

the necessary numbers of new hires. Further, steps will have to be taken to retain the new hires and thus avoid having to repeat the above experiences in the next staffing cycle.

Quantity and Quality

Staffing the organization requires attention to both the numbers (quantity) and the types (quality) of people brought into, moved within, and retained by the organization. The quantity element refers to having enough people to conduct business, and the quality element refers to having people with the requisite KSAs so that jobs are performed effectively. It is important to recognize that it is the combination of sufficient quantity and quality of labor that creates a maximally effective staffing system.

Organization Effectiveness

Staffing systems exist and should be used to contribute to the attainment of organizational goals such as survival, profitability, and growth. A macro view of staffing like this is often lost or ignored because most of the day-to-day operations of staffing systems involve micro activities that are procedural, transactional, and routine in nature. While these micro activities are essential for staffing systems, they must be viewed within the broader macro context of the positive impacts staffing can have on organization effectiveness. There are many indications of this critical role of staffing.

Leadership talent is at a premium, with very large stakes associated with new leader acquisition. Sometimes leadership talent is bought and brought from the outside to hopefully execute a reversal of fortune for the organization or a business unit within it. For example, in 2012, Yahoo brought in Marissa Mayer, a former executive at Google, to turn around the aging tech giant. Organizations also acquire leaders to start new business units or ventures that will feed organizational growth. The flip side of leadership acquisition is leadership retention. A looming fear for organizations is the unexpected loss of a key leader, particularly to a competitor. The exiting leader carries a wealth of knowledge and skill out of the organization and leaves a hole that may be hard to fill, especially with someone of equal or higher leadership stature. The leader may also take other key employees along, thus increasing the exit impact.

Organizations recognize that talent hunts and loading up on talent are ways to expand organization value and provide protection from competitors. Such a strategy is particularly effective if the talent is unique and rare in the marketplace, valuable in the anticipated contributions to be made (such as product creations or design innovations), and difficult for competitors to imitate (such as through training current employees). Talent of this sort can serve as a source of competitive advantage for the organization, hopefully for an extended time period.⁵

Talent acquisition is essential for growth even when it does not have such competitive advantage characteristics. As hiring has steadily picked up since the Great