

Building the Executive Team

A company can live or die by the quality or composition of its senior leadership. At Hawes Partners we understand how to build a management team. Not only do you need to bring in executives to fill functional gaps and who fit in culturally; you also need them to complement strengths and address weaknesses across the existing team. It is the collective knowledge of the overall executive that will give a company the edge it is seeking.

Organizations ultimately consist of individuals. At the executive level, those individuals are providing leadership to functional areas within the organization. However, the group of executives have the opportunity to form a team and as such have the potential to have a far more dramatic effect on the fortunes of the company than if they merely remained a group of individuals. All teams are made from groups of individuals; however, not all groups are teams.

A team can be described as 2 or more individuals who are brought together by commonality of vision or purpose and who interact and influence each other in order to collectively work towards their shared objective. It is intuitively understood, as well as being backed up by considerable research, that teams can achieve far more than individuals. To be effective though, the group of executives, who are all leaders themselves and must be able to operate alone, must also be able to work together as a team and be able to respond to overall leadership.

Selecting a new person to join an existing team therefore involves considerably more than merely identifying functional ability and experience. Getting the right "fit" is essential. The breadth of managerial, facilitation, analytic, big picture, decision making, foresight, guardedness, risk taking, pace setting and peace making (to name a few) skills across the team are equally important as the more obvious functional skills such as finance or production. You need to build your team around your weaknesses and your strengths.

To fully identify the right person to fill a vacancy, the existing management team, organizational culture, values and organizational objectives need to be clearly understood. Hawes Partners can help you consider this broader picture to identifying the person you need to complement your team.

Once we have helped you to assemble your executive team, you can get down to the more subtle and longer task of team-building; we don't do that, but we may have a few observations or thoughts to help you on your way.