

Handle IT Professionals with Care

By Suman Basu, President IT & CIO, Viraj Profiles Ltd

Suman Basu is an IT Strategist and Leader with a career span of 30+ years and experience and exposure across varied industry segments. Over the years, he has been associated with reputed organizations such as Viraj Profiles, Adani Port & SEZ, Tata Blue Scope Steel, Tata Steel, L&T and Allen Bradley India. His My credentials include Engineering in Electronics & Communications and certifications in CISA, TBEM Assessor, Qualified Internal Auditor ISO 9000 and process re-engineering and has also presented various papers on IT at multiple national and international seminars/conferences/forums.

Every time we receive a resignation from a trusted lieutenant we go through many crisis management processes as we are aware that good candidates with relevant industry experience is rare. The key is the ability to retain them. This

article is an attempt to help readers to analyze the root cause and some measures.

Let us divide these team members in broad three categories and name them as S1-S3 with following brief description.

S1: The typical foot soldiers of our department involved in front line

support in all IT functions namely code writing, hardware service, network management and others.

S2: The mid-level team members normally responsible for managing S1s and also coordinate with end users and also provide IT Management to make meaningful MIS to manage the department.

S3: Generally, they are less in number but are the core person who have understood business in a position to design solutions, manage projects or program and also interact with Top Management.

Now let us analyze the need of each section:

S1: They are normally young, with lots of energy and also can do wonders if guided properly. Their needs are: Cool Work Environment, Freedom, Flexi timing, Various kind of projects to work for, Learn new technologies, and as a part of compensation better percentage of cash to spend for.

S1 has a problem: Top Management hardly understands the work



done by them vis a vis their counterpart in other line function. This demotivates S1.

S 3 has a great role to play to improve the situation. Formal or informal connect with these groups / through dinner/get together/and try to understand their issues improve confidence.

Since S1 wants more new technologies to work, it is advisable to create environment where new technologies, innovations of work and also variety of projects are provided. Sometimes S1 needs some small help for their personal issues and mitigating them goes long way.

Let us now come to the situation of S2s. After spending considerable time, S1 understand the pains, but now S2 has a large challenge of looking himself good. This group normally loses touch with S1 skill sets but they would like to project themselves as meaningful. Many a times I have seen some of my S2 colleagues have undercut performance by another S2,presents job done by



than his counterparts. He will require less salary on hand but he may need some help from management for a short term loan or cash reward to manage his social needs.

To manage S2 is always a trick. Since they have urge for approval of others, may be a change of designation or promotion to look their designation attractive is a good option. S2 has to be guided on quar-

technology driven and S3 is instrumental to many strategic initiatives and also most of the time works as technical adviser to Promoters/CEOs/CFOs. S3s would understand the limitation and difficulties of the organization and would also work like entrepreneur and would take actions keeping only companies interest in mind.

Requirements of S3 are typically: Independence, Faith and Trust of management, Dignity and Self esteem, Decent pay package linked with performance, Scope to learn new techniques, Confidence of peers in other functions and a respectable life in and out of organization.

Top Management can be discreet with them and if they feel that the said person is not contributing in the top line or bottom line or not gelling with company culture, it is advisable that they communicate with them straight. S3 are very well connected and if they leave organization on a bitter note it is not good news, whereas if they leave with a sweet memoir they can be brand ambassadors.

Performance appraisal of S3 needs to be well thought of. It is also advised to compare their compensation package with comparable industries and review them at times as S3 normally will never ask for Salary hike. Most importantly S3 needs considerable space to work for and a day to day monitoring kind of approach may lower his/her performance.

Whether we deal with S1,S2 or S3 we need to understand that these people are of different breed and not quite common to other functions and therefore need to be handled differently from others. **CR**

Many crisis management processes as we are aware that good candidates with relevant industry experience is rare

S1 and sometimes have played as a road block to many improvement initiatives just to be sure that their importance is maintained. S2 also needs appreciation but the type is different. He would like his team also to score well along with him so that he and his group look better

terly basis their role clarity and also importance of their work with reference to the top line and bottom line of business.

Last I shall come to S3. It is expected that S3 play bigger role in managing the organization. In today's world every organization is