



A talent for wealth creation

Great leaders need a great team. Identifying your wealth creators will unlock your business' potential, says Dr. Adrian Atkinson of HFI

Dr Adrian Atkinson, founder and Chairman of business psychology consultancy at Human Factors International



You don't have to be a wealth creator to be a successful leader. Many excellent leaders are not themselves wealth creators. However, leaders need the support of a wealth creator to drive business growth. Wealth creators have a unique mix of characteristics that allow them to turn a leader's vision into reality, chief of which are resilience and tenacity.

After working with business leaders for more than forty years, one of the most resilient that I have mentored was the owner of a manufacturing business whose entire workforce deserted him. He left on Friday night with an intact business and returned on Monday morning to an empty factory.

As with all the wealth creators HFI has worked with, he saw this catastrophe as an opportunity. He set about recruiting a new workforce and had the business up and running again within a fortnight.

Wealth creators have the self-belief and the ability to mould the world to suit themselves and to make a success out of a disaster. Eight years after losing his workforce overnight and his Herculean effort to rescue the company, our wealth creator sold it for £22m – and started his next company.

As King of Shaves' Will King says: "If you are not prepared to sweat and sacrifice to get the boulder out of the little hollow and rolling, you're unlikely to succeed."

Wealth creators are rare, but they are essential to the success of serious businesses. HFI's business psychologists have been researching the qualities of wealth creators for twenty years and can identify them through psychometric assessments, skill and expertise.

As a leader, you need to find out whether you have the characteristics of a wealth creator yourself or whether you need the support of wealth creators to drive your business.

Wealth creators need to be recognised and put into positions where they can influence the direction of the company. Here's an example. HFI was coaching a technical team leader who was seen as

a real troublemaker. He was visionary and strategic but he was also demanding and impatient, common attributes of the frustrated wealth creator.

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Will King – King of Shaves

HFI persuaded the technically minded CEO that he needed this strategic troublemaker to work with him to identify and exploit new market opportunities. Over the next four years the two of them worked together, implementing several key acquisitions which drove the value of the company from £200m to more than £500m.

In another example, HFI found a wealth creator three levels below the board and advised them to promote him to a more influential position. They refused to recognise his potential or to promote him outside the usual succession path. He left, set up his own business and within two years was a serious rival. With no wealth creators in the executive team, the original business was soon bankrupt.

Companies that do not recognise the value of their wealth creators will struggle. Leaders that identify and support their wealth creators will flourish.

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