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Like many business owners, I've been faced with the challenge of wanting to increase revenue-but not knowing exactly how I'd pay for the additional help needed to grow my company. Fortunately, I took the advice I give to others in the article below, "Know when - and how - to hire the right staff."

Rather than pull anyone on as an employee, I have contracted with nearly a dozen professionals who help me with sales and development, PR and marketing, tech support, and finance and legal issues.



In fact, my director of communications Hope Katz Gibbs, and web developer Max Kukoy, helped me develop a new website, which I launched this month - [www.workforcelearning.com](http://www.workforcelearning.com). I am excited and proud to be able to present all of my articles, announce my speaking engagements, and provide access to past newsletters on this beautiful site.

Thanks to the support I get from my entire team, I am freed to up to do what I do best - conduct intensive workshops that provide managers and C-level executives with the skills and knowledge they need to build a more productive work environment.

My colleague Bob Corlett, president of Staffing Advisors, faced a similar dilemma a few years ago and not only opted to increase his full-time employee roster, but developed the Results-Based Hiring Process® - a product that helped him gain control over every aspect of the staffing service. As a result, he is fully staffed and better prepared to help his clients achieve their goals. (See the Q&A I did with him below in our Ask an Expert section.)

Large staffs require good human resources practices, of course, and that's why Bob and I are fans of *The Essential HR Handbook* by Sharon Armstrong and Barbara Mitchell. You'll read more about this quick and handy resource in this month's pick for our Book for Leaders.

I thank you for taking the time to read this issue of our newsletter, and invite you to attend a conference where I'll be speaking on Oct. 24 - the 2008 Women Entrepreneurs' Expo. To register, visit [www.cbponline.org/exporegistration](http://www.cbponline.org/exporegistration).

Yours, Alice

## **Managing Growth: Know when - and how - to hire the right staff**

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Kristina Bouweiri is a phenomenal entrepreneur. After marrying Reston Limousine owner William Bouweiri in 1991, she helped him turn a \$5000 investment into a \$15 million company that today is one of the largest private limo and shuttle services in North America.



Kristina is the first to admit she didn't do it alone.

"Finding the right people and putting them in the right jobs was something that took me years to master," explains Kristina, who was voted one of the Top 50 Most Influential and Powerful Women in Washington. "As an entrepreneur it is always tough to come up with the funds to pay the salaries required. Once you take that step, though, you find out they are worth every penny."

In my opinion, Kristina has mastered a skill that causes most business leaders sleepless nights and lost revenue. Although there is a real art to hiring well, and hiring at the right time, there's also a science to it.

Following are my "Three Steps to Hiring Success," a guide to help you determine when it's time to hire, which slots you must fill - and when, and whether to go with full-time hires or contractors. Try it, and I know you'll improve your approach to managing growth.

### **THREE STEPS TO HIRING SUCCESS**

#### **1. Know when it's time to hire staff**

Just like a sneeze can mean the flu may be around the corner, here are some business "symptoms" that can mean it is time to grow your workforce.

- No matter how long the work day, you and your staff leave with a "to do" list mostly "not done."
- You know that your business will grow in a predictable manner, either due to market trends, seasonal issues, drop in competition, increased referral or any other reason, you are anticipating steady growth.

- You are experiencing an increased demand for your product or service.
- You need to build pipeline of talent and resources for backup.
- You are burning out your current staff (including yourself). Signs of burnout can be an increase in sick days, missed deadlines or, worst of all, customer complaints.
- An unplanned opportunity comes knocking on your door.

## 2. Determine what type of staff members you need

It takes a lot of talent and expertise to run a business, but I have seen businesses both large and small make the mistake of starving the infrastructure to save money. In the heyday of downsizing years ago, in fact, it was commonplace to eliminate infrastructure positions and leave business operations at full force. With the economy taking a hit again, this lopsided logic is taking root again.

Executives take note: This approach does not eliminate the need to do any of the daily functions required to run your business. It simply pushes those responsibilities on to the business development team-leaving them less time to generate revenue. Conversely, by using strategic staffing strategies, companies can avoid lopsided growth in an economic downturn.

A better approach is to map your business' infrastructure by listing who is now covering the core business functions (see below). Then, when your plans call for business growth, determine how your infrastructure will grow with it.

These professionals should be on your team:

- Sales / business development experts, for these are the people who will bring in revenue.
- Marketing and advertising professionals to produce well written outreach pieces including ads, brochures, newsletters, and articles.
- Human resource professionals to provide expertise when it comes to compensation, benefits, hiring, contracting and other staffing tasks.
- Technology support for desktop and website development, support and maintenance, and equipment purchasing.
- Finance and accounting professionals to properly execute payroll, taxes, and other financial duties are done right and in a timely manner.
- Legal council, even if outsourced, is a critical team member at every company.

## 3. Decide if you need full-time employees or contractors

Full timers vs. contractors-this is a question without one right answer. But like all growth decisions, you need to examine this in the context of your business plan.

To find the approach that works best for your company ask the following:

- What skills and experience is intrinsic to your business?
- What value does this person provide to the customer?
- What type of a company are you trying to cultivate right now?
- Is your long-term strategy to grow a business for many years, or are your plans to grow for possible resale to another owner?

- What is the exit strategy for your business should you decide to sell it or close doors?

And remember this: The true currency of any business is not price-it is value. Ultimately, if the talent you need to grow your business perceives that there is more value in being employed than working on contract, this will determine your growth strategy. If, on the other hand, key team members are happier to work as contractors, don't shun them as an important resource.

For more information about Kristina Bouweiri and Reston Limousine, visit: [www.restonlimo.com](http://www.restonlimo.com).

## ASK THE EXPERT

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When is it really time to expand your workforce?"

A Q&A with Bob Corlett, president of Staffing Advisors

Bob Corlett has been in the staffing business for years, but in 2006 the president of Staffing Advisors ([www.staffingadvisors.com](http://www.staffingadvisors.com)) took a good look at his small albeit successful firm and realized he was struggling with some of the same symptoms his clients were. He knew he could help his clients better if he had a larger staff that could handle their needs.

Bob ended up hiring 6 people within 6 months.

Adding additional staff came at an expense, not only in terms of additional salaries but the shift changed the nature of how he did business. Still, he knew it was the right decision.

"Search firms were too expensive, and job advertising was not working for them. If I didn't find a way to help my clients better staff their own companies-someone else would. Quickly, it became clear I had no real choice but to expand."

The clever Corlett also had an ace up his sleeve: He had developed the Results-Based Hiring Process® - a product that helped him gain control over every aspect of the staffing service.

"I could finally guarantee hiring results for all types of positions," he says. "As a result, even in a down economy, our repeat business is booming, our marketing expenses are way down, and we are on track to double revenues and profitability again this year. Of course, now I have to hire even more people just to keep up with demand."

Recently, Bob sat down with Alice Waagen of Workforce Learning to talk about his product, and how companies can benefit from his experience and expertise.

Alice Waagen: Bob, you use the phrase Results-Based Hiring® to describe a unique process you've developed. How does it differ from traditional hiring practices?

Bob Corlett: Traditional hiring focuses on qualifications, a specific job title, so many years of experience, degrees, and so on. These are resume items and do not illustrate what a person in a new position will achieve.

With Results-Based Hiring® we begin by asking an executive two basic questions about what they want from the person who gets the job.

1. A year from now, what would success look like for this person?
2. What business impact would you want his person to achieve?

Then, we look for candidates that can fit those needs. Repeatedly, we have found that if you start with the business impact and lay out tangibly how success will be measured, you have a clear picture of what really matters. Everyone wins.

Alice: So you question and coach a hiring manager to get this specific information about a job before you go out and search for candidates?

Bob: Yes. Establishing the metrics is usually the hardest part, and although managers sometimes grumble about it they end of loving this part of the process because it helps them focus in on the results they are hoping to achieve.

Alice: I imagine that this also sets performance expectations that feed right into the performance management system.

Bob: Exactly. Top performers want clear expectations because that gives them the sense of accomplishment. What we find is that the more challenging the job, the better the candidate pool. In other words, if we post a job with clearly defined expected business results, it draws top performers and eliminates those who feel they are not up to the job challenges.

Alice: How do you look for the "soft skills" parts of the job?

Bob: Once you clarify the expected results, you can determine the skills needed to drive the results. We then identify the top three to five competencies needed to achieve the specific business impact such as "the ability to focus on the big picture," and "the ability to pay close attention to detail." We then go back and look at the expected business results and let those drive what is needed from the job candidate.

Alice: Once you have the results and competencies, what's next?

Bob: The third, crucial piece of information is the answer to this question: "What are the unique attributes of this organization that would attract the ideal candidate." This is the "what's in it for them" question. If a candidate is looking at a number of organizations, why should they join this one?

Alice: To sum it up, it sounds like you look for three buckets of information:

1. What are the expected business results?
2. What specific skills are needed to achieve these results?
3. What is unique about this company?

Bob: Bingo. And the information we gather to run the search feeds directly into the way

the manager should evaluate and reward success after the employee joins the team. Naturally we use this same process for our internal hiring needs and performance management. Managing performance is so much easier and more rewarding when you hire people with the right expectations.

For more information about Bob Corlett's Results-Based Hiring Process® visit: [www.staffingadvisors.com](http://www.staffingadvisors.com).

For more Expert Advice, visit: [www.workforcelearning.com/adviceforexperts](http://www.workforcelearning.com/adviceforexperts).

## BOOKS FOR LEADERS

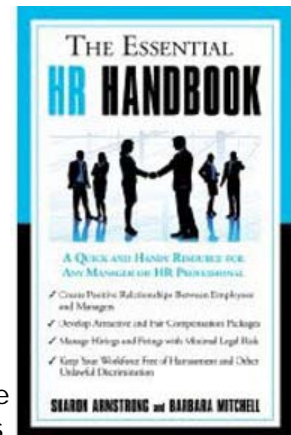
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The Essential HR Handbook: A quick and handy resource for any manager or HR professional

Review by Alice Waagen

Book by Sharon Armstrong and Barbara Mitchell

Publisher: Career Press, 2008

One of the toughest jobs in the business world is that of the middle manager. Whether the job title is supervisor, team lead or director, these positions are sandwiched between the front lines, the people doing the work day after day, and the organization's leadership, those looking ahead and giving direction. Too often, these two constituents do not see eye to eye and the middle management ranks need to buffer and cajole both upward and downward.



What makes the middle manager's job even more challenging, is that many managers are promoted in to the position with little or not training or guidance on how to direct the work of others.

As one newly promoted individual once told me, "I was so excited when I got the promotion to unit manager. But, dealing with the different personalities and work styles of my new staff drove me nuts. Why don't people come with an Operating Manual like I have for my car?"

*The Essential HR Handbook* by Sharon Armstrong and Barbara Mitchell is as close as it comes to that operating manual. The authors both have decades of experience in the HR business, and have written a clear, concise description of the fundamental aspects of managing others.

Written in an easy to understand format, the reader is briefed on how to:

- Individually manage each employee, starting on his or her first day.
- Manage a multi-generational workforce.
- Appraise job performance.
- Coach and counsel.
- Provide equitable pay, benefits, and total rewards strategies.

- Identify legal pitfalls and stay out of court.

What makes the book such a boon to managers is that it covers areas that are foreign to someone with a business or operation background.

I especially like the description of Legal Considerations in Chapter 9, which contains descriptions about hiring and termination concerns as well as how to deal with immigration issues. And the chapter on technology covers current workplace productivity challenges like private use of email and blogging and even includes wording for a blogging policy.

In this time of labor shortages in many of our key business areas, organizations cannot afford to have managers weak in the fundamentals of managing others. Providing managers with concrete information about their role in the managing human resources is critical. *The Essential HR Handbook* is a great way for them to learn about what encompassed their duties in this arena.

To buy the Essential HR Handbook, visit: [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com)

Check out other Books for Leaders: [www.workforcelearning.com/booksforleaders](http://www.workforcelearning.com/booksforleaders).

### **Upcoming Speaking Engagements**

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Friday, October 24, 2008: I will be speaking at the Women Entrepreneurs' Expo on Managing Growth: Knowing When and How to Hire Help. For more information, or to register, go to: [www.cbponline.org/exporegistration](http://www.cbponline.org/exporegistration).

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