

Mmm, interesting - so, uh, why did you employ me, huh?

So you advertise a position... first internal, then external. You get a couple of CV's, all shapes and sizes, chuck some in the bin before you even read them because they're simply too thick, chuck some more in the bin because they're just not good enough, and eventually keep some.

By [Lehan Stemmet](#) 12 Jan 2006

Your PA makes phone calls to the lucky ones and sets up interviews. Quite creatively, you decide to do these interviews at a coffee shop or some cool restaurant... you know, to make your prospects feel comfortable whilst interviewing them. Finally you choose someone, the best person for the job!

Problem! This so-called best person for the job might be the best person for the job, but what else is s/he bringing to the table? In fact, under the influence of interviewing pressure to "sell your company's amazingness to this new prospect" you may have found yourself saying something to him/her in the lines of: "...we love to see your creativity, your spunk, your natural tendency to think for yourself..."

Soon the training starts for this new prospect who has so many other hidden talents and great ideas, great skills and other traits that will benefit your company, however, training starts right at the beginning again, and this is how we do it, because that's the way it is done. Even worse than that is training a new prospect on what they already know, instead of giving them the opportunity to tell you where they're at, what they know and what they think they should learn.

Yup, I agree, for the sake of saving time we compile a training document, stuff it in the new NKOTB's (New Kid On The Block) hands and tell them to go through it... b-o-o-o-o-ring! How about some mentorship along the way? I don't know how many times I was stuffed a typical training document in the hands, and thought: "...cool, I can't wait to go through this... wow, this is really great... this company is where I want to work..." Why can't I remember ever thinking that? *Why can't you remember ever thinking that?*

The answer is simple: You can't remember thinking that because you most probably never thought it, right. Feel free to disagree if you like. The point is... as with most religions in the world, if not all religions in the world: "do unto others as you want them to do unto you... treat others the way you'd like to be treated." This is sometimes called the Golden Rule, the Universal Rule, etc.

Funny how we all know this fact when it suits us, but as soon as we have to spend some time mentoring a NKOTB (New Kid On The Block) your mood changes and you start worrying about your precious time, your hectic schedule, your vicious diary, your overloaded workload, and your emotional corporate shock absorbers in need of a change, your brake pads being run down to the core, your filters being stuffed.

OK, so point taken, you are very busy, and rightly so with all the current business and corporate vibes moving towards: less people, higher productivity. But, on the other hand, what if you spend some time with this NKOTB, show them the ropes... not necessarily how to do the job (they might know how to do this...previous experience), but YOUR COMPANY'S policies and procedures, and the way you guys do things. Imagine how much time you will save at the end of the day, should you do this.

Give someone a manual, a training document and they will probably knock on your door all the time, because there will always be something that's not so clear in the manual. Even worse, something may be put very

clearly in a training document, but hey, we all know doing the work and repeating the work, is probably the best way to learn. Most psychologists reckon the best way and most effective way we all learn is though EXAMPLE... the rest is made up of doing it yourself and repetition (how did you learn to speak, for example?).

So here's the deal: see how you can help someone new learn from your experience and expertise, then let them give it a shot, while you're being a mentor/coach, and sooner or later they'll be just as good as you, if not better (ouch!), than you at doing it. Maybe, just maybe that's the problem in internal training and mentoring. It's so easy to throw a manual at someone new and criticise them for not knowing what's written there or for not knowing how to do the job, regardless of whether they simply don't know how to do the job according to your company's P&P, or know who your suppliers are or some of the other little intricacies of your company. More often the smaller things, the things even you have learnt through experience in your company, make a NKOTB great or fail... makes your company phenomenal or well...

"...but we gave you the flippen manual... idiot..."

ABOUT LEHAN STEMMET

Lehan received his B.Sc degree at the University of the Free State, earning academic merit bursaries for psychology and biochemistry. While and after completing his degree in biochemistry and microbiology, he earned some extra money doing temp work for too many companies to mention. He has experience in science, human resources, data capturing, database building, information gathering, politics, sales, exporting and importing, human resources, counselling, operations, consulting and many more industries. He has also, while running a consulting business and second-hand office furniture business, completed a post graduate diploma in psychology and industrial psychology with distinction. After his return from Europe – where he played a part in the EURO change over project - he was offered a position as territory manager in KwaZulu-Natal for Capital Outsourcing Solutions (CAPOS). After almost two months he got promoted to business development manager and moved up to Johannesburg. Shortly thereafter he was offered the position of National Operations Manager. He is responsible for operational services accounts on a national level, including research, benchmarking, merchandising, field marketing, issue escalations, as well as selection, appointment and training of new staff. For further information / comments please contact Lehan on Cell: +27 82 345 0887 or E-mail: lehan@capos.co.za / lehans@mweb.co.za.
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