

Recession ended, many companies are scrambling to staff positions in order to keep up with demand. For example, Amazon, Oracle, and Microsoft are each attempting to fill a whopping 2,000 positions that all pay at least \$60,000 a year.⁶ Shortages in the quantity or quality of labor can mean lost business opportunities, scaled-back expansion plans, inability to provide critical consumer goods and services, and even threats to the organization's survival.

Finally, for individual managers, having sufficient numbers and types of employees on board is necessary for the smooth, efficient operation of their work units. Employee shortages often require disruptive adjustments, such as job reassignments or overtime for current employees. Underqualified employees present special challenges to the manager, as they need to be trained and closely supervised. Failure of the underqualified to achieve acceptable performance may require termination, a difficult decision to make and implement.

In short, organizations experience and respond to staffing forces and recognize how critical these forces can be to organizational effectiveness. The forces manifest themselves in numerous ways: acquisition of new leaders to change the organization's direction and effectiveness, prevention of key leader losses, use of talent as a source of growth and competitive advantage, shortages of labor—both quantity and quality—that threaten growth and even survival, and the ability of individual managers to effectively run their work units.

Staffing System Examples

Staffing Jobs Without Titles

W. L. Gore & Associates is a Delaware-based organization that specializes in making products derived from fluoropolymers. Gore produces fibers (including dental floss and sewing threads), tubes (used, for example, in heart stents and oil exploration), tapes (including those used in space exploration), and membranes (used in Gore-Tex waterproof clothing).

In its more than half-century history, Gore has never lost money. Gore employs over 9,000 workers and appears on nearly every "best place to work" list. What makes Gore so special? Gore associates argue that it's the culture, and the culture starts with the hiring.

Gore has a strong culture, as seen in its structure: a team-based, flat lattice structure that fosters personal initiative. At Gore, no employee can ever command another employee—all commitments are voluntary, and any employee can say no to any request. Employees are called "associates" and managers are called "sponsors." How do people become leaders at Gore? "You get to be a leader if your team asks you to lead them."⁷

Gore extends this egalitarian, entrepreneurial approach to its staffing process. The focal point of Gore's recruitment process is the careers section of its website, which describes its core values and its unique culture. The website also provides