



DAVID A MARSHALL CONSULTING INC.

DEALING WITH THE FALLOUT OF BAD MANAGERS

FROM MY 20+ YEARS AS AN EXECUTIVE IN
MANUFACTURING

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I've always said, "Hire slow, fire fast," and that's served me well on a number of occasions. It helps me avoid hiring people who will be bad for an organization, and in those rare instances that someone slips through the cracks, I don't spend weeks and months agonizing about the problem as they slowly infect my entire company culture.

I've written before about how I found out that someone in my management team once spent several months undermining me and telling members of the board and the other managers about problems and issues I supposedly had. When I finally found out about it, I fired the guy on the spot, which put a stop to his underhandedness. The problem was that the effects lingered on.

My team was still dealing with the lies and half-truths the guy had told, and it had tainted the cohesiveness we had built as a unit. They weren't sure what to believe, until I had basically corrected each of their notions about me, or they learned the truth about particular situations and decisions.

I was reminded of this guy a few months ago when I read on IndustryWeek.com that "Bad Managers Have a Terrible Impact That Lasts Long After They're Gone."

The article was actually an excerpt from the book, *Lessons from the Titans: What Companies in the New Economy Can Learn from the Great Industrial Giants to Drive Sustainable Success* by Scott Davis, Carter Copeland, and Rob Wertheimer.

The authors discussed the company, Danaher, and the way they screen for character traits during their hiring process, sometimes as much as, if not more, than their talent. **Continued Page 3**

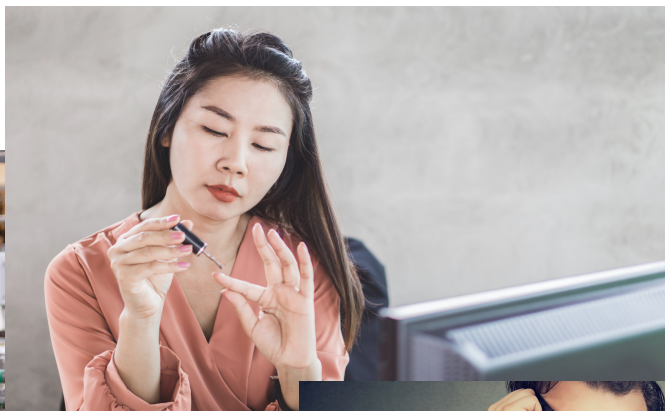
The company favors humility, as humble people are more likely to adopt the entire cultural concept of continuous improvement. Transparency is also critical to Danaher, as well as team-oriented players. The focus on character traits helps HR increase its hit rate of recruiting excellent prospects, filter talent successfully, and compensate high achievers to remain motivated and drive up retention. To find the traits it favors, Danaher uses an outside consultant to administer a personality test as well as something similar to an IQ test. The consultant is entrusted to give a thumbs-up or -down opinion.- Danaher

You've probably heard similar stories about some managers' hiring criteria based, not on the interview itself, but on the candidate's behavior during an interview. These are a few I've heard over the years.

- One business owner would take candidates out to dinner, and he paid attention to whether they salted their food before they tasted it. Salt-firsters did not get hired, taste-firsters did. His thinking was that if someone would salt a professionally-cooked meal without tasting it first, they couldn't be trusted to look at all angles of a problem or pitch a solution without considering all possibilities.
- Stories abound about how the hiring manager asks the front desk receptionist about how the candidate treated them when they first entered the building. If the candidate treated the receptionist as if the receptionist were beneath them or unworthy of basic politeness, they didn't get the job. If they were kind and treated the receptionist like a person, they were likely to be hired.
- One manager judges candidates on whether they leave a water bottle behind in an interview. He gives every job candidate a small bottle of water and pays attention to whether the interviewee leaves the water bottle behind when the interview is over. If they take it, they're probably a good fit because they're more likely to care about the workplace and their colleagues. If they leave it, they probably expect other people to clean up after their problems — the leavers don't get hired.

In the article, the authors Davis, Copland, and Wortheimer, focused specifically on the dangers of bad managers, because they realized that people don't leave jobs because of the pay, they leave because of bad managers. A bad manager can cause your best performers to leave the company. A bad manager will then replace those associates with someone who thinks like them, which usually means not hiring people smarter and more capable than them.

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That means your A performers are being replaced with C performers. And as more of your A performers leave, guess who the C performers are going to hire?

No, not more A performers. If you're lucky, you'll get more C performers. And this is just one way a bad manager's impact will be felt long after they've left: because you're left with all these average (at best) employees who can't do their job nearly as well as their predecessors, which means their performance and productivity drags down the rest of the organization.

What this means is that not only do you need to hire slow and fire fast, but you should focus your efforts on developing your staff so they can be the best versions of themselves they can be, which can help you better withstand that occasional bad hire. End

About David A Marshall

David Marshall is a Senior Manufacturing Executive with Corporate Culture Development and Operational Excellence Expertise. David most recently was President and COO of Robroy Industries and Board Member where he oversaw this manufacturing organization with four locations in the USA producing high quality electrical products and oilfield products. During his tenure he worked hard on implementing cutting-edge technology into these facilities during renovations of several of the plants and build out of one ultra-modern 130,000 square foot manufacturing facility in Texas.

With David guidance, these companies saw a remarkable seven record years of profitability; eleven consecutive years with profitability exceeding 20% of revenue; and more than \$300 million added to the equity of the business since going private in 2001. David earned his MBA from the University of Virginia: Darden School of Business.

He currently consults manufacturers looking to achieve operation excellence. His motto is: "If you can't measure it, you can't manage it."

He has been a manufacturing executive, as well as a sales and marketing professional, for a few decades. Now he helps companies turn around their own company by making the right decision. If you would like more information, please visit my website and connect with me on Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn. <https://damarshall.consulting/>