

## Exceptional talent, extraordinary demands

**Bogotá, Colombia** – We usually discuss and publish articles and recommendations on the things that executives – the leaders of organisations – need in order to perform to the utmost and be the best leaders they can be. However, we sometimes forget that these executives, these great leaders, were once up-and-coming young hopefuls with big ideas and a strong will to win, always seeking companies that would give them the opportunity to develop their talent.



Companies are eager to get the best professionals, but are they prepared to attract, develop and ultimately retain them?

According to a study by [McKinsey](#), over the next five years the global war for talent will have a greater impact on companies than any other factor. It is considered to be a strategic priority; as very few organisations are confident in their ability to retain talent, although there is no clear answer on how the challenge should be faced or what measures should be taken.

Research carried out by [Gallup](#) identified the following work environment and leadership priorities for talented young individuals:

- Am I clear on what is expected of me at work?
- Do I have the necessary tools and equipment to perform my job well?
- Do I have the opportunity to do the work at which I consider I'm the best?
- Does my supervisor or someone at the company care about me as a person?
- Does my organisation promote professional development?
- Are my opinions taken into account from day to day?
- Am I clear about the mission/purpose of my company and how my work contributes to it?
- Do I have good interpersonal relationships at work?
- Am I clear on how my professional development has progressed over the last 6 months?
- Over the last year, have I had opportunities to develop myself and learn at work?

As we can see, these people require a work environment that allows them to develop through conscious and autonomous decision-making, doing what they do best and identifying themselves with the mission and ultimate goal of the organisation, thus achieving an intrinsic motivation and from this, a real professional commitment.

But what or who should be responsible for creating that environment? Usually we chorus “The company!” because its mission and vision play an important role, but who really puts the noble ideals into practice and turns the company’s mission and vision into the way that people in the organisation feel and act? Employers and leaders are directly responsible for creating a work environment that functions as a seedbed for new talent; leaders need to be aware of their role as talent developers who create conscious organisations.

Fred Kofman sets out the characteristics of a conscientious employee in his book "Conscious Business":

- Unconditional responsibility;
- Integrity;
- Ontological humility;
- Authentic communication;
- Constructive negotiation;
- Excellent coordination;
- Conscious responses;
- Emotional mastery.

The first three are related to a person's character, the way s/he is and acts. The next three are interpersonal skills, and the final characteristic allows us to develop the others.

Kofman points out that these characteristics are easy to understand, but harder to put into practice. It takes effort to internalise them into everyday practice. Although they are nothing but common sense, turning them into behaviours requires conscious thought and action.

Leaders, let us be aware of the talent we have in our teams and identify what we need to provide for our talent to develop; in this way we are creating the necessary policies and tools to attract and retain them. Now more than ever, we need to retain our talent and make the most of what is coming. It's time to sow talent for the future and thus form the business industry that our society requires to face the challenges of tomorrow's economy.



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