4.2 of this chapter while the non-disclosure of individual study identities is described and justified in Section 4.3. The demographic profile of the respondents is presented in section Section 4.4 followed by the sections detailing the research results from the interview-guided conversations, the rating scale questionnaire, and Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich's (2007) "Talent Development Survey" (TDS). Rather than presenting all the raw data gathered during the interviews, the approach taken was to identify and present recurring themes and identify unique instances (Creswell 2003; Yin 2003) for each of the five distinct RTC employee classifications which form the five categories of respondents for this study.

4.2 The case site: Right to Care (RTC)

The non-profit organisation chosen as the case site for this study is Right to Care (RTC). As already mentioned, RTC describe themselves as:

> "Right to Care is a non-profit organisation (Section 21) that builds public- and private-sector capacity for the provision of antiretroviral therapy to HIV-positive individuals." (Right to Care 2009)

RTC focuses on innovation and the use of technology to deliver HIV treatment, care, and support. The organisation has a history of striving to excel in its talent management and although built on a strong entrepreneurial culture, it does not seem to differ from a typical South African NGO or suffer from any talent management barriers (Viedge 2008; Right to Care 2009).

The organisation's defining statements from its website are compiled below:



Our Vision

All HIV-positive patients to receive high quality treatment, care and support improving their quality of life, productivity and survival.

Our Mission

To facilitate access and build capacity to deliver innovative HIV treatment, care and support services.

Figure 10: Adaptation illustrating "About Right to Care" from the RTC Internet Home Page (Right to Care 2009)

The organisation was established in Johannesburg in 2001 and is chiefly funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). This funding, which is America's initiative to combat the global HIV/AIDS pandemic, comes specifically from the United States President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR Funds). RTC uses the funding to pay for the care and treatment of more than 110 000 HIV-positive individuals and to support more than 100 clinics in South Africa. The organisation has three executive directors and approximately 500 staff members distributed across five provinces in South Africa where the organisation has established a presence (Right to Care 2009; The U.S. President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief – PEPFAR 2009).

Apart from its talent management reputation, the researcher's choice to use RTC as the site for this study is further supported by the RTC leadership statement regarding organisational and talent performance which declares that "the performance of the organisation and each staff member is highly monitored to ensure successful results" (RTC Annual Report 2007:1).

4.3 Case site identities

The question of anonymity pertaining to the identity of the case site does not arise as RTC was primarily selected due to its reputation of ardently pursuing excellence in the managing of its talent force. The researcher in agreement with Yin (2003) is of the view that divulging the case site identity is a desirable option which will facilitate the ease of integrating the findings of this study with future research and if necessary, allow for the reviewing of the entire case.

With regards to the identities of the individual interviewees, however, the researcher, unlike Yin (1994) was of the opinion that anonymity was necessary in light of the following notions:

- Disclosing the identities of the individual interviewees would stifle their willingness to freely share their views especially if these were contradictory or critical of RTC talent management practices. This notion

was affirmed during the interviews by the recurring requests by individuals to remain anonymous.

- Analysing the holistic application of ideal talent management practices within the NGO is a study of the organisation and as such does not require the divulging of the true identities of the individual interviewees (Yin 2003).

- Protecting the participants is recommended if there is a possibility that issuance of the final report could subsequently affect them (Yin 2003). Although the researcher found no evidence that the respondents would be affected by the report, the fact that they were employees of RTC was considered pertinent and likely to affect their responses.

Based on the above issues, the researcher decided that the potential value of rich uninhibited information outweighed the value of revealing the individuals' names. Therefore, the option of a compromise whereby the case itself is accurately identified while maintaining the anonymity of the individual interviewees was adopted.

4.4 The case study respondents

The initial research plan was to interview 25 RTC staff members. The number of interviews conducted in comparison to the original plan and the resultant profile of respondents is as presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Profile of respondents (Right to Care 2009)

Description of respondent type	Number sampled
1. Executive directors	3
2. Programme leaders	8: initial plan was for 9
3. HR department Staff	5
4. Line managers	5
5. Employees classified as talent	3
Total number of participants interviewed	24

The realisation that the feedback from the eight programme leaders interviewed was basically similar led to the decision to cease persisting for an interview with the ninth programme leader. The 24 interviews were conducted following an interview appointment schedule which is replicated in the following Table 5 with the programme leaders being represented by the phrase P – Leader while the line managers are denoted by L – Manager.

Table 5: Schedule of 2009 RTC case study interviews

SCHEDULE OF THE 24 RTC INTERVIEWS: APPOINTMENT TIME-SLOTS SELECTED BY RESPONDENTS

MORNING INTERVIEWS			
TIME		**Friday 15th May**	
7:00 - 8:00		1) 1st Director	
TIME	**Monday 25th May**	**Friday 29th May**	**Monday 1st June**
8:00 - 9:00	2) 1st P - Leader	7) 1st HR Officer	
9:30 - 10:30		8) 2nd HR Officer	9) 5thP - Leader
11:00 - 12:00	3) 2nd P - Leader		10) 2nd L - Manager
12:30 - 1:30	4) 3rd P - Leader		
AFTERNOON INTERVIEWS			
TIME	**Tuesday 26th May**		**Tuesday 2nd June**
11:00 - 12:00			11) 3rd HR Officer
12:30 - 1:30	5) 4th P - Leader		12) 2nd Director
2:00 - 3:00	6) 1st L - Manager		13) 3rd Director
MORNING INTERVIEWS			
TIME	**Monday 8th June**	**Friday 12th May**	**Monday 15th June**
8:00 - 9:00	14) 4th HR Officer	17) 6th P - Leader	18) 1st Employee
9:30 - 10:30	15) 5th HR Officer		19) 4th L - Manager
11:00 - 12:00	16) 3rd L - Manager		20) 2nd Employee
AFTERNOON INTERVIEWS			
TIME	**Wednesday 17th June**		**Tuesday30th June**
11:00 - 12:00	21) 5th L - Manager		23) 3rd Employee
12:30 - 1:30	22) 7th P - Leader		24) 8th P - Leader

All the interviews took place in Johannesburg; most of them at the RTC headquarters while some were conducted telephonically. To expedite the process of conducting the interviews and minimise the disruption to RTC

operations, the researcher prepared a schedule and requested each of the interviewees chosen to select a suitable time slot. Table 5 above depicts the final schedule and resultant timings of the 24 interviews.

The numbers 1st, 2nd, 3rd, up to 5th or 8th depending on the number of interviewees within each category represent the corresponding interview order that the respondent happened to fall in as a result of the date and time slot chosen in relation to the other respondents within similar job categories. To uphold each respondent's anonymity as earlier decided, these numbers will not be used when presenting or analysing the results as the schedule was availed to all respondents and anyone with knowledge of one's interview date and time would be in a position to deduce the interviewee's identity. Consequently, the following interviewee responses presented and explained could be from any of the three, five, or eight interviewed within the various employee categories.

4.4.1 Demographic profile of the respondents

Although the interviewees share the commonality of being RTC employees, the 24 respondents comprised of a varied distribution indicative of the demographic diversity within the organisation.

It should be noted that the demographic make-up of the respondents was not a factor considered by the researcher when selecting the interviewees. The respondents were chosen in their capacity as directors, programme leaders, line managers, HR officers, and RTC employees who were involved in and impacted by the organisation's talent management without prior regard to the demographic profile.

Despite the aforementioned criteria used in the selection of respondents, the interviewed employees formed a demographic breakdown that spread across the variables of age, gender, race, years of service, and position at RTC. The distributions of the respondents across these demographic variables are presented in the following figures 11 to 15.

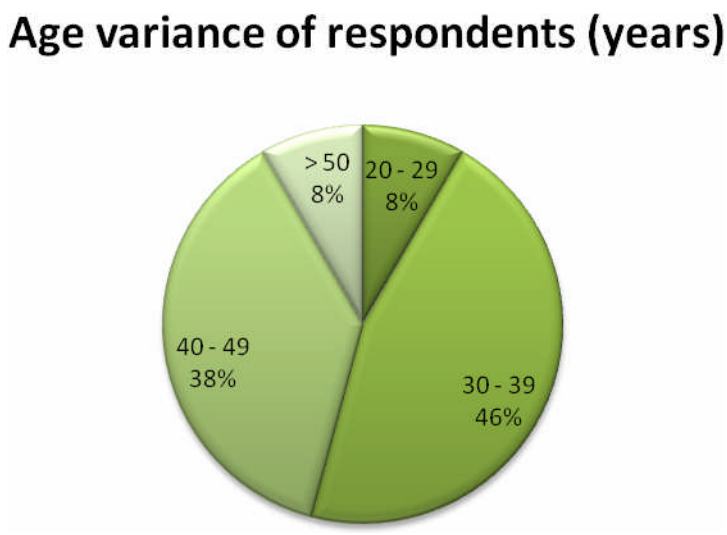


Figure 11: Chart depicting age group distribution of respondents

The respondents were from a wide range of ages as illustrated in Figure 11 above. The largest representation in this study was of the ages 30 to 39 years making up 11 of the respondents. The remaining constituted 9 from the 40 to 49 group with the final 4 falling equally in the over 50 years and the 20 to 29 group.

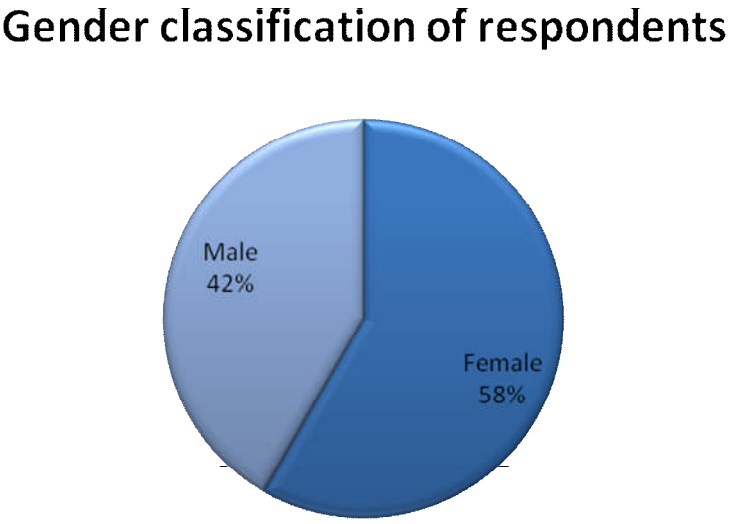


Figure 12: Gender profile of respondents chart presentation

The 24 interviewees were represented by 14 females and 10 males making up the graphic presentation in Figure 12 above.

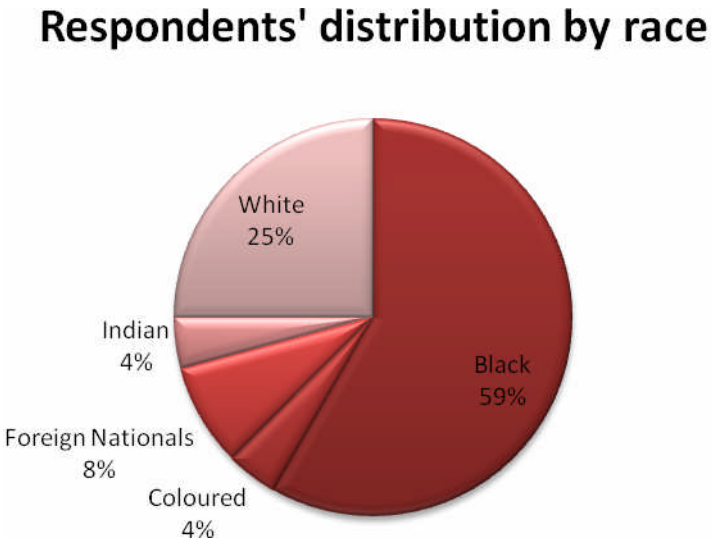


Figure 13: Demographic profile chart – distribution of respondents by race

As illustrated in Figure 13, majority of the interviewees were black making up 14 of the 24 respondents. The white employees interviewed were 6 with 2 foreign nationals, 1 coloured person, and 1 Indian completing the ethnographic profile.

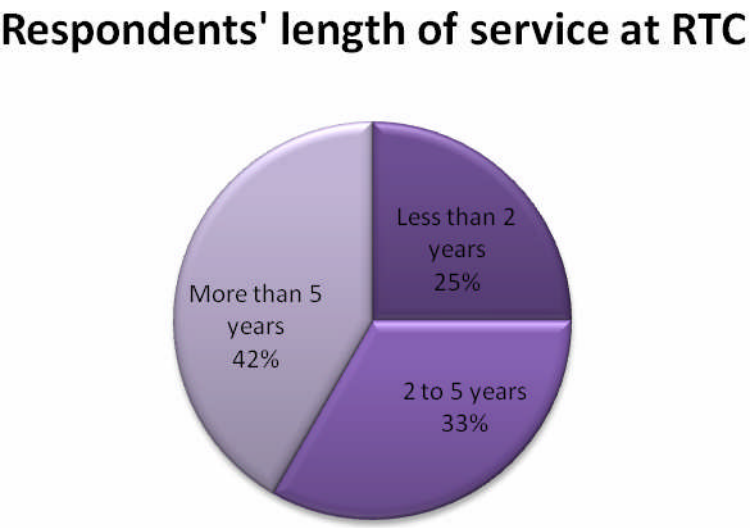


Figure 14: Chart representing respondents' years of service at RTC

Ten of the interviewees had been with RTC for over 5 years forming the 42% represented in Figure 14 above. Eight respondents had served the organisation for between 2-5 years while the final six had been with RTC for less than 2 years.

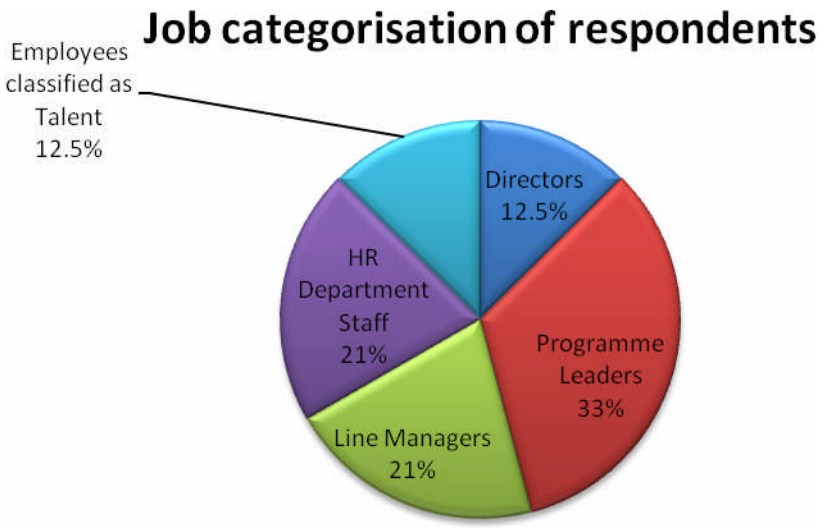


Figure 15: Demographic profile chart – job classification of respondents

The job classification of the respondents depicted in Figure 15 breaks down to three directors, 8 programme leaders, 5 line managers, 5 HR officers and 3 employees.

4.4.2 *Analysis of the profile of respondents*

Neither the literature review nor the results evaluated demonstrate the demographic profile as having an impact on the importance and application of talent management processes. It is apparent to the researcher that talent is talent and requires proper management regardless of the age, race, gender or any other demographic diversity.

As pertains to the number of respondents, the researcher had planned to interview 25 RTC staff members but was one interviewee short due to the complete and utter lack of response from one programme leader despite numerous overtures by the researcher. This occurrence was providential as it

demonstrated to the researcher that the respondents were not under any sort of duress to participate in the study. The researcher therefore suggests that the assumption at the beginning of the study that the interviewees would give honest and accurate responses held true as illustrated by the rich, uninhibited, and thorough results which have allowed for a complete and thorough assessment of RTC's talent management system.

4.5 RTC talent management strategy

The literature findings identified talent management as being the single most important force and the strategic driver for creating organisational value and enhancing corporate performance (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007). Successful talent management begins with the organisation's definition of talent and the establishment of talent management as a critical part of the organisation's business strategy (Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Morton 2004; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008).

4.5.1 Results pertaining to RTC definition of talent

Question 1 (refer to Appendix 1) which facilitated the beginning of the interview guided conversation was formulated to clarify RTC's definition of talent. The question along with the compiled answers on the respondent perceptions of how RTC defines talent is presented in the following Table 6.

Table 6: Definition of talent at RTC

Respondent type	**Responses to Question 1:** **How does RTC define talent?** • **Briefly describe the attributes which in your view epitomise good talent in an RTC employee.**
Executive directors	RTC Talent: • Is qualified, motivated, innovative, and has a good understanding of RTC values • Is self-driven, challenges the norms, comes up with new ideas, and gets things done • Cares about his/her duties, roles and responsibilities, and does not mind being held accountable • Is guided by the RTC vision and mission
Programme leaders	RTC Talent: • Is not confined by the job description and innovatively achieves results which are in line with RTC mission and targets • Is committed, dedicated, passionate, hardworking, and prepared to identify gaps which may require going the extra mile • Is qualified, skilled, target driven, not afraid to take on new challenges as well as ownership • Is honest, faithful, loyal, not afraid to ask for help or acknowledge personal limitations • Is flexible, works independently and professionally • Communicates well, has good listening skills, the right mindset, and a reputable character • Adheres to RTC vision and values
HR officers	RTC Talent: • Is qualified and can multitask within RTC, working towards a common objective • Is not afraid of challenges, rather ready and willing to learn and to take ownership • Is committed, flexible, works well, and a good communicator with good listening skills

Respondent type	Responses to Question 1: How does RTC define talent? • Briefly describe the attributes which in your view epitomise good talent in an RTC employee.
HR officers	RTC Talent: • Is a team player, helpful, and not self-centred • Is a forward and logical thinker, passionate, open-minded, and a risk-taker
Line managers	RTC Talent: • Can see the big picture • Is self-motivated, confident and flexible • Is a cooperative team player who is willing to take responsibility • Is an honest independent worker with a positive attitude towards the job requirements and other staff members • Is intelligent, hard-working, and possesses good listening skills • Values and abides by RTC objectives and goals
Employees classified as talent	RTC Talent: • Has the right skills, attitudes, and RTC values • Is goal driven and willing to learn • Always asks questions and always pushes beyond expectations

Most of the attributes and descriptions given for RTC talent and detailed in Table 6 above came up repeatedly and were mentioned in one form or another during each of the 24 interviews.

4.5.2 Analysis of RTC definition of talent

The term talent for the purposes of this study was defined to refer to high-performing employees whose contributions are vital to an organisation's exceptional performance (Morton 2004). Talent at RTC is essentially defined in

this same way particularly due to the fact that all the talent attributes listed in Table 6 above facilitate high and exceptional performance establishing the value placed on talent and the subsequent talent mindset and culture within the organisation (Guthridge, Komm and Lawson 2006; McCauley and Wakefield 2006; Ready and Conger 2007).

Most of the respondents started off reciting the list of RTC talent attributes with the need for qualifications. However, none of them stopped there indicating that talent at RTC has to go beyond possessing the relevant knowledge and skills. The interviewees went on to mention several personal attributes, behaviours, ethics, and leadership intelligences illustrating the high standards required of RTC talent. One programme leader after describing similar talent attributes at RTC went on to qualify the statement saying:

> "Talent at RTC is seen as someone who could do even if they don't do. I've seen talent perceived, motivated, and even paid for prior to being demonstrated." (RTC programme leader 2009)

This single rival point of evidence suggested that talent at RTC could be individuals who have the potential but are underperforming. However, the same point goes on to illustrate that the said talent was given a chance and motivated for better performance. Literature findings in support of this indicated that talent should be defined at all levels of the organisation giving a chance to all individuals who have the capability (Peters and Smith 1996; Morton 2004; Pollitt 2004; Cappeli 2008).

Having ascertained the definition and importance of talent at RTC, the next study question to be analysed pertains to the establishing of the talent management strategy as a critical part of the organisation's business strategy.

4.5.3 Results pertaining to the RTC strategy for talent management

Findings from the literature review revealed that an organisation's talent management strategy should ideally be the domain of the executive (Heinen and O'Neill 2004). In keeping with these findings, the first part of Question 2

(refer to Appendix 1) was constructed specifically for the directors. The question asked if RTC has a talent management strategy and required the directors to broadly describe it.

Although the directors are all cognisant of the value of excellent talent management and are all actively involved in promoting a culture that is in line with this belief, they have not defined a formal RTC talent management strategy. Nevertheless, with RTC rapidly growing as it is, different short-term talent needs and strategies are defined and addressed during the various organisation growth phases.

Having appraised the talent management strategy, the second part of Question 2, part b (refer to Appendix 1), was addressed to the HR staff to analyse HR's role in RTC talent plans. The question asked HR officials to briefly define the department's role within RTC's talent management structure.

RTC HR officials started off by confirming the lack of a formal strategy for the organisation's talent management. HR is mainly process-orientated and plays a supportive function in ensuring that the organisation first and foremost has staff, and that this staff complement is informed and educated, and that they adhere to RTC expectations, policies, and procedures.

4.5.4 Analysis of RTC strategy for talent management

RTC leadership has not yet drafted a formal talent strategy although the directors in response to Question 2 of the interview schedule mentioned their ongoing discussions around the formalising and documenting of a talent management strategy. The directors discussing the organisation's proposed talent strategy demonstrated to the researcher that they all possess a talent mindset by speaking of their understanding of the strategic importance of talent at RTC. Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008) define a talent mindset as the fundamental belief in the importance of better talent at all levels of the organisation to not only produce extraordinary results, but to also outperform competitors. A discussion around talent strategy creates a talent mindset which in turn, facilitates the developing of a talent strategy. However, despite the

directors demonstrating a talent mindset, the answers to the question indicate that the organisation currently, neither has nor follows a talent management strategy. This lack was succinctly lamented by one programme leader who said:

> "Floundering without strategic direction for the organisation's talent is the biggest constraint holding back RTC talent." (RTC programme leader 2009)

This programme leader's argument was synonymous with the directors' belief that defining a clear structure, roles and responsibilities for current and future talent would facilitate even better performance by the organisation's talent. The literature findings identify organisations that are successful in their talent management as those that have a talent strategy that is linked to the overall business strategy. Heinen and O'Neill (2004) described this crucial linking of talent strategy to business strategy as a process that they illustrated in six steps (refer to Figure 2:12). The success of talent management practices at RTC was, however, established despite the organisation's lack of a talent management strategy. This outcome indicates to the researcher that in addition to the importance of a talent management strategy as detailed in the literature, equally if not more important is the attitude and mindset of the organisation's leadership. This position supports the literature revelations that an organisation's CEO should personally drive the planning and development of the organisation's talent, and be the ultimate owner of the talent management system (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001; Heinen and O'Neill 2004). The case study results indicate that the RTC directors view on the overall importance of talent for extraordinary performance is clearly replicated in the majority of the organisation's employees. This mindset has led to the development of talent management at RTC supporting the literature findings that effective and sustainable talent management begins with the senior leaders developing a talent mindset which is essential because the real barriers to talent management are formed and set in the mind (Guthridge, Komm and Lawson 2006; McCauley and Wakefield 2006).

4.5.5 Conclusions on RTC talent management strategy

The interviewees all had a clear and in most cases similar opinion of the definition of talent at RTC. Talent at RTC can be summarised as:

- Qualified or professional having the relevant knowledge and skills
- Innovative thinker, motivated, self-driven and dedicated
- Having leadership attributes, self-management and taking ownership
- Possessing personal integrity; honest, faithful and committed
- Good at relationship management, a good communicator and team player
- Practising RTC values the core of which is patient focus
- Change-oriented individual who challenges the norms
- Dedicated hard worker with a positive attitude
- Is guided by the RTC vision and mission

Although the directors do not yet have a formal talent management strategy, it can be concluded that the topic of talent and talent management is one that all of RTC is well acquainted with.

Given that RTC is only eight years old it is concluded that in the short term, the organisation's success in talent management is dependent upon its top leadership's ability to identify the importance of talent management. The results demonstrate that RTC leadership, having developed a talent mindset; actively make the organisation's talent their priority even without a formal talent strategy. However, it should also be noted that the analysis of the results show that all of the RTC directors are of the view that having a talent management strategy is an area that the organisation should develop.

4.6 Attracting and recruiting of talent at RTC

The purpose of this study is to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African non-profit organisation and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives. Having established the importance of talent management at RTC, the first talent management imperative identified in literature and discussed in section 2.3 is the attracting and recruiting of suitable talent by the organisation. Consequently, the third set of results that the researcher analysed are from Question 3 of the interview schedule addressing the organisation's employee value propositions that make RTC an attractive employer of choice.

4.6.1 Results pertaining to RTC Employee Value Proposition (EVP)

Question 3 (refer to Appendix 1) of the interview schedule was constructed to ascertain the employee value propositions behind the respondents' willingness to continue working at RTC. The interviewees were further asked if they would recommend RTC as a choice employer to external talent.

The interviewees answered the question in their capacity as RTC staff reminiscing on the reasons why they applied to RTC and why they stayed. They all declared their unqualified recommendation of RTC as an excellent employer.

The directors spoke of RTC being a venue through which individuals could reach out and change people's lives without getting frustrated by the bureaucracy that is rampant at government sites that have the same objectives as RTC (RTC director 2009). One director speaking with pride in the organisation's achievements stated:

> "We want our employees to be happy where they are so we create an enabling environment by defining the outcome and giving our staff the freedom to implement, innovate, and work well." (RTC director 2009)

RTC's reputation for recognising talent and developing people in a field where all of the respondents are passionate topped the list of EVP elements as

reported by the programme leaders. HIV/AIDS was referred to as a dynamic field to which RTC offers continuous growth, development, training and advancement so that having worked with the organisation gives one's resumé expertise status in the industry (RTC programme leader 2009). The programme leaders reflecting on why they continue to utilise their talents to advance the organisation's objectives spoke positively of RTC's physical and social working environment, commending the sincere employee recognition and appreciation which forms an integral part of the organisation's culture. Admitting that the work was challenging and at times overwhelming, the programme leaders described the desire to utilise and not waste their talents, stating that had they only desired better pay, they would have sought positions within the private sector (RTC programme leader 2009). Most of the programme leaders were of the opinion that RTC is a better remunerator than other organisations in the industry. The leaders listed remuneration as one of the elements of the organisation's EVP, describing a balance that the organisation seeks to find between the private sector, government, and market-related salaries (RTC programme leader 2009). The programme leaders lauded the organisation, saying it has a reputation of living up to its name in the way it cares for its employees, making "caring" another one of its EVP elements.

The line managers viewed the nature of the organisation and their passion for the field in which RTC operates as the leading element of the employee value proposition.

> "RTC offers me what I need, which is not money but an honest institution which would recognise my efforts." (RTC line manager 2009)

RTC is seen as providing talent with a unique opportunity to work in development and make a positive contribution to South Africa without going bankrupt in the process (RTC line manager 2009). As was the case with the programme leaders, the organisation's reputation for talent training, development, growth and recognition was repeatedly mentioned by the line managers along with its attractive working environment. Communications, trust, freedom to challenge and innovate are some of the EVP elements that lead to a

win-win situation for RTC and its talent. As a result, RTC talent are proud to be linked to the success of an organisation that is creative, innovative and influential in its industry (RTC line manager 2009). On remuneration, however, the view was divided with some managers reporting their salaries as being market related while others were of the opinion that the organisation is not a good remunerator, stating that several employees stayed on because of their passion (RTC line manager 2009). Despite these feelings, the consensus among line managers is that the organisation offers extremely attractive benefits especially the medical aid, pension and disability funds which could barely be matched by other organisations.

HR personnel having conducted a remuneration survey of the organisation's salary scales against other PEPFAR/USAID funded NGOs reported that RTC is up to par with the highest payers. In adherence to an agreement with USAID, the organisation pays a specified rate range above the market or government base. Although the researcher obtained documentation for triangulation of the information, the RTC rates are not disclosed to maintain the requested confidentiality. The organisation's remuneration is one of the elements of the RTC employee value propositions that results in the high volumes of unsolicited applications from employees working with other organisations (RTC HR officer 2009). RTC will not consider such applications in honour of the "gentlemen's agreement" that they have with several of these organisations to not poach each other's employees (RTC HR officer 2009). HR personnel also cited as reasons for talent desiring to work with RTC, the development opportunities, RTC's reputation of quality and excellence in experience and the vigorous training the NGO provides in a challenging and ever-changing HIV/AIDS environment. With the numerous elements of the organisation's EVP, RTC's reputation and industry leadership status is, in the HR staff view, the leading reason for the high numbers of unsolicited applications as well as high volumes of responses to all advertised positions.

The employees interviewed were of the view that the organisation's reputation of providing opportunities for advancement, development and growth is the leading RTC EVP element. Following this is the organisation's culture and

values especially the open-door policy and the trust and partnership with the management (RTC employee 2009). The employees all viewed the medical cover provided as an important proposition along with the job security that they felt they have at RTC.

4.6.2 *Analysis of the RTC employee value proposition*

The employee value proposition is described in literature as the complete sum of all that people experience and receive while working with an organisation (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008). The interviewees when responding to Question 3 recounted a fairly long list of what they experience and receive which add up to RTC's employee value proposition. The answers demonstrate that RTC's reputation for excellence especially in the commendable handling of talent, and their leadership in the HIV/AIDS field are deemed to be the most outstanding elements of the Organisation's EVP. The respondents describing the elements of the organisation's EVP illustrated that the organisation provides an attractive working environment through its culture, values, and the open-door policy leading to high levels of trust and partnership with the management. It should be noted that although some of the interviewees were disgruntled about the remuneration, majority were happy and considered RTC pay as an important element of the organisation's EVP. The HR personnel confidentially provided the researcher with documentation of the RTC salary bands for the study purposes. Unfortunately, the researcher not having much expertise in this area and in respect of the confidentiality request was not in a position to make an objective judgement besides noting that the salary scales appeared to be good.

The discussions on the EVP elements established the proposition that the high quality talent at RTC are not only interested in participating in great achievements but also in feeling that they are a part of something they can define as special (Herman and Gioia 2001). The results demonstrate that RTC promises implied at the time of employment have all been fulfilled in the minds of the participants. This supports the findings from literature which suggest that an organisation's employee value proposition needs to be strong and consistent

with the organisation's brand as an employer of choice (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001). RTC has accomplished this notion successfully as illustrated by claims from all the interviewees that they would recommend the organisation as an excellent employer to others.

The researcher therefore concludes that the study findings on RTC employee value proposition correlates with and supports the literature findings on EVP. The organisation does not, however, rely on its EVP for the purposes of attracting external talent but rather, as one director clarified, for branding internally (RTC director 2009). The researcher would argue that although the elements of RTC employee value proposition are tailored for internal branding purposes, the power of the employee word of mouth to outsiders cannot be overlooked. The fact that all of the interviewees were aware of RTC and sought employment with the organisation as well as HR's report of the in-pouring of unsolicited applications indicate that the organisation's branding and EVP is one of the key factors that facilitate its ability to attract and recruit the talent it needs. The RTC success in identifying, attracting and recruiting of talent as well as other factors that enhance this ability form the subject matter of Question 4 and are discussed next.

4.6.3 *Results pertaining to RTC identifying, attracting and recruiting suitable talent*

The assessment of the NGO's ability to identify suitable talent and consequently attract and hire them led to the formulation of Question 4 (refer to Appendix 1) of the interview schedule. The following Table 7 states the question and summarises the findings on RTC's talent attraction and recruiting capabilities and strategies.

Table 7: How RTC attracts and recruits talent

Respondent type	Responses to Question 4: **Does the organisation have the competencies necessary to identify suitable talent, attract and hire them?** • **Briefly outline the recruitment activities which are routinely undertaken when acquiring new talent into the organisation.**
Executive directors	• Recruitment takes place when necessary which with the current RTC growth rate is once every two months. In the previous years, RTC growing rapidly was hiring at a level equivalent to acquiring one new person every working day of the year • The primary source of advertising for RTC positions is the local newspapers • With regards to identifying talent, the directors occasionally meet people whom they deem as having the right fit for RTC. The directors keep abreast of these individuals and when a suitable opportunity arises within the organisation, approach them with the offer • At times, the directors will identify where there is a need that can be met locally such as the need for pharmaceutical assistants in certain rural areas. In such cases RTC will embark on a project of training matriculants from the affected rural areas to fill the organisation's requirements
Programme leaders	• Each programme leader is in charge of their individual programme and is allocated a budget for operations. Programme recruitments are conducted in line with the budget, as and when needed • For professional hires such as doctors and pharmacists, the services of a recruitment agency is employed • Pertaining to other positions, internal advertisements on the RTC intranet are the first step to filling the position followed by external advertisements in the local newspapers

Respondent type	Responses to Question 4: **Does the organisation have the competencies necessary to identify suitable talent, attract and hire them?** • **Briefly outline the recruitment activities which are routinely undertaken when acquiring new talent into the organisation.**
Programme leaders	• HR plays a support role assisting with an understanding of how to conduct interviews, use aptitude tests, write proper contracts, and deal with various recruitment issues • Programme leaders are involved in final interviews to verify required attributes, attitudes and characters that are required for talent to present the right fit in a position
HR officers	• RTC recruiting is done internally first before accessing external talent through local newspaper advertisements • Clarity about the positions vacant is critical and is provided by the line managers completing templates on the skills and attributes required • An external consultant is used for the initial screening and short-listing of professionals • Beyond professional qualification, HR, programme leaders and line managers assess various attributes to verify a fit with RTC values • There have been some hires that are top management decisions including the job description and salary range
Line managers	• Line management role in recruitment is the preparation of clear definitions of roles, responsibilities and requirements to be reproduced by HR in advertisements • Some RTC hires are top management directives to HR
Employees classified as talent	• HR recruits based on skills and merit • Employees are invited to apply for positions first before HR conducts external recruiting

The discussions with the interviewees revealed that RTC has and continues to grow and increase rapidly. Due to this ongoing expansion, talent selection and recruiting as presented in Table 7 above is for the most part a yearlong activity within the organisation. Although talent attraction and recruiting is primarily HR's responsibility all levels of staff interviewed with the exception of those classified as "employees" reported active involvement and input at various levels of this process.

4.6.4 *Analysis of identifying, attracting and recruiting of talent at RTC*

RTC's success in recruiting for the talent it needs was demonstrated not only by the interview results but also by the researcher's observation of ongoing interviews at the case site as well as an induction for several new employees.

The interviewees were all very clear on what is defined as talent at RTC and the HR team described as well as presented to the researcher with various forms that the line managers are required to fill outlining job requirements before any advertising or recruiting takes place. This clarity is described in the literature review as being the beginning of a sound hiring system (Wellins 2001; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007). The theory findings indicate that before rushing out to recruit, managers should give internal candidates a chance to apply or demonstrate their ability to fill a given post (Pollitt 2004) a concept that is clearly demonstrated by RTC advertising and where possible, recruiting for all jobs internally first.

RTC is continually growing and continuously hiring. When wooing specific talent that they need, one HR officer stated that "if a person is not accepting our offer of remuneration increase, we raise it." The organisation will within specified limits find ways to obtain the talent they desire. This supports the literature findings that the power of selection which once lay with organisations has shifted to talented people who are aware of their value and are also more easily enticed to take the next better offer (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001). As a result, Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001) suggest using new recruiting strategies as opposed to conventional strategies and contrast the

two strategies (refer to Table 1:19). The case results demonstrate that RTC employs some of the new strategies recommended but for the most part relies on what the literature findings refer to as old recruiting strategies (Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001). The new recruiting strategies that RTC employs include, hunting for talent all the time, breaking compensation rules to get the candidates they want and developing a recruiting strategy for each type of talent (HR officer 2009). The evidence from the interviews suggest that the success RTC has in the attracting and recruiting of talent especially as relates to the medical profession is due to a very positive EVP. The organisation is a good employer and constantly has good people presenting themselves as prospective employees and as demonstrated through the answers, positions advertised for at RTC are typically flooded with responses. It is evident that RTC is well able to attract and recruit for the talent it needs especially given the organisation's growth and high performance.

4.6.5 *Conclusions on the attracting and recruiting of talent at RTC*

Elements of RTC employee value proposition can be summarised as the organisation's dedication to talent training, development, recognition, rewards, benefits, care and remuneration. It should be noted that although there is some disputed evidence with regards to RTC pay, majority say the remuneration is good. The organisation's leadership, expertise and quality reputation in the HIV field as well as the attractive working environment and the opportunity for innovation form the leading elements of RTC's EVP.

RTC employee value proposition therefore becomes the first among the factors identified that enable the organisation to successfully attract and recruit the talent it requires. The other factors concluded from the results include:

- Management involvement in recruiting which though mostly run by HR gets input for other departments
- Preparation and provision of a recruitment budget
- Clarity of talent professional requirements and work ethics

- Use of existing organisation talent to fill positions before external hires
- Well-defined recruitment procedures, policies and roles as prescribed by the HR department
- Involvement of management in assisting HR to select individuals with the desired talent attributes, attitudes and behaviours that go beyond the professional knowledge and skills
- Use of professional recruiters when necessary
- Use of local newspapers to advertise local positions

Even though the results indicate that the organisation does not put much effort into external talent attraction, it can be deduced that RTC is effective in accomplishing the research's second study problem as evidenced by the repeated reports of its success in identifying and recruiting suitable talent. Although RTC does not actively brand itself to external talent, the results indicate that its greatest attraction and one of the main reasons behind its success in recruiting is its employee value propositions. It is concluded that as much as various recruiting strategies are important to give an organisation an edge in the turbulent talent market, the results demonstrate that equally important is the organisation's reputation and ability to keep attracting its existing workforce.

4.7 The training and development of talent at RTC

The second talent management imperative identified during the literature research is the training and developing of an organisation's existing talent. Questions 5 and 6 (refer to Appendix 1) were formulated to elicit responses that appraised RTC's training and development efforts. The answers to these two questions are presented and evaluated in the following sections of this chapter.

4.7.1 *Results pertaining to RTC talent training and development*

Question 5 (refer to Appendix 1) of the interview schedule was constructed to evaluate how the organisation goes about training and developing its work force. The question and the resulting responses from the five RTC job groups interviewed are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8: How RTC trains and develops its talent

Respondent type	**Responses to Question 5:** **How does the organisation identify and respond to its staff training and development needs?**
Executive directors	• All RTC staff training and development is carried out in line with USAID funding regulations. As a result, RTC cannot pay for any degree courses or support more than 5 days' study leave annually • USAID provides RTC with an annual staff training budget. This has facilitated the organisation operating a training department which caters for the specific development requirements of the various job categories from the doctors, to the non-medic staff, to general HIV management • Most RTC staff training is performed in-house as required. However, where necessary, job-relevant external training is provided for • RTC staff development starts from the top with the directors and cascades to all levels of the organisation. Specific to the directors is the organisation's association with the Institute of Directors which resulted in attending a course on King II and King III codes of governance • In response to the need for fine-tuning of RTC managers, the organisation embarked on a mid-level and senior management training programme for a period of six months. The training focused on developing and advancing the calibre of managers within the organisation while also equipping them to effectively handle the recurring cases of burn-out and conflict resolution

Respondent type	Responses to Question 5: How does the organisation identify and respond to its staff training and development needs?
Programme leaders	• RTC has a training department that specialises in meeting specific training needs as and when they arise • RTC will pay for essential work-related courses such as Excel or Access refresher courses, if required by the employee's role • Realising that most of their leaders were first-time managers, RTC engaged consultants to develop all managers in various management and coaching skills over a period of six months of intensive in-house training • Given the ever-mutating nature of HIV, the organisation facilitates doctors, nurses and dieticians gathering together with consultants during Friday rounds to appraise new cases and fine-tune existing skills. RTC has taken this initiative a step further by availing full-time expertise skill and advice in the form of a paediatrician specialist whose job description is to train others and be accessible via toll-free phone to consult with all who require assistance • The organisation provides basic levels 1, 2, and 3 HIV management training for all staff with extended deep training for the different job categories as required
HR officers	• Line managers have to present a requisition to be apportioned a training budget from the available funds. Managers will then select the individuals who need to go for training which should be in line with the individual's existing or aspired roles, duties and responsibilities • RTC training is for the purposes of equipping individuals to perform as well as advancing their individual careers within the organisation • USAID regulations prohibit RTC paying for degree courses or allowing over 5 days' study leave. Nevertheless, support is given to employees who take the initiative for further personal development

Respondent type	Responses to Question 5: How does the organisation identify and respond to its staff training and development needs?
HR officers	• Essential external training, such as the labour relations workshops attended by HR, is encouraged and funded by the organisation • Recurring staff exits and the information from the staff exit interviews revealed the need for management training. RTC in response provided in-house training for all managers • Basic HIV training is provided with the aim of extending beyond RTC employees and reaching their friends and neighbours and the external RTC operation chain
Line managers	• RTC offers excellent HIV management training to all • RTC provides management and leadership training to all manages and leaders • The organisation's training is mostly conducted in-house but external workshops can be motivated for and RTC will pay as long as the budget has been planned for that particular department
Employees classified as talent	• The opportunity for training and development is available both in-house and externally as long as an individual is willing to learn • RTC will not pay for degree courses

The findings in Table 8 above are not just based on the organisation's policy but are backed by participant experience. The interviewees all recounted exposure to or involvement in various aspects of RTC training and development.

4.7.2 *Analysis of RTC talent training and development*

The nature of the duties and responsibilities carried out by RTC employees mostly require the use of cerebral skills as opposed to manual skills. Martel (2003) argues that organisations characterised by cerebral skills dominance

and pursuing high performance critically need continuous learning and skills development. The responses to Question 5 indicate that the RTC leadership as well as their chief funder, USAID, both realise this fact and plan as well as work towards continually developing the organisation's talent. The existence of the RTC training department within the organisation illustrates the value that the organisation places on ongoing staff training and development.

RTC employs several avenues for training its staff from their in-house training, to external courses, to workshops and using consultants to attain the required level of performance. Although some of the respondents seemed disgruntled over the fact that the organisation does not fund degree courses for its talent, the data from the interviews revealed that the organisation provides all the necessary training and development that its talent need to accomplish their duties. Furthermore, the results indicate that should an employee develop him or herself above their current responsibilities through a degree course, then RTC would recognise this improvement and advance that employee to a level more suited for their capabilities. RTC would carry on developing that employee as required to fulfil the responsibilities of that level.

Having established the organisation's diligence in the training and developing its talent, the researcher through Question 6 of the interview schedule sought to assess the value and impact of the training, learning and development on the organisation and its workforce.

4.7.3 *Results pertaining to the impact of RTC talent training and development*

Given RTC's reputed talent management prowess, Question 6 (refer to Appendix 1) of the interview schedule was constructed on the assumption that RTC management who made up most of the study respondents could be classified as talent and would therefore have undergone some talent training and development. The question requested the respondents to briefly describe how RTC training and development initiatives had impacted their individual performance. Following is the question and the direct responses given by the various levels of staff interviewed.

Has the organisation played any role in your professional development, growth and success?

- *If yes, briefly describe the impact that RTC training and development has had in your career.*

- *How do you envision training and development growing your personal skills as well as overall organisational skills in the future?*

    - For me, this is quite outstanding. RTC appointed me without any management experience. Training was arranged formally and expertise in all management areas including financial management, HR, and project management among others was provided to train and develop us and now I am a different person altogether (RTC line manager 2009).

    - I had no idea how to use a laptop but if I can use the computer today, those under me will also learn and do it. Today I call myself a guru. This is where I started and since someone gave me a chance, I too can, with respect and understanding, see the potential in others and be able to empower them (RTC programme leader 2009).

    - I've become a leader who is willing to be led. I can call on my subordinates who are gurus in their area of expertise and ask for assistance knowing that we work toward a common goal and that the relevant support is available for all of us (RTC director 2009).

    - I'm much more rounded than I was. I've developed a structural approach to how things are done (RTC director 2009).

    - I love this organisation because it has helped me grow as a person and I've got skills now that can help me open my own firm (RTC line manager 2009).

    - In any given year I get enough exposure for my Continuous Professional Development (CPD). The organisation has given me the opportunity to develop my strengths (RTC programme leader 2009).

- In-house and outside training has been provided which presented me with applicable approaches to best practice as a professional directly involved in offering a service to clients (RTC employee 2009).

- I took the initiative to be trained. With the two days training on labour relation and occupational health, nobody told me where to go but I've never been denied the opportunity. Through direct coaching by my direct supervisor, I was trained in everything I know (RTC HR officer 2009).

- I've grown through the in-house training, I was given the chance. From what I was, I can say I'm more confident in my work and I can face the world and talk boldly about HIV and RTC with what I've personally gained (RTC employee 2009).

- They've given me the platform to design and implement new things (RTC line manager 2009).

- The experience has strengthened my understanding in finance and led me to be able to empower the people below me. You learn from some people, you change systems and over time you impart that to your subordinates. Somebody has to make me look good which means my subordinates have to be empowered (RTC director 2009).

- The management coaching was a fantastic support from which I received advice on specific situations and an understanding of how specific actions fit within the overall picture of the organisation and within my personal management style and skills (RTC programme leader 2009).

- RTC supported me in attending labour law training which was a good course that has helped me better manage staffing issues (RTC HR officer 2009).

- The organisation has given me a scope to be what I want to be in recognising my strengths and weaknesses and giving me the space to grow as I assist the organisation in achieving its objectives (RTC programme leader 2009).

- Our success is also our downfall which was the reason for the recurring cases of burnout. What are outstanding about RTC training are the burn-out workshop and the availability of a psychologist's services to the staff. This has assisted me in identifying burn-out signs before it becomes a problem (RTC programme leader 2009).

- In this company there is no room for growth. You see new faces instead of them training us. They advertise internally then the position is filled with outsiders. RTC is biased against my race. It favours another race and they get first preference to everything whether they know the job or not (RTC employee 2009).

It should be noted that of the 24 responses to Question 6, some were extremely close in content. Therefore, the decision was taken to only reproduce the 16 direct responses above which essentially capture all the various participant reports on their personal assessments of RTC training and development.

With regards to future aspirations, all of the respondents barring one felt that there was room and the intention to continue developing their individual skills while achieving RTC's objectives. A number of the respondents are currently pursuing various degree courses which they are assured that although not paid for by the organisation, will be recognised and used to further their advancement in RTC chartering their future roles as well skills training and growth.

4.7.4 *Analysis of the effect of training and developing RTC talent*

> "There is a limit to what one can accomplish through continuous learning. The biggest development that one can ever gain is through the workplace by overcoming the challenges experienced at the workplace." (RTC director 2009)

These words from one of the RTC directors encapsulate the organisation's approach to measuring the value of its talent training and development. An organisation cannot effectively train its talent if the leadership consider training

and learning as a soft target for cost-reduction programmes (Cantrell, Benton, Laudal and Thomas 2006). The results illustrate that RTC leadership are appreciative of the improvement in the quality of the organisation's performance resulting from the staff training and development. It was observed and noted that while the respondents indicated a concern for how the current financial crisis may affect future RTC budgets, no suggestions were offered with regards to reducing the training budget.

RTC has developed a training and development culture that begins with the leadership and runs throughout the entire organisation. This insight into the organisation's culture leads to the argument that any employee or leader who has benefited from organisational training, development and advancement is most likely to encourage fellow employees or direct reports to develop themselves. Although this was not revealed during the literature review, the researcher was confronted over and over with the evidence of RTC leaders and managers who utterly believe in training and developing their subordinates and giving them the same chance that they had been given. The view is taken that this aspect of the results builds on existing theory. Training and development does not only lead to improved performance within an organisation (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008), it can also facilitate the growing of outstanding talent developing leaders within the organisation. The calibre of leaders suggested here are those who will go out of their way to ensure that their subordinates are offered the chance to develop and who can say like one RTC programme leader:

> "I believe that if people are trained, supported and empowered, there is no way that they will underperform." (RTC programme leader 2009)

Employee training and development is, however, twofold. As Peters and Smith (1996) and McCall (2008) explain, some employees are not keen on learning and are more comfortable doing what they believe they are employed to do which is to work and not to learn. The organisation could employ all sorts of training and development avenues but unless an employee is willing to advance, such efforts by the organisation would be futile. This fact was at one

point emphasised in one programme leader's frustration as she questioned how to improve or consider for development someone who had clearly stated that "I'm not interested in training and courses, I came here to earn a salary" (RTC programme leader 2009).

4.7.5 *Conclusions on training and development of talent at RTC*

The learning-driven and innovative culture of the organisation became apparent to the researcher during the conversations as clearly demonstrated by the responses presented above. RTC is evidently keen on training, developing and advancing its employees. The factors that facilitate the successful training and development of RTC talent are:

- The RTC and USAID approach to and provisions for employee training and development
- Existence of the RTC staff training and development department
- The value given to training and advancement in the entire organisation as well as the learning and innovative culture it has developed
- Strategic development of training plans and budget
- RTC's ability to identify and respond to both supervisors and their direct reports training gaps and to the dynamic training requirements in the HIV field
- Use of several avenues for training to suit various development needs such as one on one coaching and the use of formal training programmes
- Placing the impetus for training on the employees and their managers
- Use of exit interviews to identify talent training needs and RTC gaps

As was the case with the second research problem, RTC with regards to the third research problem, is keen and dedicated to carefully training, developing and advancing its talent. It is also clear from the responses that although the

organisation encourages and pays for employee development, personal talent ambition and the drive to learn play a huge role in the actual development of each individual. Continuous staff training and development is evidently intrinsic in the organisation's culture.

The RTC system of training and developing talent is assessed as suitable given that the organisation's core competency is not the developing of staff but rather the provision of quality HIV treatment and care which is what the training efforts currently empower the staff to do excellently. In affirmation of this interpretation, the interviewed individuals reported that the organisation's training and development efforts were not just for the sake of developing people but are geared toward filling essential competency gaps. This practice is in line with Soupata's (2005) suggestion for organisations wanting to master the use of investments in training and development for improved competitiveness and success in the organisation's workforce.

Talent training and development is not a stand-alone process but should ideally be linked to the organisation's performance management system. Performance management was the third talent management imperative identified for this study and the subject matter of the fourth sub-problem discussed following.

4.8 Managing RTC talent performance

The fourth sub-problem arising out of the literature review for this study required assessing RTC's talent performance management and the corresponding employee engagement. The answers to the three questions formulated to tackle this sub-problem are presented in the following sections of this chapter.

4.8.1 *Results pertaining to RTC performance management*

Question 7 (refer to Appendix 1) of the interview schedule requested the respondent to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the organisation's performance management system. The question along with this topic on performance management yielded deep discussions on the various features of

RTC performance management. The responses revealed the importance of continuous betterment of talent performance at RTC as presented below.

Quality of talent performance at RTC is considered to be of utmost importance given that the organisation's core business revolves around patients' lives (RTC director 2009). In an effort to maintain high performance standards, costs at RTC are measured in relation to the expense of treating current patients. This differs from the popular practice in the industry whereby some organisations simply link their costs to the total number of patients who come through their doors and are on their books (RTC director 2009). To sustain this quality of performance, the organisation employs among other systems an online performance tracking system, which measures most things pertaining to patient care over time. This system used by the organisation's quality assessment team has the ability to randomly pull up any one of RTC's clinics, focus on a specific doctor and track how specific patients are responding to various treatments (RTC director 2009). The quality assessment team randomly visits treatment sites and carries out patient surveys to assess the quality of care given at the various sites (RTC programme leader 2009). The HR department also organises informal visits to the various RTC sites to assess the employee wellbeing as well as handle any minor staff issues that may arise (RTC HR officer 2009).

High levels of trust exist among the senior leadership of RTC resulting in the management team developing the practice of an "open-door" policy of partnership between subordinates and superiors (RTC director 2009). There are no set rules with regards to how much time a leader at RTC should invest on people issues but the culture of the organisation especially with the open-door policy is one where leaders and their subordinates have continuous interaction (RTC HR officer 2009). Tracking of employee performance is the line manager's responsibility and as one programme leader reasons "if your staff members are failing then you are failing with them" (RTC programme leader 2009). Some of the managers prefer to set aside one day of the week for their subordinates to maintain the open-door partnership and foster a relationship whereby their subordinates feel free to address any issue including possible management

shortfalls (RTC line manager 2009). The consistent thread at RTC identified by all interviewees is the intentional giving and receiving of feedback by and from all levels of the organisation (RTC programme leader 2009). The benefits accruing from the open-door policy are only available if an employee takes the initiative, is self motivated and pushes for more, over and above requirements (RTC employees 2009).

Good performance requirements are not limited to the medical practitioners at RTC (RTC director 2009). Equally important is the standard of the performance of non-medical talent if the organisation is to successfully achieve its objectives and sustain its current position as an industry leader in its field of operation. Regular training for different levels of staff is provided to empower them and facilitate their performance improving (RTC programme leader 2009).

As a result of the performance standards discussed above, RTC has in the past fired individuals for poor or non-compliance. This has resulted in incidents requiring RTC to defend its actions at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA) (RTC HR officer 2009). RTC has been taken to the CCMA a total of four times and has won every single one of those cases because of the quality and consistency of its performance management which fosters a culture of increasing and improving performance within the organisation (RTC director 2009).

4.8.2 *Analysis of RTC performance management*

The approach to managing talent performance at RTC is quite formal and structured but at the same time quite flexible. The answers to Question 7 indicate that the organisation operates on constant interaction and feedback with the outstanding feature of the RTC performance management system being its open-door policy. The open-door policy was identified through the study results as one of RTC's key strengths because it facilitates continuous conversation pertaining to what the organisation needs to achieve through its talent and how it is to be done. Robbins (2005) argues that as organisations become more complex, they become more formalised losing some of the richness found in ongoing communication. Continuous face-to-face or

telephonic communication enables the effective tapping of the collective experience and wisdom resident in the organisation's talent. This competitive advantage is less likely to be achieved through formal reports, memos or electronic emails which Robbins (2005) defines as sources of low channel richness or inadequate information. One of the directors during an interview conversation while commenting on the effectiveness of RTC's performance management stated:

> "We have an open-door policy that stays open all year allowing for ongoing communication with the staff. That is where I get the feedback I need to identify where there may be gaps and deal with them. Things don't build up and wait for a big meeting to be sorted out and that is what makes us an excellent organisation as I see it." (RTC director 2009)

The literature research on managing talent performance did not reveal any reference to an open-door management policy. However, the RTC open-door policy is interpreted to be similar in principle to Bacal's (2000) view that performance management requires an ongoing communication process. Performance management communication is undertaken in partnership between an employee and his or her immediate supervisor for the purposes of establishing clear expectations and understandings about the job requirements (Armstrong and Baron 2005). The results reveal that RTC with regards to the open-door policy is involved in partnership management for the purposes of better performance. The word "open-door" evidently create an atmosphere of liberty within set standards in the organisation. One HR officer gladly declared, "I've learnt that I can ask questions all day long until I get it right" (RTC HR officer 2009) while an employee stated, "I can go in and ask them anything because they are always available and will listen to my question" (RTC employee 2009).

The interviewees' reflections were fairly consistent when describing the organisation's goal of increasing and improving performance at all levels. This is aspired toward while keeping in line with the RTC performance standard of quality care for the patient. The results illustrate copious evidence of the NGO's

enthusiasm in the management of its talent performance. The principle of performance management is built on the notion that better organisational performance is the direct result of raising the performance levels of individuals within the organisation (Bacal 2000; Pfeffer 2001; Reid and Crisp 2007), a concept that the RTC leadership seem to adhere to.

The open-door policy has, however, presented some problems for some managers as the policy allows for employees to bypass their immediate supervisors and take their problems to higher level leaders. This has at times led to bottlenecks in the performance management system as a higher level leader may take a decision without grasping the underlying issues or involving the lower reporting chain (RTC line manager 2009). In general, the interviewees were appreciative of and highly praised the RTC open-door policy. In addition, documentation collected from the organisation including its annual reports that are available on its website state that RTC has and continues to achieve and surpass most of its performance targets (RTC Annual Report 2007). These results further demonstrate that the organisation's talent is well managed and support the literature revelation that successful partnership in managing talent performance improves the individual, team, and ultimately organisation's performance (Bacal 2000; Armstrong and Baron 2005; Cantrell and Benton 2007).

4.8.3 *Results pertaining to the deploying of talent at RTC*

The nature of RTC operations requires almost two thirds of its employees to be medics. As a result, most programme leaders and some of the managers including two of the directors of the organisation are medical officers. These staff members who by virtue of their roles are no longer practising in their medical field on an ongoing basis are required to put in some hours weekly seeing patients.

> "That contact with the patients and the visual image of the face of suffering helps keep them grounded and focused in achieving RTC goals." (RTC director 2009)

At a professional level, the organisation provides specialists for medical staff to consult with for the purposes of better quality of treatment (RTC programme leader 2009).

Continuous talent recognition for work well done is an ongoing activity at RTC (RTC programme leader 2009). Ad-hoc appreciation and commendation of the subordinates for their performance is a frequent occurrence at the organisation. Managers actively practice empowering their direct reports to handle various difficulties and only step in if the subordinates experience difficulties (RTC programme leader 2009). The goal of some of the line managers is to build a culture where performance is excellent regardless of the presence or absence of supervision (RTC line manager 2009). The employees interviewed all reported that there is plenty of management support available for them, which provides an enabling environment for them to realise their potential. One employee succinctly declared that “RTC is all about employee wellness and cares for the employees” (RTC employee 2009). HR is mandated to give all employees at their induction, RTC policies and procedures and to assist the line managers in clearly communicating role requirements to all employees (RTC HR officer 2009).

4.8.4 *Analysis of RTC deploying of talent*

With people’s lives as the priority driver for RTC performance, poor performance is absolutely not acceptable at any and all levels of the organisation. As anticipated by Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod (2001) and illustrated through the performance/potential grid (refer to Figure 4:29), organisations that achieve higher performance do so by differentiating and effectively managing their high, average, and low performers. Although there is little evidence to suggest that RTC differentiates its high, average, and low performers, the results indicate the effective management of all of its employee performance. It is apparent that the right policies and procedures have been adapted to enable, as one of the directors plainly states, decisions that facilitate the objective of getting rid of the bottom 5% to 10% of poor performers if improvement is not forthcoming (RTC director 2009).

Literature findings suggest that an organisation requires a good understanding of the skills and competencies resident within its workforce to be in a position to deploy talent strategically (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Finnie and Early 2002). The researcher deduced from the responses that the ongoing communication allowed the interviewees to understand their strengths and weaknesses within the organisation. This facilitates the described high levels of trust and supports the organisation's ability to deploy skilled personnel in suitable positions and match the right people to the right jobs.

The rival comment that was voiced during the discussions on RTC talent training and development when an employee suggested that a particular race at RTC was accorded preferential treatment with regards to talent deployment (RTC employee 2009) was analysed to demonstrate that "every worker is happy or unhappy in his or her own way" (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008:103). This comment represented a single rival position. The comment is concluded as indicating that while RTC deployment and redeployment of talent may not be perfect it certainly exists as a practiced form of management activity for improving the organisation's performance.

4.8.5 *Results pertaining to RTC employee engagement*

Question 8 (refer to Appendix 1) of the interview schedule was formulated to establish the level at which RTC influences its employee engagement. The question was constructed in the form of a questionnaire with 10 key drivers of employee engagement derived from the literature research. The participants were each requested to rate the importance given by RTC to each of the 10 building blocks of employee engagement as presented on the following page.

Using the scale provided, select the option which best describes the importance given to the following key drivers of employee engagement at and by RTC.

SCALE:	1	2	3	4	5
	Unimportant	Of some importance	Important	Very important	Critically important

Table 9: RTC individual participant questionnaire results and the cumulative average rating

	Key drivers of employee engagement	Directors			Programme leaders							Line managers					HR officers					Employees			Average
1.	Progressive supervisory relationship with immediate management	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	5	5	4	4	4
2.	High levels of communication	4	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	5	4	5
3.	Alignment of employee's efforts to organisational goals	3	4	3	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	4	5	4	3	5	5	4	4	3	5	5	4	4
4.	Pride in the organisation's vision and reputation	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	4	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	5	5	5	4	5
5.	Contentment in what the employee does on a daily basis	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	5	3	5	4	4	4	3	4	5	5	4	3	4	5	4	4	4
6.	Positive recognition and rewarding of the employee's efforts	4	3	4	5	5	5	4	5	4	3	5	4	5	5	3	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5	4	4
7.	Availability of career growth opportunities	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	3	3	5	4	4	4	4	3	5	5	4	3	3	5	5	5	4
8.	Fostering of healthy relationships between co-workers	4	4	3	4	5	5	5	5	3	3	4	4	4	3	3	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4	4
9.	The employee's ability to perform and improve	4	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	3	4	4	5	4	4	4	4	5	4	4
10.	High levels of trust	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4	5	4	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	4	4	5	4	5

The high ratings in Tables 9 and 10 above attest to the importance of employee engagement within the organisation. It should be noted that the average rating deduced was highest with regards to the importance placed on RTC high levels of communication, pride in the organisation's vision and reputation, and high levels of trust. This evidence supports the study findings pertaining to the critical importance of RTC open-door policy. The high 5 average ratings also illustrate the key elements of the organisation's EVP as its reputation and attractive working environment resulting from the high levels of trust and partnership with the management. The raw data presented in the tables above are further analysed to evaluate the bigger picture on the importance of all factors. The results of the observed frequencies of the responses are presented in Table 10 below.

Table 10: Observed frequencies of RTC employee engagement ratings

	Q. 1	Q. 2	Q. 3	Q. 4	Q. 5	Q. 6	Q. 7	Q. 8	Q. 9	Q. 10	**All**
Unimportant											
Of some importance											
Important			**4**		**3**	**3**	**6**	**5**	**1**		**22**
Very important	**14**	**10**	**11**	**9**	**13**	**11**	**9**	**13**	**17**	**10**	**117**
Critically important	**10**	**14**	**9**	**15**	**8**	**10**	**9**	**6**	**6**	**14**	**101**
Totals	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	24	**240**

As detailed in Table 10 above, the interviewees were all of the view that the 10 factors which enhance employee engagement within an organisation are considered to be, at the least, important at RTC. Furthermore, the average ratings for all 10 drivers of engagement as detailed in Table 9 were at either very, or critically important. Given this fact, the researcher is of the view that the use of other tests or data analysis techniques to explain or ascertain the degree of importance given to these drivers of engagement is currently unnecessary. The assessment that can be made from the observed frequencies of the data signifies that facilitating employee engagement at RTC is important. This result is considered sufficient for the purposes of the study.

4.8.6 *Analysis of RTC employee engagement*

Employee engagement is described by Kahn (1990) as a complex phenomenon whereby employees are with their mind and their feelings focused on the job, and with the people around them. It is the measure of the level at which people express who or what they are, and also who they would like to be at work.

The results to the questionnaire clearly show that all the respondents are of the opinion that the 10 key drivers of engagement identified are regarded as important and espoused at RTC. Furthermore, it became clear to the researcher during the interview-guided discussions that RTC as a result of its positive influence on employee engagement generally has highly engaged employees who give wholly of themselves to the organisation and, in some cases, to the detriment of their health and wellbeing leading to burn-out. Talent burn-out as reported by the respondents is a serious concern at RTC. Nevertheless, the results suggest that RTC talent correlative to the literature findings can be defined as engaged because of the indication of their motivation, ambition, inspiration, passion, dedication, empathy, solidarity, desire, selflessness, and trust toward the organisation (Martel 2003; Reid and Crisp 2007).

In support of the above analysis, the researcher arriving early a couple of times at the case site found it bustling with employee activity way before the scheduled RTC reporting time. On one occasion, this was a good hour and a half earlier than the RTC operating hours. Casual questioning on this observation during the interviews revealed that it was a normal occurrence though not a requirement at RTC for staff to come in early and work late leading to the conclusion that RTC fosters overall employee engagement.

4.8.7 *Results pertaining to performance reviews at RTC*

The final question analysing RTC's performance management system, Question 9 (refer to Appendix 1), requested the interviewees to describe the organisation's performance review system and in addition, describe its function in relation to the overall talent management system. All the respondents were

well versed with RTC's performance appraisals and viewed them as an extension of the organisation's talent management.

Although performance appraisals are conducted at all levels annually, the management believes in the use of, at minimum, monthly reports to assess talent (RTC director 2009). High levels of ongoing communication are considered extremely important with care being taken to avoid excessive supervising (RTC line manager 2009). Performance review is viewed as a daily management exercise requiring excellent communication in guiding staff members on what is required of them (RTC programme leader 2009). For their part in reviewing performance, the HR department carries out internal audits to ascertain the reasons for underperformance. These audits together with their knowledge of the various job descriptions assist them in discovering performance gaps and providing adequate training (RTC HR officer 2009). The programme leaders sit in during annual performance appraisals. They, however, do not conduct the proceedings but their presence encourages the open-door policy that RTC fosters between supervisors and subordinates. The annual performance appraisal is in actual fact a tool for the management team which opens the doors for yearlong communications on talent performance (RTC programme leader 2009). Managers have regular meetings especially with poor performers to review how their efforts can be improved and objectives met.

The performance appraisal form is firstly filled out by the employee being appraised then by line manager before the formal appraisal activity where they together fill out the mutual rating column. The appraisal results are reviewed by a remuneration committee which consists of a consultant; two executive directors, one non-executive board member and HR. The committee has the mandate to redress the performance ratings if necessary (RTC HR officer 2009).

Although line managers are responsible for tracking talent performance, they are not in the position to issue any warnings directly with regards to performance but rather are required to inform HR of any concerns (RTC line manager 2009). HR provides counselling sessions for poor performers to clearly

communicate expectations and ascertain where training may be required to assist in performance improvement. If an issue escalates to grievance, the matter is handled by the executive team with advice from HR who also act as the employee's guide (RTC line manager 2009; RTC HR officer 2009).

RTC leaders take part in bi-annual progress presentation meetings which yield feedback with regards to the organisation's performance as well as the outstanding and new objectives and how these will be accomplished (RTC programme leader 2009). In addition to the progress presentations, the managers and directors are involved in fortnightly management meetings to keep abreast of where RTC is going. Manager to manager communication on performance is still, however, considered by some of the interviewees as being quite weak and insufficient (RTC line manager 2009).

4.8.8 *Analysis of RTC performance reviews*

Supporting literature findings that performance reviews or appraisals do not constitute adequate performance management (Heinen and O'Neill 2004), the RTC performance review system is successful because of its connection to the organisation's talent management. Question 9 of the interview schedule yielded descriptions of the RTC performance review system that provided adequate evidence for consistent comparison with the theory recommended process (refer to Figure 6:34) of well-planned, ongoing, stepwise communication and feedback. The RTC process as reported by the interviewees facilitates continuous communication and feedback on performance (Heinen and O'Neill 2004) resulting in a management tool for ongoing day to day talent assessment.

The researcher interprets the RTC performance review system to be in line with the literature recommendations because it is well planned with adequate preparation. It also involves total commitment and ongoing stepwise communication from the individual employees to the highest levels of the organisation leadership (Bacal 2000; Heinen and O'Neill 2004).

4.8.9 *Conclusion of RTC talent performance management*

The results to the fourth research problem point to the ongoing pursuit of high and better performance at RTC erected on a foundation that seeks quality. The success of RTC performance management can be attributed to the following factors:

- The fact that the ten key drivers of employee engagement in Question 8 (refer to Appendix 1) compiled from the literature research are considered important at RTC
- The fact that quality of patient care is the priority driver for RTC performance standards
- The RTC open-door management policy
- The consistency of RTC performance management at all levels
- Clarity of RTC policies, procedures and job descriptions as well as performance requirements
- The use of performance appraisal as a management tool for year-long communication and tracking of performance
- The use of a quality assessment team as well as the online performance tracking system
- Availability of management support and the existence of an enabling work environment for staff to realise their potential
- RTC culture of continuously increasing and improving performance by empowering employees
- Availability of specialists and consultants for guiding performance
- High levels of trust and consistent on-going performance feedback
- RTC culture that does not tolerate poor or non-performance

RTC performance management has been identified from the responses and the organisation's documentation as leading to the organisation achieving and surpassing most of its performance targets. The literature revealed that historically, organisations that achieve the best performance do so by adhering to proven people management practices (Cantrell and Benton 2007). The open-door style of partnership management is deduced to be one of the key reasons for RTC attaining industry leadership status. Organisations that attain and sustain competitive advantage rely on effectively and efficiently using information gained through high levels of ongoing rich communication (Robbins 2005).

As mentioned earlier, the open-door policy allows for employees to bypass their immediate supervisors and has, as a result, created some relationship problems between some supervisors and subordinates. Despite this single problem identified during the study, RTC is concluded to be optimally managing its talent performance and consequently achieving outstanding performance.

4.9 RTC talent retention

The fifth and final sub-problem that the researcher needed to appraise was RTC's long-term employee retention and succession planning. To address this issue, three questions were formulated and the answers to each of these questions are presented under the following subheadings.

4.9.1 *Results pertaining to RTC employee turnover*

RTC has been operational for eight years and has grown tremendously during that period. Question 10 (refer to Appendix 1) asked the respondents to rate the organisation's turnover as observed by them during their time as RTC employees. The directors reported very low employee turnover stating that core managers had been with the organisation for quite a while (RTC director 2009).

Programme leaders were also of the opinion that turnover with regards to employees exiting RTC is so low that some of the leaders had not observed or experienced any employee departure during their tenure at RTC. Programme

leaders based in the rural areas, however, had a different experience with regards to turnover of medical practitioners, especially doctors serving in the rural sites. High turnover of doctors at these sites, they reported, was not due to unresolved problems with RTC but rather availability of work opportunities at locations which better suited these professionals (RTC programme leader 2009).

The line managers confirmed the report given by the programme leaders. Having generally observed almost no employees leaving RTC, some of them, in addition to the aforementioned distance issues, cogently attributed the high turnover of doctors that they had experienced to unsatisfactory remuneration (RTC line manager 2009).

HR personnel stated that employee turnover was approximately 10% per annum throughout RTC. They reported on some individuals who came to RTC to specifically gain the HIV expertise, knowledge and training that the organisation is renowned for, leaving after a year or two when they had achieved their desired goals. HR also reported on RTC having a gentlemen's agreement with most organisations in the industry and with the government sites which prohibited poaching of one another's employees. However, even with the agreement in place, RTC has suffered from some of its talent being targeted and sometimes poached by other organisations (RTC HR officer 2009).

The HR department also voiced one other concern pertaining to talent retention despite the overall fairly low employee turnover.

> "Most people who leave RTC do so because of their relationship with management. There are particular departments where almost every month someone will either resign or ask to be moved. Some of these managers still need more intensive training on understanding and dealing with people issues." (RTC HR officer 2009)

The HR staff reported this concern as a recurring issue on some of the exit interviews conducted with former RTC employees. They also clarified that

although the RTC management training and development programme had produced some positive changes, there are still areas for possible managerial improvement (RTC HR officer 2009).

All employees interviewed reported noticing very few people leaving the organisation. They also all declared their intentions to continue employment with the organisation in the long term (RTC employee 2009).

4.9.2 *Analysis of RTC employee turnover*

Responses to Question 10 of the interview schedule conclusively demonstrate that the organisation has a 10% employee turnover rate. Given the easy transferability of skills across organisations, the global employee turnover rates are stated to be approximately 25% per annum (South Africa NGO Pulse 2008). The RTC 10% employee turnover rate is low and is deduced to be the result of the organisation effectively managing and consequently, retaining its people. There were reports of the targeting of RTC employees by other organisations but little evidence to suggest successful poaching of RTC talent.

The discussions with the respondents indicated that RTC did not gain its success in talent retention overnight. The HR department in particular, while lauding the organisation's talent retention efforts, were notably disappointed over some managers' poor record of the same, proving Reid and Crisp (2007:1) that "People don't leave companies, they leave bosses". The results illustrate that being aware of this management problem, the RTC leadership responded by embarking on a mid-level and senior management training programme focused on developing and advancing RTC managers.

The literature findings demonstrated the serious effects of turnover costs (Cascio 1999; Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005) which RTC does not experience although the results indicate that the organisation incurs high recruitment costs as it continues to grow.

4.9.3 *Results pertaining to RTC internal promotions and succession planning*

Question 11 of the interview schedule (refer to Appendix 1) was constructed to assess RTC's record on promoting from within and the resulting organisational succession planning, if any. The interviewees with the exception of the directors were requested to rate RTC on promoting from within while part b of the question was addressed to the directors asking them to describe the organisation's efforts and plans with regards to growing its future leaders.

Prior to asking the respondents this question, the researcher observed and noted copious evidence of the organisation promoting from within. One of the current directors had initially joined RTC as a medical doctor in charge of one of the organisation's programmes. All the programme leaders interviewed with the exception of one had grown through RTC ranks into their current positions. The one exception joined RTC as a specialist coming in to consult with and train other doctors and as a result, stepped directly into the leadership position of expertise in that particular programme. The line managers, HR officers and employees as well spoke of previous personal development and promotion within the organisation to take on more responsibilities and in some cases, new and higher roles.

The programme leaders commended the organisation on promoting from within. One programme leader was of the opinion that the organisation is compelled to promote from within because of the pressure arising out of its rapid growth and not necessarily as the result of identifying and developing talent (RTC programme leader 2009). As the organisation grows, new positions are created and for the most part, existing staff members are the first to be considered for development to take up those positions before seeking external hires. Another programme leader giving an example of RTC promoting from within reported multiple promotions in a particular province where the administration clerk was promoted to data capturing, and a data capturing staff member promoted at the same time to take the place of the data manager (RTC programme leader 2009).

The line managers, HR officers and employees interviewed all felt that RTC is quite active at internal growth and promotions. HR personnel also reported the strain that the rapid growth has placed on staff movements which has led to the rule that an employee should serve at any given position for at least six months to give the line manager a chance to assess the individual's ability before further promotions are undertaken (RTC HR officer 2009).

One of the employees hopeful of future personal growth within the organisation stated that:

> "Individuals who started out as nurses, social workers or regular doctors are as we speak, programme advisors, leaders or trainers. People at RTC can make long term plans at a personal level, which includes future plans for them in the organisation. I see myself here for the next 10 years because my personal plans and my future in the organisation are merged." (RTC employee 2009)

In response to part b of Question 11 (refer to Appendix 1), as per the researcher's expectations given the preceding reports, RTC directors are all quite active in grooming their staff. Despite this fact, there isn't a formal organisation strategy for the purposes of succession planning. Conscious of the benefits of actively and strategically growing future leaders, one director admitted RTC's shortfall in this area saying, "Our career paths are currently ad-hoc and we could definitely strengthen our succession planning. It is an element that needs our focus and development." (RTC director 2009)

4.9.4 *Results pertaining to RTC employee retention strategies*

The reasons behind RTC's ability to retain its talent in the long run were compiled using Question 12 (refer to Appendix 1). The question required each of the interviewees to name the three most important factors which in their view are responsible for the successful retention of talent at RTC. The question is stated in the following Table 11 along with the responses it generated.

Table 11: Factors behind the successful employee retention at RTC

Respondent type	**Responses to Question 10:** **Which are the three most important factors which in your view are responsible for RTC's success in long-term employee retention?**
Executive directors	Factors enhancing RTC employee retention: • Overall employee engagement • RTC's values and objectives • RTC's clear purpose and direction • A culture that values respect for the employee and the open-door policy • Trust, communication, teamwork, and cooperation • Employee involvement, ownership and accountability • The organisation's reputation and drive for quality and customer-patient focus • Internal branding of the organisation • RTC's culture and practices
Programme leaders	Factors enhancing RTC employee retention: • RTC culture of employee appreciation, recognition, respect, acknowledgement and reward • Flexibility for directing personal career in line with RTC objectives and the freedom to get things done at one's pace • Opportunities for self-development, training, growth and advancement • Pride in being a part of the RTC success and reputation • Space to be innovative, make decisions, impact input and results • Excellent team spirit and satisfaction in the working environment • Good salaries, great perks and benefits • Excellence in the managing of the organisation and the support from the directors • The constantly open lines of communication

Respondent type	Responses to Question 10: **Which are the three most important factors which in your view are responsible for RTC's success in long-term employee retention?**
HR officers	Factors enhancing RTC employee retention: • Exceptional RTC integrity and values • Pride in the organisation's reputation of leadership in its field • Opportunities for employee development and growth • Employee appreciation through salary increments, public recognition and rewards • Good communication and trust among colleagues • Attractive medical aid and benefits • Flexibility and freedom given in performing of job requirements leading to job satisfaction • The nature of the work and the people who create the environment and culture of RTC
Line managers	Factors enhancing RTC employee retention: • Employee recognition and continuous feedback, especially positive feedback from superiors • Opportunities for skills development, training and room for growth • Allowances made for employee autonomy and creativity • Great benefits and satisfactory conditions of employment • Unique opportunity to work without going bankrupt for an organisation that is reputed for making a positive contribution and developing South Africa • Having a passion in line with RTC objectives
Employees classified as talent	Factors enhancing RTC employee retention: • The work environment – fellow employees and the support from supervisors • Job security and possibility of continuous unlimited growth within the organisation • Excellent benefits especially the medical cover

RTC employs a variety of retention strategies as evidenced by the long list of successful employee retention factors in Table 11 above. It is interesting to note that during the discussions, all of the interviewees had no plans or even thoughts of leaving the organisation any time soon.

4.9.5 *Analysis of RTC talent retention and succession planning*

As was the case with the talent management strategy, the answers to Question 11 of the interview schedule indicate that although the organisation is quite active on internal promotions, it does not have a defined strategy with regards to succession planning. Individuals interviewed all spoke of RTC's frequent internal promotions, a phenomenon that has resulted in HR placing a six-month mandatory service term before a promoted employee can be considered for further promotions. Researching the claim by one programme leader that RTC promotions are not for the purposes of talent development but from the pressure arising from rapid growth (RTC programme leader) is outside the scope of this study. However, the researcher would argue that whatever RTC motives may be for promoting its talent, the strategy has worked excellently for purposes of retaining its talent.

Promoting internally is one of the retention strategies established through Question 12 of the interview schedule as being part of the reasons for RTC's successful talent retention. Kinnear (1999), in her research to determine reasons for organisational commitment amongst knowledge workers, identified four critical factors for retaining talent. The respondents, when listing the reasons for RTC's success in talent retention, mentioned all of the four factors identified by Kinnear (1999) namely:

1. The freedom to plan and execute work independently.
2. Adequate remuneration, financial reward and recognition.
3. Availability of developmental opportunities and growth potential of the industry.
4. The access to leading technologies and challenging work assignments.

The answers given to Question 12 support the literature revelations of the above factors as well as several other factors which RTC has invested in, and which are concluded to be the reasons behind the organisation's success in talent retention.

The RTC management team has successfully focused on excellently developing and efficiently managing its workforce to result in lasting employee commitment and subsequent talent retention. This is deduced to be the result of RTC leadership establishing what their talent want and providing it. This analysis is in line with Butler and Waldroop's (1999) argument that the best way to keep talent is to know them better than they know themselves and then use that information to customise the careers of their dreams.

4.9.6 *Conclusion on RTC talent retention*

> "RTC is growing at a high rate and despite the changing work environment, the faces that have been here faithfully for years are still diligently and faithfully working at achieving RTC objectives." (RTC director 2009)

With regards to the fifth and final sub-problem of this study, the researcher concludes that RTC, as demonstrated by the results presented above, is indeed successful in retaining its talent over the long run. The responses attest to low RTC employee turnover rates that stem from numerous factors including:

- The overarching employee engagement
- RTC values, objectives, purpose, and culture
- The organisation's open-door management policy
- RTC trust, communication and employee teamwork
- RTC reputation for quality and patient focus
- Employee respect, recognition, appreciation, acknowledgement and reward

- Opportunities for talent training, development, growth and advancement
- Job satisfaction, flexibility, autonomy, creativity and innovation
- Employee pride in RTC's reputation and industry leadership status
- Remuneration and benefits

Given the interviewees' responses pertaining to RTC success in talent retention, it can be deduced that they are aware and appreciative of the organisation's efforts to retain them.

4.10 Results verifying RTC talent management performance

The results to the five sub-problems discussed above came from the main problem of this study, which was to analyse how an NGO applies talent management processes and to deduce the factors that promote its successful performance of talent management imperatives.

The final activity of the interview session was to confirm the findings from the interviews while concurrently surveying the organisation's overall talent management performance. For this purpose, the researcher adopted the use of the "Talent Development Survey" (TDS) (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007:26).

TDS consists of twenty questions, each to be rated using a given scale of 1 to 3 where 1=no, 2=sometimes, and 3=yes. The survey was handed to the interviewees to complete at the close of each interview session. The complete survey along with the RTC respondents average score for each question is presented below:

How does your organisation match up? Not every organisation emphasises employee recruitment, training, development, management and retention as important organisation capabilities. Talent management requires focus, commitment, and investment over time to build reputation and capability. The following test will assess where your organisation stands as a talent developer.

Using the scale provided, select the option that best describes the performance of the following talent management activities at RTC.

(1=No, 2=Sometimes, 3= Yes):

Table 12: Average RTC rating on the Talent Development Survey (TDS)

Key ingredients of talent management		Average rating from the 24 respondents
1.	We treat employee development as a strategic investment.	**3**
2.	Talent plans are an explicit element in business planning.	**2**
3.	Senior management is highly involved in people development.	**3**
4.	We have a strong bias to grow employees “from within”.	**2**
5.	We rarely, if ever, recruit outsiders for executive positions.	**2**
6.	We see talent as a corporate asset, not “owned” by a particular business unit or function.	**3**
7.	The employee qualities we look for are well defined and adhered to.	**3**
8.	We care equally about candidate abilities and values in selection.	**3**
9.	Recruiting is everybody’s business.	**2**
10.	We invest in building strong relationships with selected talent pools (e.g. schools) to find the best candidates.	**2**
11.	We have well-defined career paths for employees.	**2**
12.	Our career systems are well-designed and continuously improved.	**2**
13.	We provide top talent with a broad range of work experiences.	**3**
14.	We are passionate about employee training.	**3**
15.	We invest significant time and efforts in ensuring employees continue to grow in competence.	**3**
16.	Performance assessment is rigorous and demanding.	**3**
17.	We use 360-degree feedback to give employees a clear view of how they are seen by colleagues.	**2**
18.	In our organisation, coaching skill and interest is a key element in selecting and evaluating managers and leaders.	**2**
19.	Our talent is often “raided” by other organisations because of our reputation for development.	**2**
20.	We invest in our reputation as a developer of talent.	**2**

Total Score: The cumulative average of the 24 individual scores **49**

When totalled, the TDS rating scale of 1, 2 or 3 on the twenty questions add up to a possible organisational score ranging from 20 to 60. Table 12 above details the average rating of each question by the 24 respondents and totals to an average RTC score of 49. The following chart, Figure 16, presents each respondent's cumulative score from a possible TDS low of 20 to a high of 60. Each score reflects the respondent's assessment of the level at which the organisation emphasises employee recruitment, training, development, management and retention as important organisation capabilities.

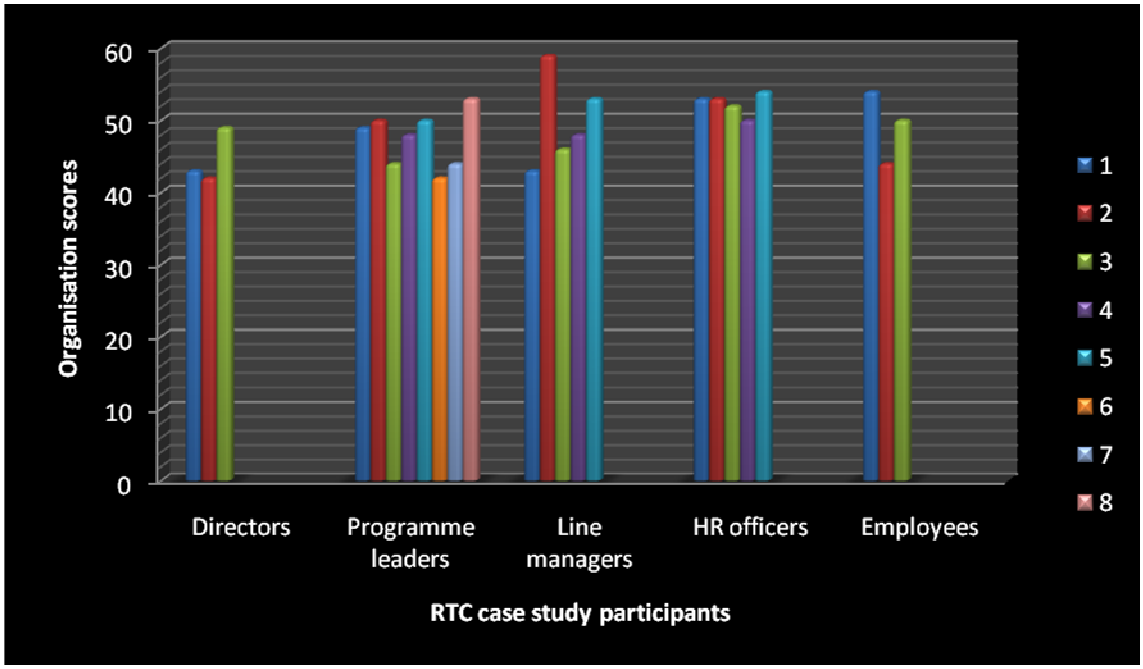


Figure 16: Graph depicting RTC talent management survey results

The 24 bars of the graph in Figure 16 above represent each of the 24 respondent cumulative scores as detailed in Table 13 below.

Table 13: RTC branded talent development survey results

Respondent type	Individual participant perception and cumulative score on RTC talent management from a possible TDS score range of 20 to 60.							
Executive directors	43	42	49					
Programme leaders	49	50	44	48	50	42	44	53
Line managers	43	59	46	48	53			
HR officers	53	53	52	50	54			
Employees	54	44	50					

4.10.1 *Analysis of RTC talent management performance*

The TDS questions as already described above yield a possible total organisational score ranging from 20 to 60. RTC survey scores as presented in Table 13 above range from 42 as the lowest to 59 being the highest. The organisation's average cumulative score was found to be 49 as detailed in Table 12 above.

Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich (2007) supplied suitable judging criteria to provide the researcher with a holistic understanding of how staff members perceive the organisation's overall talent management efforts while assessing its reputation and capability as a branded talent developer. The judging criteria provided by the authors of the survey are:

1. Above 50, the organisation is a talent developer and should keep it up.

2. Between 40 and 49, the organisation is on track but needs to define priorities for development.

3. Below 40, the organisation needs a lot of work to be a talent developer.

The perception of the people who completed this survey is that RTC is on the right track with its talent management. Furthermore, half of the total ratings were 50 and above indicating that half of the interviewees regard RTC as having reached a level of excellence in talent management. More importantly, the entire HR department who have the professional expertise, comprehension and daily involvement in the organisation's talent management all scored RTC at 50 and above. This reflected their satisfaction with the organisation's overall talent management efforts as pertains to talent attraction and recruitment, training and development, performance management and talent retention. The TDS results conclusively demonstrate RTC's success in its application of talent management processes as well as its adaptation of numerous factors promoting the successful performance of the four talent management imperatives.

4.10.2 *Conclusion on RTC talent management*

The conclusions made from the study findings with regards to the five research sub-problems are:

- **The first sub-problem was to establish the organisation's definition of talent and subsequent talent management strategy:** It has been established through this study that although RTC does not have a formal talent management strategy, it has a clearly structured yet varied definition of talent. The RTC talent definition has been found to be similar to the definition in literature of high-performing employees whose contributions are vital to an organisation's exceptional performance. RTC as anticipated through the literature findings was found to manage their defined talent with particular care and successfully. However, although the literature suggests that successful talent management hinges on the organisation linking its business strategy with a talent strategy, the study demonstrates that RTC without documenting a formal talent strategy has been effectively managing its talent and has developed sustainable talent management practices. This success is concluded to be the result of the RTC leadership and the entire organisation having a talent mindset and developing a talent culture.

- **The second sub-problem was to analyse the organisation's ability to attract and hire individuals who have the skills and attributes they require or would like to develop:** It is concluded that RTC has a finely developed ability to attract and hire the individuals it needs. The organisation in line with the literature revelations is found to have a strong and positive employee value proposition that makes it an employer of choice for good talent. In addition, the organisation as recommended by the literature is clear about the employee competencies that matter and employs effective recruitment strategies. Although RTC does not perform all of the literature recommended talent recruiting strategies, its EVP is concluded to be a strong magnet for continuously attracting and availing good talent to the organisation.

- **The third sub-problem was to evaluate the training and development of people within the organisation:** It has been ascertained that RTC is successful in identifying the training and development needs of its talent and satisfying them. The literature findings recommend that talent training and development should be tailored to meet specific competency gaps and facilitate better talent performance. RTC's success in attracting and recruiting the right talent has enabled it to work towards refining the abilities its talent already possesses. The study findings show that the organisation is dedicated to developing its talent and has been effective in preparing for and providing all the relevant training as and when needed.

- **The fourth sub-problem was to assess the effectiveness of the organisation's performance management:** RTC has been deduced to be effective in managing its talent performance. The organisation's outstanding performance and industry leadership is attributed, as suggested in the literature, to its success in performance management. The study has demonstrated that the management at RTC has a good understanding of the skills and competencies resident within the organisation and consequently, in line with the literature findings, deploys its talent successfully. The organisation was found to practice partnership management with its talent through ongoing review and feedback of performance using the open-door policy. RTC performance reviews were found to be well planned and to enhance its performance management as recommended in the literature. The organisation was seen to have a highly engaged workforce as the result of its excellence in managing its talent performance.

- **The fifth sub-problem was to appraise the success of the organisation's long-term employee retention and succession planning:** It is concluded that RTC is successful in talent retention although the organisation does not practice formal succession planning. The dynamic nature of the organisation stemming from the rapid growth and continual hiring and redeploying of staff means that succession is

virtually, a daily RTC management activity. The study findings show that RTC applies most of the literature recommended retention strategies and does not suffer from the identified adverse effects of talent turnover. RTC was found to value its talent and invest diligently in talent retention. RTC leadership is therefore concluded to be successful in establishing what their talent want and providing it, thereby achieving lasting employee commitment and subsequent talent retention.

In general, the results discussed in this chapter clearly indicate that RTC applies effective talent management processes and has not only identified but also invests in the factors which promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives. Although the organisation's talent management processes are not a direct replica of the literature findings, the study demonstrates that a talent mindset can act as a good surrogate for a talent management strategy and can facilitate the developing of excellent talent management practices.

This assessment serves to fulfil the purpose of this study which was to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African non-profit organisation and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives. Consequently, the recommendations arising from the analysis and interpretation of RTC's success at talent management as well as the factors deduced to promote this success are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This closing chapter of the report summarises the main research findings and interpretations from the literature and the case study. The chapter proceeds to provide significant recommendations and concludes with suggestions which could facilitate further research.

5.2 Conclusions to the key research interpretations

The researcher began this project questioning if and how a non-profit organisation could successfully perform talent management processes and reap the rewards of exceptional organisation performance and lasting competitive advantage. The single case research at a typical South African NGO namely Right to Care provided a thorough analysis as well as adequate information on the feasibility of the study question.

In compliance with the case study protocol (refer to Table 2:46) literature research was embarked upon to provide a theoretical framework and guide for the research process once the study problems had been defined. The literature findings suggest that an organisation's success in talent management depends on the organisation's ability to effectively link its talent strategy to its business strategy. Contradicting this, the organisation studied is quite successful in its talent management, which it views as a critical business activity although it has not developed a strategy for, nor directly linked its talent management as a strategic priority to its business plans.

Beyond linking talent strategy to business strategy, further literature clarifies that the key to gaining and sustaining high organisational performance is in harnessing the organisation's talent effectively to achieve the desired goals. The literature proceeds to identify four talent management imperatives, namely:

1) Attracting and recruiting talent

2) The training and development of talent

3) Managing of talent performance

4) Talent retention

Case study findings suggest that Right to Care has identified and invested in factors that promote the successful performance of these talent management imperatives. Despite not having a talent strategy, the organisation through the use of the following salient but not comprehensive list of factors is successful in its talent management:

- **The attitude and mindset of the organisation's leadership:** Both the literature findings and the study results have established that the beginning and sustaining of excellent talent management lies with the top executives of the organisation. Furthermore, the report concludes that successful talent management requires the entire organisation's involvement from the highest level leadership down to the lowest level employee. HR should be a key facilitator and not the sole owner of the talent management processes.

- **Having a clear definition, understanding and expectation of talent:** The findings of both the literature and the study indicate that clarity in the definition of talent will result in successful identification of talent requirements, attraction and selection of suitable talent, development, motivation, deployment and, ultimately, retention of talent.

- **Effective use of employee value propositions to engender overarching talent engagement:** Literature and the study have demonstrated that the best recruiting practice is a never-ending process of being appealing to new and, most importantly, existing talent. This has been resolved to be feasible through the use of varied yet sustainable employee value propositions which foster a lasting and highly engaged

talent force while simultaneously attracting external talent to the organisation.

- **Living up to the organisation purpose, values, and reputation:** The study as anticipated by the literature findings has illustrated that having a reputation for effectiveness and a consistency towards values facilitates employee engagement. RTC's focus on quality of patient care has resulted in talent pride in the organisation, passion for the organisation's vision and mission, and a commitment to the organisation's objectives and culture.

- **Partnering with talent in their individual training, development and performance management:** Adding on to the literature findings, the study revelation of the organisation's open-door management policy was found to be an effective, practical, and sustainable style of partnership management. The research demonstrates that involving employees in all aspects of their experiences at work while showing an interest in their desired advancement facilitates a quid pro quo with regards to talent contribution and commitment.

- **Clarity and consistency in cultivating and developing a talent culture:** Building on the literature findings was the study insight that talent exposed to and benefiting from the organisation's training and development are in turn keen to facilitate the development and advancement of other employees. The organisation's consistency in training, developing and managing of talent encouraged the same talent to continually seek overall organisation growth by fostering other individual talent development.

- **Ardently investing in talent retention strategies:** Having consistently applied the aforementioned talent management factors, the literature and study findings suggest that the organisation needs to actively invest in talent retention strategies. Knowing that the organisation desires to keep them and enable their advancement within the organisation's hierarchy was found to create the desire and drive in talent to perform at their level

best for the organisation. This also led to talent factoring the organisation in as part of their long-term life plans.

RTC's current HIV field and industry leadership position was found to be the product of the above factors which facilitate its excellence in talent management.

The researcher, in the light of the findings of this study, can with confidence state that any prior scepticism resulting from experience in the non-profit industry has been assuaged, as demonstrated throughout the study. The research has justified that if an NGO's leadership and workforce are willing to work at talent management, then the NGO has the ability to consistently discover, attract, develop, deploy, motivate, energise, manage and retain talent thereby fostering excellent and sustainable high organisational performance.

5.3 Recommendations to NGO management and workforce

Like all other organisations, non-profit organisations are prescribed as requiring good governance to successfully and competitively achieve their designated purposes. The quality of any organisation's governance as demonstrated through this case study is dependent on the calibre of its leadership and workforce. This is essentially the domain and product of the organisation's talent management processes, a fact which by itself justifies the need for every organisation to invest in and develop its talent management.

The study demonstrates that the opportunity to repeat high performance is available to any NGO management and workforce if the initiative is taken to unlock and multiply its talent potential. This can be achieved by effectively managing and combining the competencies and knowledge resident in the organisation, and cultivating a talent culture as a distinctive capability arising from the leadership's attitude and talent mindset.

Exceptional workforce performance and sustainable NGO uniqueness are certainly not possible if talent management is left as the HR department mandate. Based on the study findings, it is clear that talent management within

any organisation cannot be effective unless it is embedded in the organisation with ardent belief in its strategic importance as well as in the vital role of the talent management imperatives identified in this report and illustrated in Figure 17 below.

5.4 Recommended talent management processes



Figure 17: Adaptation of Cheese, Thomas and Craig's talent multiplication model to recommend a virtuous circle of excellent talent management for outstanding organisational performance (Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008)

The model of excellent talent management processes illustrated in Figure 17 encapsulates the key suitable and therefore recommended talent management elements defined in this report. Excellent talent management within any NGO should begin with the leadership linking the organisation's business strategy to a talent strategy. This should lead to everyone developing a talent mindset thereby creating a talent culture within the organisation. The recommendation is for the talent management imperatives to be strategically developed into an organisational virtuous circle with everyone involved in attracting and recruiting talent, training and developing talent, managing and motivating talent performance, and sustaining and retaining great talent. The outcome as demonstrated in this report will be a highly engaged and committed talent force focused on achieving and sustaining outstanding performance for the NGO.

The research process yielded several factors that constitute the practices strongly related to talent management success as recommended in Table 14.

Table 14: Fundamental practices recommended for the successful performance of talent management imperatives

Activities for promoting the successful performance of talent management imperatives				
Talent strategy	**Attracting and recruiting talent**	**Training and developing talent**	**Managing talent performance**	**Sustaining and retaining talent**
Transforming the attitude and the mindset of the NGO's leadership.	**Investing in building the NGO's employee value proposition.**	**Partnering with talent in their individual training and development.**	**Having a clear definition, understanding and expectation of talent.**	**Sustaining an organisational talent mindset and culture.**
Linking the NGO's business strategy to an effective talent strategy.	**Determining current and future skills profiles based on NGO business needs.**	**Customising career paths that facilitate talent performance and achieve NGO objectives.**	**Investing in strategies for growing a highly engaged workforce.**	**Living up to the NGO's purpose, values, and reputation.**
Developing sustainable principles of talent management.	**Employing multiple talent recruitment strategies.**	**Maintaining consistency in cultivating and developing a talent culture.**	**Adapting performance reviews to enhance talent management.**	**Ardently investing in talent retention strategies.**

The study illustrates that RTC did not develop the specific activities listed in Table 14 overnight. The successful performance of talent management imperatives at Right to Care as well as the excellence of its talent management processes are embedded in the organisation's culture and a critical RTC capability. Consequently, with these recommendations comes the caution that it will take time, commitment and effort as well as financial investments for any organisation to attain successful talent management processes. However, considering the potential gain from good talent management as demonstrated in this report, the researcher would urge all readers who are not yet benefiting from this valuable management paradigm to take a step towards building a talent force for the purposes of creating strategic and sustainable value for the organisation. Any investment towards developing capabilities for excellence in the managing of an organisation's talent force will conclusively show, as has this research, that the most worthwhile and meaningful asset in any organisation is its talent.

5.5 Recommendation to RTC leadership and talent force

The study has demonstrated that Right to Care is successful in effectively applying talent management processes. It has also established that the organisation has not only identified but also invests in factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives. However, RTC has only been operational for eight years during which the results suggest continuous improvement in the organisation's talent management. The question that arises given the literature findings is with regards to the sustainability of RTC's currently successful talent management.

The researcher in light of the overall case study results is in agreement with the half of the respondents who according to their TDS results view RTC as a branded talent developer, a performance which it should keep up. However, the lack of defined strategic talent planning process as a key capability for accomplishing the organisation's overall objectives and sustaining RTC's current leadership position and competitive advantage in the HIV field leads to the key question of whether RTC will be in the position to keep up this

outstanding performance in the long run. The recommendation suggested is for RTC's leadership to strategically plan for and consider existing as well as anticipated business challenges and then forecast their talent needs accordingly. This would facilitate the organisation working towards better development of the talent it needs but most importantly will enable the leaders to cultivate and maintain the currently non-existent leadership pipeline. Apart from providing the next generation of leaders for the organisation, this suggested succession path could be designed to provide advancement for talent who though excellent in their current duties are not inclined to become managers or leaders. RTC could develop customised career paths granting promotions towards specialisation and recognition in specific talent fields. This approach, while guaranteeing a form of continuity for the organisation's successful leadership would also result in the development of even more skilled and focused specialists than RTC currently has.

Given that the directors during the interviews identified the organisation's career paths and succession planning as elements that need their focus, the researcher would encourage them to put into action steps to attend to this critical talent management aspect. The RTC leadership mindset and talent force performance indicates that this section (5.5) would be better suited if titled "commendation to RTC leadership and talent force".

5.6 Suggestions for further research

This study was carried out to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African non-profit organisation and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives. The decision to design a single case study was based on both the supervisor and the Business School research panel recommendation as well as on the research design justified in the evaluation of the case study design in Section 3.2.1. The success of this single case study in ascertaining the researcher's objectives leads to the first suggestion for future research to be a study which would be designed as:

“A multiple case study design within the non-profit industry to analyse the application of talent management processes in various SA non-profit organisations and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives.”

Given the importance of good talent management as demonstrated through this study, further research could be carried out in other SA industries to establish the application of talent management processes and deduce the various factors in those industries that respectively promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives.

In the course of the study interviews, several statements with regards to some RTC managers who also happen to be medical doctors were made by the interviewees but further pursuit or analysis of these statements was outside the scope of this study. Examples of these statements include:

> “Some of these doctors, who are managers, give them a sick person and they will do everything they can for that person but give them a form for leave approval and it seems administration and managerial duties are too much for them.” (RTC HR officer 2009)

> “Doctors, if they want to, make outstanding managers” (RTC director 2009)

> “What is not great for people who are not doctors is that the nature of the work here makes it a doctors’ organisation, so for top managerial positions, preference will be given to doctors. Unfortunately, doctors don’t always make good managers and they won’t listen to anyone except their fellow doctors.” (RTC line manager 2009)

With regards to these and similar statements that arose during this research, another suggestion for further research would be phrased as:

“The purpose of this study is to establish whether doctors can make good managers and deduce the factors that facilitate the success of doctors functioning in managerial and administrative roles”.

With globalisation and changing work practices, an arising phenomenon within the modern workplace is the fact that it is no longer a single physical workplace. People work from home, while travelling, and have varying work patterns. A final suggestion for further research encountered during this study would be phrased as:

“The purpose of this research is to analyse evolving work patterns and suggest suitable talent management processes for the successful handling of talent in the modern workplace”.

5.7 Final remarks

South African organisations, as described at the beginning of this report, have been experiencing debilitating skills shortages, a phenomenon that is not limited to the non-profit industry, which was the focal point of this research. The literature review and the case study have clarified that excellent talent management is the single most important force, and the strategic driver for creating organisational value and enhancing corporate performance. In line with this research, a talent management virtuous circle has been recommended to assist organisations in indentifying, investing in, and successfully performing the vital processes of attracting and recruiting, training and developing, managing and motivating, sustaining, and retaining suitable talent to facilitate the organisation’s continuous success in attaining high performance. Several factors were identified and recommended as constituting practices that promote the success of talent management.

The objective for any and all organisations with emphasis on NGOs should be to successfully apply talent management processes in support of the organisation’s overall objectives and produce extraordinary results for the organisation while sustaining a source of enduring competitive advantage.

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APPENDIX 1

Actual Research Instrument

Interview protocol

Once panel approval has been obtained and permission from RTC leadership to conduct the study granted, an introductory email detailing the purpose, process and requirements of the research will be sent to each of the selected participants. This will be followed by the researcher liaising with each of the interviewees to plan for each interview session.

Prior to the actual interview, if the interviewee does not have a personal office within the premises then the researcher in collaboration with the RTC administration will ensure that one of the RTC rooms is available and booked for the interview time slot.

Conducting the Interview

The researcher will begin the interview session by self-introduction followed by an explanation of the purpose of the research. The fact that the research results will be available in the public domain if published will be explained upfront as well as the assurance of each participant's confidentiality. The following paragraphs from the researcher's introductory email to each interviewee will be read once more to clarify the aim of the research.

"I will be conducting a research paper at Right to Care through Wits Business School as part of the requirements for the fulfilment of my MBA degree. The research, while touching on general management at Right to Care, will focus particularly on the management of the people whose efforts make Right to Care an exemplary NGO, i.e. the management of talent within Right to Care. Your input as a leader/manager/HR officer/employee within the organisation will be of great value in enabling me to effectively assess your management systems and practices and, hopefully, write a report that will be of future assistance to other NGOs and probably to Right to Care as well.

Kindly understand that my goal is not to gain comprehension of your organisation's policies and guidelines, but rather an understanding of how talent is actually managed on a daily basis. Please feel free to raise any questions, different aspects, successes or even failures that would help me understand the Right to Care talent management process".

The interviewee will then be informed that the interview questions were generated from literature research on excellent talent management practices to serve as a guide for the interview discussion. The researcher will once again reiterate the importance of the interviewees sharing their actual experiences at Right to Care and remind them that the information gained from the process will be publicly available when the report is completed. The interviewee will once again be assured of personal anonymity and invited to ask any questions he or she may have before and even during the interview.

Interview questions

The following set of questions will seek to clarify the organisation's definition of talent and establish its talent management strategy. Question 2 is formulated specifically for the directors while part b of the same question will be addressed to HR personnel only.

1. How does RTC define talent?

    - Briefly describe the attributes which in your view epitomise good talent in an RTC employee.

2. Does RTC have a talent management strategy?
    - If yes, briefly describe the strategy.

    b) What is HR's role within the RTC talent management plans and structure?

The following set of questions is constructed to analyse the organisation's employee value propositions and the organisation's ability to attract and hire individuals who have the skills and attributes it requires or would like to develop.

3. What do you consider to be the employee value propositions which compel you, especially with your knowledge of the internal workings of this organisation, to continue seeking ongoing employment here?

    - Would you recommend RTC as a choice employer to external talent?

4. Does the organisation have the competencies necessary to identify suitable talent and consequently attract and hire them?

    - Briefly outline the recruitment activities which are routinely undertaken when acquiring new talent into the organisation.

This set of questions will evaluate the organisation's training and development practice and the impact this has on talent.

5. How does the organisation identify and respond to its staff training and development needs?

6. Has the organisation played any role in your professional development, growth, and success?

    - If yes, briefly describe the impact that RTC training and development has had in your career.

    - How do you envision training and development growing your personal skills as well as overall organisational skills in the future?

The following set of questions will assess the interviewee's perception of the organisation's performance management practices and the subsequent employee engagement.

7. How effective is the organisation's performance management system in facilitating the required and aspired levels of talent performance within the organisation?

8. Using the scale provided, select the option which best describes the importance given to the following key drivers of employee engagement at

and by Right to care, then fill in the grey box with the corresponding choice number.

SCALE	1	2	3	4	5
	Unimportant	Of some importance	Important	Very important	Critically important

1. Progressive supervisory relationship with immediate management
2. High levels of communication
3. Alignment of employee's efforts to organisational goals
4. Pride in the organisation's vision and reputation
5. Contentment in what the employee does on a daily basis
6. Positive recognition and rewarding of the employee's efforts
7. Availability of career growth opportunities
8. Fostering of healthy relationships between co-workers
9. The employee's ability to perform and improve
10. High levels of trust

9. Give a brief summary of the performance review system.

    - How does the performance review structure connect with the overall talent management system?

This set of questions will appraise the organisation's employee commitment, retention, and succession planning. Question 11 will be addressed to all the respondents with the exception of the directors who will be asked to answer Part b of the question.

10. What is the organisation's labour turnover rate?

11. How would you rate the organisation on promoting talent internally?

    b. Is the organisation involved in a leadership training programme that seeks to grow future organisation leaders?

- If yes, briefly describe an example of a case in point – either in progress or of a successfully in-grown leader.

12. Which are the three most important factors which in your view are responsible for the organisation's success in long-term employee retention?

The final activity during the interview session will be requesting each interviewee to complete the following survey which appraises holistically the organisation's talent management capabilities while confirming the findings from the interviews.

Talent development survey (TDS) (Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007:26)

How does your organisation match up? Not every organisation emphasises employee recruitment, training, development, management and retention as important organisation capabilities. Talent management requires focus, commitment, and investment over time to build reputation and capability. The following test will assess where your organisation stands as a talent developer.

Using the scale provided, select the option that best describes the performance of the following talent management activities at RTC

(1=No, 2=Sometimes, 3= Yes):

1. We treat employee development as a strategic investment. **1 2 3**

2. Talent plans are an explicit element in business planning. **1 2 3**

3. Senior management is highly involved in people development. **1 2 3**

4. We have a strong bias to grow employees "from within". **1 2 3**

5. We rarely, if ever, recruit outsiders for executive positions. **1 2 3**

6. We see talent as a corporate asset, not “owned” by a particular business unit or function. **1 2 3**

7. The employee qualities we look for are well defined and adhered to. **1 2 3**

8. We care equally about candidate abilities and values in selection. **1 2 3**

9. Recruiting is everybody’s business. **1 2 3**

10. We invest in building strong relationships with selected talent pools (e.g. schools) to find the best candidates. **1 2 3**

11. We have well-defined career paths for employees. **1 2 3**

12. Our career systems are well-designed and continuously improved. **1 2 3**

13. We provide top talent with a broad range of work experiences. **1 2 3**

14. We are passionate about employee training. **1 2 3**

15. We invest significant time and efforts in ensuring employees continue to grow in competence. **1 2 3**

16. Performance assessment is rigorous and demanding. **1 2 3**

17. We use 360-degree feedback to give employees a clear view of how they are seen by colleagues. **1 2 3**

18. In our organisation, coaching skill and interest is a key element in selecting and evaluating managers and leaders. **1 2 3**

19. Our talent is often “raided” by other organisations because of our reputation for development. **1 2 3**

20. We invest in our reputation as a developer of talent. **1 2 3**

Total:

APPENDIX 2

Consistency matrix

The purpose of this research is to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African Non-Profit Organisation and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives.					
Sub-problem	**Literature Review**	**Research questions**	**Source of data**	**Type of data**	**Analysis**
First sub-problem: Establish the organisation's definition of talent and subsequent talent management strategy	Morton 2004; Hinrichs 1966; Fitz-enz 1984; Langbert 2002; Frank and Taylor 2004; Heinen and O'Neill 2004; Cappelli 2008; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008; Crush 2002; Guthridge, Komm and Lawson 2006; McCauley and Wakefield 2006; Kock and Burke 2008; Ridderstrale and Nordstrom 2002; Handfield-Jones, Michaels and Axelrod 2001; Reid and Crisp 2007; Ready and Conger 2007.	1) How is talent defined within the organisation? 2) Does the organisation have a talent management strategy?	Interview questions 1 and 2 addressing sub problem 1. Survey questions: 2, 6,7,11 and 12. Organisation documentation. Researcher observation.	Nominal data: Indirect from interview questions and documentary data sources. Direct through researcher observation. Ordinal data gathered from the survey.	Thematic or content analysis, addressing rival explanations, comparing and contrasting, triangulation, relying on theoretical propositions, using judging criteria provided for the survey.

The purpose of this research is to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African Non-Profit Organisation and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives.					
Sub-problem	**Literature Review**	**Research questions**	**Source of data**	**Type of data**	**Analysis**
Second sub-problem: Analyse the organisation's ability to attract and hire individuals who have the skills and attributes they require or would like to develop.	Pollitt 2004; Martel 2003; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008; Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Wellins 2001; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007; Pfeffer 2001; Cappelli 2008; McCauley and Wakefield 2006; Drotter and Charan 2001; Herman and Gioia 2001.	3) How does the organisation's employee value proposition appeal to talent? 4) Does the organisation have the competencies necessary to identify suitable talent, and consequently, attract and hire them?	Interview questions 3 and 4 addressing sub problem 2. Survey questions: 2,5,7,8,9,12 and 20. Organisation documentation. Researcher observation.	Nominal data: Indirect from interview questions and documentary data sources. Direct through researcher observation. Ordinal data gathered from the survey.	Thematic or content analysis, addressing rival explanations, comparing and contrasting, triangulation, relying on theoretical propositions, using judging criteria provided for the survey.
Third sub-problem: Evaluate the training and development of people within the organisation.	Martel 2003; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008; Peters and Smith 1996; Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Cappelli 2008; McCall 2008; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007; Soupata 2005; Frank and Taylor 2004; Miller and Desmarais 2007; Cantrell, Benton, Laudal and Thomas 2006; Lunn 1995.	5) How does the organisation train and develop talent? 6) What is the impact of the organisation investing in talent development?	Interview questions 5 and 6 addressing sub problem 3. Survey questions: 1,2,3,4,7,11,12,13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 20. Organisation documentation. Researcher observation.	Nominal data: Indirect from interview questions and documentary data sources. Direct through researcher observation. Ordinal data gathered from the survey.	Thematic or content analysis, addressing rival explanations, comparing and contrasting, triangulation, relying on theoretical propositions, using judging criteria provided for the survey.

The purpose of this research is to analyse the application of talent management processes within a South African Non-Profit Organisation and deduce the factors that promote the successful performance of talent management imperatives.					
Sub-problem	**Literature Review**	**Research questions**	**Source of data**	**Type of data**	**Analysis**
Fourth sub-problem: Assess the effectiveness of the organisation's performance management.	Cantrell and Benton 2007; Bacal 2000; Armstrong and Baron 2005; Torrington, Hall and Taylor 2005; Pfeffer 2001; Reid and Crisp 2007; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008; Davenport, Thomas and Cantrell 2002; Soupata 2005; Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod 2001; Finnie and Early 2002; Stevens 2008; Martel 2003; Kahn 1990; Heinen and O'Neill 2004.	7) How effective is the organisation's overall performance management especially in relation to effective employee engagement? 8) How does the organisation's performance review system relate to performance management?	Interview questions 7, 8 and 9 addressing sub problem 4. Survey questions: 3,4,6,7,8,11,12,13,14, 15, 16, 17 and 18. Organisation documentation. Researcher observation.	Nominal data: Indirect from interview questions and documentary data sources. Direct through researcher observation. Ordinal data from the questionnaire and the survey.	Thematic or content analysis, addressing rival explanations, comparing and contrasting, triangulation, relying on theoretical propositions, using judging criteria provided for the survey.
Fifth sub-problem: Appraise the success of the organisation's long term employee retention and succession planning.	Peters and Smith 1996; Ulrich 1998; Butler and Waldroop 1999; Cascio 1999; Kinnear 1999; Cappelli 2000, 2008; Herman and Gioia 2001; Frank, Finnegan and Taylor 2004; Frank and Taylor 2004; Branch 1998; O'Connor and Fiol 2004; Herman 2005; Cheese, Thomas and Craig 2008; Stevens 2008; Martel 2003; Younger, Smallwood and Ulrich 2007; Stum 2001; Reid and Crisp 2007.	9) What is the organisation's labour turnover rate? 10) What are the organisation's retention strategies?	Interview questions 10, 11 and 12 addressing sub problem 5. Survey questions: 2, 4, 5, 11, 12,13,17,19 and 20.	Nominal data: Indirect from interview questions and documentary data sources. Direct through researcher observation. Ordinal data gathered from the survey.	Thematic or content analysis, addressing rival explanations, comparing and contrasting, triangulation, relying on theoretical propositions, using judging criteria provided for the survey.