

Administrative Solutions

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When Hiring, Play For All The Marbles

What does the expression "*playing for all the marbles*" mean to you? Derived from a competitive children's game, the expression typically conjures up images of ongoing preparation and a fierce determination to win.

If you are a business owner or manager with one of the few job openings available in today's job market, then the term "*playing for all the marbles*" is significant to defining the success of your business. If you are an employer trying to fill a job vacancy, it means ongoing preparation and a fierce determination to hire the best possible talent available.

They prepare to recruit, interview and select new employees as if the life of the company or their career depends on it.

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Are You Playing For All The Marbles?

How To Support An Employee Going Through Depression

If you have an employee who is suffering from a mild depressive disorder, there are a few things you can do as a manager to be supportive.

Here are a few tips:

- ✓ Help your employee set reasonable goals. In light of the depression, the employee may have an unrealistic view of what he or she needs to accomplish.
- ✓ Assist the employee in breaking a large task into several small ones. This will help take the pressure off of the project. Encourage them to set priorities and accomplish what he or she can.
- ✓ Provide information about any employee assistance program your company might have.
- ✓ Try to get the employee involved in workplace activities to build self esteem.
- ✓ Be patient.

—Adapted from the National Institute of Mental Health

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Help Employees Succeed

Save yourself – and your organization – lots of wasted time and energy by making sure employees don't fail for any of these reasons:

- **They aren't** sure what the job is.
- **They don't** know how to do the job.
- **A person** or situation interferes with employees' ability to do the job.

Source: *13 Fatal Errors Managers Make and How You Can Avoid Them*, by Steven W. Brown

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They realize that every time there is a reduction in force somewhere, there is the potential to get a Secretariat for the price of a very good show horse.

A client recently asked me to assist him in recruiting and screening prospective applicants for a Director of Administration position. After a short meeting, I knew he was playing for all the marbles.

We wrote a classified ad that clearly defined the candidate as a generalist with supervisory or managerial skills and experience (in other words, weaklings need not apply). We profiled the position by determining the characteristics of the right candidate and how she or he would function in the company's environment.



The screening process consisted of converting 160 résumés into 12 telephone interviews, which resulted in seven on-site, one-on-one screening interviews. Three of those individuals were chosen to interview with the local management team.

The next step was not selecting the best of the three but determining whether to make an offer or start the process all over again, indicating the employer's true commitment to excellence. As you prepare to fill your next vacancy, how will you recruit the right person? I urge you to prepare to play for all the marbles and be determined to win the best talent for your organization.

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A man is not idle because he is absorbed in thought. There is a visible labor and there is an invisible labor.

— Victor Hugo

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Teach Your Employees' Communication Basics

Sharpen communication between you and your staff members by following these guidelines:

- **Really listen; don't "wait to talk."** When employees are speaking, focus on what they're saying and try to understand their complete meaning. Don't let your attention wander because you're thinking about how you'll respond.
- **Be concise. Don't monopolize the conversation.** Get to the point and give employees the chance to share their ideas.
- **Keep an open mind. Reserve judgment.** Consider all points of view and possibilities before you respond.
- **Show respect.** Convey your commitment to listening through your body language as well as through your silence. Don't slouch, fiddle with papers or carry on any side conversations.
- **Seek and confirm understanding.** When you're not sure exactly what someone means, ask for clarification. Then, to confirm that you understood, summarize what you heard.
- **Appreciate more than one right answer.** Each employee brings a different perspective to the discussion. Accept that problems can have more than one solution.



Reprint permission from: *Manager's Edge*, as adapted from *Star Dynamics*, Janelle Brittain, Oakhill Press



Help Feed the Hungry – Click Here: www.thehungersite.com

The Hunger Site was founded to focus on a specific humanitarian need; the eradication of world hunger. The staple food funded by clicks at The Hunger Site is paid for by site sponsors and distributed to those in need by Mercy Corps and America's Second Harvest. Since its launch in June 1999, the Hunger Site has established itself as a leader in online activism, helping to feed the world's hungry and food insecure. On average, over 220,000 individuals from around the world visit the site each day to click the yellow "Help Feed The Hungry" button. Try it out...it's **FREE!**

Employment Laws You Should Know

There are numerous complex laws that govern the employer-employee relationships as well as the provisions requiring reporting or record-keeping.

Here are a few that you should take notice of:

Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA) is a federal law that protects older employees (those over the age of 40) from employment discrimination on the basis of age. Only employers with more than 20 employees are required to comply with ADEA. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against any disabled employee or applicant who could, with or without a reasonable accommodation of that disability, perform a job. The act also requires an employer to provide accommodation, such as modified work hours or duties, or special equipment, if such an accommodation is *not "unduly burdensome"* and is necessary to help the disabled employee perform his or her job.



Pensions, benefits and compensation are governed by an array of laws, including the Employee Retirement Income Security Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and laws such as COBRA, which requires an employer to continue some forms of employee insurance coverage for a period of time after the employee has been terminated. Some employment benefits are also mandated by state or federal law, such as Social Security, unemployment compensation, and workers' compensation.

Wrongful termination or discharge refers to terminating an employee in violation of a public policy of a state, such as when the employee has reported a violation of the law by the employer. Many states also recognize a claim for wrongful termination where the employer has violated its employment contract with the employee.

Retaliation for making a claim or reporting a violation is prohibited by most of the federal and state laws relating to the workplace. In the case of Title VII and other federal antidiscrimination laws, a retaliation claim may be maintained even when an employee cannot show that he or she was discriminated against.

Ask your attorney for advice on all legal matters.

The information presented here should not be construed to be formal legal advice or the formation of a lawyer/client relationship. This newsletter makes no claims or representations as to the validity of the articles submitted by 3rd party authors.

The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.

— Winston Churchill



ONE MINUTE IDEAS

Atypical Resolutions -

- * STRIVE FOR BETTER BALANCE – Schedule more activities with your family and friends if you spend most of your time at the office.
- * TAKE BETTER CARE OF YOUR MIND – Read a book a month or take a course at a local college. Ask yourself what you would like to learn more about, then take the plunge.
- * SHARE YOUR TALENTS, energy and other resources with volunteer organizations.
- * TRY A NEW FITNESS PROGRAM – Choose something that rewards you with new friends and fun places to explore.
- * TAKE TIME TO APPRECIATE FAMILY, friends and co-workers.
- * TURN CHANGES INTO CHALLENGES and master them with gusto.
- * SEEK PEACE OF MIND and help others do the same.

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Future Insights

Beware of empires. Guard against any manager building a bureaucratic dynasty that gets in your way of performance. Cross-train your people, enable them to work productively together across departmental or functional lines. Stay fluid and flexible.

Emphasize personal and professional growth. Establish and maintain a learning environment. Use education, training, and development to help every worker become more competent, more confident. Link personal and corporate growth objectives to build the congruency that bonds people to your company. When people can meet their personal needs through their employment with you, they'll be more likely to stay.

Show appreciation. Tomorrow's employees, like today's, are hungry for appreciation. Thank your people every day. Be sincere and specific. Train all your managers and supervisors to follow your example, consistently. Seek creative ways to show you care.

Get closer to your people. Develop tighter relationships with your people. Share your visions, your dreams, your needs. Learn how your people feel about these issues, and other things that are important to them. Stimulate and support vigorous open communication.

Stay alert to trends. Study your industry's publications. Scan popular newsmagazines, newspapers, and newsletters. Talk with colleagues, customers, suppliers. Attend an annual meeting if you're really interested in trends and creative ideas.



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