



Adding Creativity into the Mix

As we enter our 24th year in business, we have had the opportunity to note various trends in business, especially as it relates to finding and acquiring talent. One of the trends we've noticed in talking with our clients, as well as our research, is the need for organizations to find superb talent who have strong technical and managerial competencies cohesive with a changing world and business conditions.

It's interesting to note as our business environments become more regulated and analytical on items ranging from quarterly earnings to yearly audits, that the "softer skills" are the ones which are becoming differentiators in finding and keeping talent. More and more we expect our business leaders to have balance between the analytical side and the creative side. You know we've seen a trend when at a recent shareholder's meeting General Motors Vice Chairman Bob Lutz said, "What we've got at GM now is a general comprehension that you can't run this business by the left, intellectual, analytical side of the brain. You have to have a lot of right side, creative input. We are in the arts and entertainment business, and we're putting a huge emphasis on world-class design."

Daniel Pink, futurist and best selling author of "A Whole New Mind - Moving from the Informational Age to the Conceptual Age" argues persuasively that what it used to take for people to get ahead in their careers—logical, linear, left-brain, and spreadsheet-type abilities—are less in vogue than abilities like artistry, empathy and big-picture thinking. According to Pink, "the left brain is necessary, but no longer sufficient. And the right brain stuff is the point of differentiation."

One of Pink's aptitudes for professional success and personal satisfaction is "story"—both telling and listening. It's been our belief that storytelling has a rich history as a leadership tool in shaping and nurturing an organization's culture and values. Steve Denning, former executive with the World Bank, has become an expert in the art and science of storytelling. His work has been featured in Harvard Business Review and his latest book is entitled, "The Leader's Guide to Storytelling." Steve's aptitude in this area was certainly not a birthright. As he puts it, "I was the quintessential analytic manager. Crisp. Clear. Sharp decisions. Stories were the last thing on my mind. You needed bottom-line. You needed analysis." But then later in his career at the World Bank he needed to tell stories to build consensus, persuade others to action and to further communicate ideas and concepts. For Steve, stories were the springboard to major organization change.

For the past quarter century our mission has been to find the talent to fill our client's needs. This purpose takes on greater meaning in a 24/7 world where balance and adaptability become critical. Today's managers and leaders need more "tools" in their "toolbox" than ever before. Our experience has shown that finding the right talent for your organization requires much more than looking at the words on the job description.

We look forward to the months and years ahead as opportunities to solve our client's critical staffing needs. Our journey continues as we seek talent—be it analytical, creative or a mixture of both!