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## How Applied Theatre Can Help You Retain Your Employees

Topic: [Employment & HR](#)  
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Tags: [Hiring](#), [Theatre](#), [Kaustubh Bankapure](#)  
06 Nov 2015, 10:12

Hiring talent for your business has always been a priority. But retaining talent is just as important. It's a competitive world, and your talent – in other words, your employees – always have other options to choose from. So if your employees are not happy enough with their challenges, returns and opportunities at your business, you may find them moving to another company.

“Attracting and holding talent have become two of the central tasks of management,” said Peter Drucker. In this article, I will discuss the second part of Drucker’s statement – holding talent. Managing talent.

**You may ask:** Is talent management really important? What if I don't do it? My business is going good anyway. You'll find the answers to these questions in this article. You will also understand how important your talent is, and how to help them grow and retain them by the way of affirmative actions.

### What Is Talent?

Before I begin to discuss talent management, I'd like to explain what I mean by talent. Talent is 'a special ability that allows someone to do something well.' What is this special ability? That's what many employers can't answer, and that's why many employers lose talent, because they fail to understand what this ability is, how to understand it and how to nurture it.

My experience in many industries as an HR consultant and behavioural trainer allows me to demonstrate talent as an equation. Talent = Knowledge + Knowledge of how to use the knowledge.

Understanding your employees' needs in terms of challenges, and creating appropriate opportunities for them, is what I mean by talent management. You are always investing in your employees, directly or indirectly. Apart from salary or remuneration, your business also provides facilities that become a learning centre or resource for your employees. A good employee always tries to gather knowledge from all available sources. The day your business fails to provide her or him with appropriately challenging work, she or he starts looking for that challenge somewhere else.

Other businesses are also looking for good talent. This can make it difficult for you to retain your talent if you have been unable to provide them with appropriate challenges.

### What Is Applied Theatre?

“Knowledge workers have many options and should be treated and managed as volunteers (or stake holders). They are interested in personal achievement and personal responsibility. They expect continuous learning and training. They want respect and authority. Give it to them,” says Peter Drucker.

But many businesses fail to give a good employee what she or he wants. This is not always related to money. It is related to self-respect, admiration for her or his work, and pride for the company she or he is working for. Suitable learning and development programmes can help you achieve these things for your employees.

Applied theatre is a promising way to execute learning and development programmes. In the words of Philip Taylor, “Applied theatre opens up new perspectives, poses options and anticipates change.” It is an unconventional theatre practice used for human resource development. It helps to break the old habits of your employees, and motivate them to explore new ways to work.

According to Osterland, “The tendency to repeat old patterns of behaviour is a common problem for individuals and for society as a whole.” You have seen how, often, your employees become comfortable with their work and working methods, and do not try to use new methods to work. Training programmes for your employees provide an opportunity to break old patterns of behaviour and explore new areas of development.

Applied theatre uses personal exploration as a key process area. The process invites every participant to contribute, and also allows every participant to learn in her or his own way. It uses symbols, role play and improvisational theatre to allow participants a point of entry into the 'self', and as a vehicle to explore the relationship between knowledge and action.

## How Applied Theatre Works

Activities for participants include process drama, forum theatre, improvisations and playback theatre. The participant's personal experiences are processed with the help of these activities, which helps them to understand things in a much better way.

Information is also circulated through and by the participants in entertaining practices, making this methodology a form of infotainment. Applied theatre has certain advantages when it comes to learning and development:

- 1. Engagement:** This method is highly entertaining because it involves various theatre-based activities. It also helps participants to improve their attention spans, as they become part of the process and thus need to concentrate on themselves.
- 2. No barriers:** Theatre has its own language of communication, and this process removes the barriers of text and language. As most of the work is performance based, participants discuss things through various activities and try to learn from them.
- 3. Interaction:** The interaction may be in a form of question, reaction, analysis, statement or realisation.
- 4. Spirit of enquiry:** The process encourages the participants to ask questions of each other and the facilitator. It develops a spirit of enquiry.
- 5. Perception:** Seen and unseen problems and known and unknown issues are experienced with different perspectives in this process.
- 6. Learn to unlearn:** The process is often based on personal experiences, which helps participants to understand how not to think about things which are of no importance. It helps your employees to understand that it is important to learn how to unlearn things which are not correct.
- 7. Learning with development:** With this methodology, learning and development take place at the same time. The process helps employees realise their experiences are part of learning. The outcome of this learning is a development process which happens at the same time.
- 8. Holistic development:** It allows employees to grow and develop as human beings, so that the progress is made with your employee not only as a professional, but also in her or his personal sphere.

As Peter Drucker said, employees are volunteers, and they can volunteer in anyone's business as and when they want. As an employer, your job is to make sure that your employees get enough challenging work and opportunities according to their talent. This can be ensured with appropriate learning and development programmes at regular intervals. These programmes help employees understand their quality of work, level of achievement, dedication, job profile and responsiveness in a much better way.

Talent management is a need. Those who understand this and work towards it will survive simply because a happy employee is the biggest strength of any business.

Posted by

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