

Getting managers to run teams like CEO

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Singapore – The success of a business project can determine the performance level of an organisation so it is vital to identify the right team leader from the start.

Ravi Sahi, regional director for client solutions at ESI International, said a good manager should have skills similar to the highest ranking officer in the company. “The skills set to be a good project leader are the same as those required of chief executive officers (CEOs), only that it is on a smaller scale.”

Sahi explained that managing a small team to execute a project is very much like running the entire organisation. Leaders typically have good people management skills, a clear set of goals, and the ability to motivate their team members. He added two other traits CEOs are excellent at, and project managers should possess, are critical thinking and problem solving.

“How the problem is fixed will separate an average manager from a brilliant manager,” Sahi said. “A brilliant manager will see the problem, but also look at it as an opportunity.”

Good CEOs will not simply “fix the problem at a tactical level – which we all can do – but they also step back and think about the strategic implications of their actions”. Sahi said having a creative element to solving problems is another management virtue.

However, HR needs to see that connection and start developing the next generation of leaders accordingly. It also helps if HR is aware of the types of skills needed to handle the complexities of different projects so they can recommend the right candidate for the job.

But Sahi said most projects do not fail because of a lack of technical expertise. “Projects fail because of bad communication.”

Sahi said HR should help leaders develop “high-impact communication” skills so they can share their plans effectively with an increasingly diverse teams. “HR has to help managers ensure their communication is rich and robust, and easily understood by all.”
