Leader Recruiting and the T-model

Gardner Philip

Purpose – Many of Michigan State University's employer partners who recruit regularly on campus are not familiar with the T-model but quickly grasp the concept of depth and breadth. In extended discussions with employers as we establish the T-model, our employers directly link the T to desired traits for candidates for their leader talent programs. This connection has opened some new avenues of research into the connection between leader recuiting and the T. This presentation reports some of the early findings from our initial research project.

Design/Methodology/approach – The Collegiate Employment Research Institute has been exploring leader talent recruiting as part of its annual college recruiting series. We surveyed nearly 2500 employer representatives who were actively recruiting on college campuses across the U.S. In our theme section of the survey, employers can choose the recruiting topics that interest them. 545 employers (62% representing companies with 500 or fewer employees, 40% from service sector, 26% from professional services, and 27% from production sectors) opted to complete the topic on leader talent recruiting. They reported the primary purpose of college recruiting was to identify future leaders who are likely to be selected from company's co-ops/interns (34%) or current employees (40%).

Findings – Using organizational fit measures and behavioral interviews recruiters assemble a leader candidate pool with selection focused on communication and interpersonal skills, initiative, learning, and relevant work experience. Academic major is not considered an important selection criteria. Factors that determine who is selected for further consideration include those who can build trust & confidence, uphold behavioral standards, deliver strong & credible results and master new experiences. Also successful candidates score high on self-awareness, self-regulation and self-motivation.
By overlaying the components of the T-professional model, as defined by Michigan State University, onto leader candidate characteristics we can delineate strong connections between the two.

Research limitations/implications (if applicable) – This study was exploratory in nature as we do not have much prior research on this topic. The first step was to simply determine the dynamics of leader recruiting. We established connections to the T-model. With these insights we are designing more rigorous studies around the T.

Practical implications (if applicable) – These initial findings have stimulated interest in further research about T- development and leadership training on campus including examining the integration of different T-learning opportunities and leadership advancement; establishing the relationship between T-development in undergraduates who are participating in campus leadership programs; and longitudinal analysis of how T attributes influence leadership attainment in early career.

Key words (max 5) Y-professional model, leader talent recruiting, employer perceptions

Paper type – Conceptual paper / Research paper