

# THE DONALD COOPER CORPORATION

Speaking and coaching internationally on management, marketing and profitability



## Management tool #B-28:©

### 4 Key Questions to ask about talent, technology and training:

The 3 'Ts' of business success are '**talent, technology and training**'. While working with a Biz Coaching client recently, I developed these '4 Questions below' to help with a number of key challenges. The '4 Questions' were a breakthrough for our client and they will be helpful in your business.

#### Key Question #1:

**What talent do we need to add?** What 1 to 3 **new positions**, filled by talented top-performers, would make a big difference in our:

- management effectiveness,
- financial control,
- quality,
- efficiency,
- customer experience,
- marketing and market leadership,
- sales and / or,
- profitability.

1. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Note:** If there are more than 3 new positions that need to be created, document the additional positions on a separate piece of paper.

**Action Plan for Question #1:** What will be our Action Plan to make this happen? Specifically, what will be done, by whom, by when, with what result, measured how, at what cost and rewarded how?

1. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_.
6. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Key Question #2:**

**Note:** Failure to deal with non-performance is one of the biggest problems in most businesses today. So, here is Key Question #2:

**Who do we need to replace? In what **existing positions**** in our business, if mediocre or toxic staff were replaced by talented and committed top-performers, would it make a big difference in our:

- management effectiveness,
- financial control,
- quality,
- efficiency,
- customer experience,
- marketing and market leadership,
- sales and / or,
- profitability.

1. \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_.

3. \_\_\_\_\_.

4. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Note:** If there are more than 4 new people who need to be replaced, document the additional names on a separate piece of paper.

**Action Plan:** What will be our Action Plan to make this happen? Specifically, what will be done, by whom, by when, with what result, measured how, at what cost and rewarded how?

**Note:** Every non-performer or mediocre performer falls into one of two categories...rescuable or not rescuable. For those who you believe are rescuable, document what the problems are and also what value they do bring to the business. For example, they may be good at operating equipment but they're toxic or abusive to other team members or to customers.

Next step, create a plan to rescue them through training, personality counselling, setting clear performance standards, putting them in a job for which they're better suited, or whatever. Always make it clear what is expected of them and by when you two agree that they'll be up to where their job performance or behaviour need to be. Always document these conversations and commitments in a file. Preferably, have the problem employee sign the commitment. If you end up having to terminate some of these folks, the person with the best paperwork wins.

For those employees that you deem to be 'not rescuable', terminate them in a tidy fashion to avoid having to pay a big termination settlement. Have a conversation with them about exactly what the problem or shortfall is and give them an opportunity to leave now or commit to correct the problem. If they insist that they can correct the problem(s), ask how they will go about doing that and specifically by when their performance or behavior will be up to standard. Keep in mind that there must be certain zero tolerance behavior that results in immediate dismissal. What you always want to avoid is legal action or company sabotage by a vindictive employee. It's expensive and disruptive.

**Key Question #3:**

What pieces of **new equipment or technology or system upgrades** would make a big difference in our:

- management effectiveness,
- financial control,
- quality,
- efficiency,
- customer experience,
- marketing and market leadership,
- sales and / or,
- profitability.

1. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Note:** If there are more than 4 pieces of equipment or technology or system upgrade possibilities, document them on a separate piece of paper.

**Action Plan:** What will be our Action Plan to investigate these possibilities and make them happen? Specifically, what will be done, by whom, by when, with what result, measured how, at what cost and rewarded how?

1. \_\_\_\_\_.
2. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_.
6. \_\_\_\_\_.
7. \_\_\_\_\_.
8. \_\_\_\_\_.
9. \_\_\_\_\_.
10. \_\_\_\_\_.

**Key Question #4:**

What **additional staff training**, in which departments or job functions, done effectively, would make a big difference in our:

- management effectiveness,
- financial control,
- quality,
- efficiency,
- customer experience,
- marketing and market leadership,
- sales and / or,
- profitability.

1. Department or job function: \_\_\_\_\_.

Type of training required: \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Department or job function: \_\_\_\_\_.

Type of training required: \_\_\_\_\_.

3. Department or job function: \_\_\_\_\_.

Type of training required: \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Department or job function: \_\_\_\_\_.

Type of training required: \_\_\_\_\_.

**Note:** If there are more than 4 departments or job functions where effective training will make a big difference, document the additional departments or job functions on a separate piece of paper.

**Action Plan:** What will be our Action Plan to make this happen? Specifically, what will be done, by whom, by when, with what result, measured how, at what cost and rewarded how?

1. \_\_\_\_\_.

2. \_\_\_\_\_.

3. \_\_\_\_\_.

So, how can you use these 4 Key Questions to maximize the power of the '3 Ts', **talent, technology and training** in your business or department?

**Donald Cooper speaks and coaches internationally on management, marketing, and business innovation. He can be reached by email at [donald@donaldcooper.com](mailto:donald@donaldcooper.com) in Toronto, Canada.**