



# The Art of Building an Effective Team

Building an effective team is not just about filling roles; it's about crafting a cohesive unit that drives your company towards its goals. This presentation delves into various aspects of team building, from strategic hiring to effective management, employee retention, and building a positive company culture.

**F** by Fabian Schonholz

# About Fabian Schonholz

**Technology** and **AI** expert with a track record of guiding companies through the strategic deployment and integration of different innovative technologies including AI. His experience spans start-ups and Fortune 500s in Media, **DTC/B2B**, SaaS/PaaS, Medical, and Gaming industries. He has led three successful **exits** totaling **\$65M** and excels in building **high-performing global teams** and driving **revenue growth**. Ex-NASA, Disney, NBCUniversal, Pictage, Gumiyo, Internet Brands, Xylan and other.

Currently, Fabian is helping companies with **demystifying AI**, guiding them through **seamless integration** and strategic deployment across **diverse business units**. His profound expertise lies in crafting transformative technology, data strategies, and **AI visions** that not only enhance operational efficiencies but also drive substantial **revenue growth** across multi-vertical organizations

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# Hiring Strategically

- Reduces turn-over
- Enables the creation of a better culture – but is not guaranteed
- Enables “ownership”

## How?

- Retention starts from the moment the candidate first interviews
- While important, it's not about their expertise, it's about what makes them tick
- How willing are they to pivot and dive into new challenges?
- Are they a “NO” before a “YES”? **This is a red flag**
- Are they willing to admit they don't know the answer to something but follows through to find out what it is?
- Are they willing to think through **HARD** problems and not give up?
- Focus on their thinking process – it shows you where you might need to mentor them

# Who to Hire: Expert, Smart, Intelligent?

## Experts

Experts bring in-depth knowledge and experience in specific areas. They can contribute significantly to complex projects and provide valuable insights. But ... they have a hard time pivoting because they have invested time and money focusing on a “single subject.” They make great consultants.

## Smart People

Smart individuals possess strong cognitive abilities but have a hard time adapting to new situations and effectively solving new problems. I normally don't hire smart people.

## Intelligent Individuals

Intelligence is a broad concept encompassing various cognitive abilities. They have high emotional intelligence, communication skills, and teamwork abilities. Even better, they can easily adapt to new situations and solve new hard problems. I prefer to hire intelligent professionals.



# Managing Technical People

- 1 Define Clear Expectations**  
Set clear goals, milestones, and deliverables for your technical team. Communicate expectations clearly and provide regular feedback on their progress. Embrace agile methodologies.
- 2 Focus on Mentoring**  
Give your team members the benefit of your experience and knowledge. Make it so they are not there just for the salary, but because you bring them a benefit beyond a salary. Focus on developing them for their next job. This will also affect turn-over.
- 3 Empower and Delegate**  
Give your team members autonomy and responsibility. Delegate tasks that align with their skills and interests, allowing them to take ownership of their work. **Tell them what you want, not how you want it.**
- 4 Foster Collaboration and Learning**  
Encourage knowledge sharing. Create an environment where learning and growth are valued and supported, and discussion can be had openly and respectfully. If you do it right, almost no subject should be "taboo."
- 5 Recognize and Reward Performance**  
Acknowledge and celebrate achievements. Offer incentives, opportunities for advancement, and professional development to motivate your team. But careful, not everybody performs at the same level. You need to be inclusive, and not everybody gets a gold star!!





## Building Local and Global Teams

A

### Mix it up

Build teams with members from different geographies. Eliminate the “us” vs. “them.” Forster intra-team collaboration by providing communication tools and encouraging discussions

B

### Build teams along product lines

Teams are aligned by product and by geography. However, the integration team should cross over geographies to insure cohesive technical operations

C

### Centralized with augmentations

Your core teams are in your “headquarters” with augmentations from different geographies. You can organize the teams either as A or B





## Employee Retention



### Competitive Compensation

Offer competitive salaries and benefits packages to ensure your employees feel valued and fairly compensated for their contributions.



### Positive Work Environment

Foster a positive and supportive work environment that encourages collaboration, respect, and a sense of belonging.



### Professional Development Opportunities

Provide opportunities for growth and advancement through training programs, mentorship, and career development initiatives.



### Open Communication

Encourage open, transparent and honest communication between managers and employees, employees amongst themselves and with you. Create a safe space for feedback, suggestions, and concerns. Your door should be open always!!

**BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY: RETENTION STARTS THE MOMENT THE CANDIDATE STARTS INTERVIEWING.**

Have an open and frank discussion from the start!!

# Company Culture: A Foundation for Success

1

## Transparency

Be transparent with your teams. Do not over-digest information, you hired intelligent professionals. Give them the good news, the bad news, and everything in between. Obviously there is sensitive information you might not be able to share but let them know that too.

2

## Trust

With the right “rules of engagement” no topic should be taboo. If your teams need to feel that they can discuss openly hard topics, then work becomes a place to exchange all sorts of ideas, and a strong support system develops.

3

## Communication tools

Invest in tools that facilitates communication, in particularly for global teams (regardless of the configuration.) These tools will ensure that the company culture develops to be inclusive of local cultures.







## Identifying and Managing Problematic Employees: Standard procedure!

### 1 Early Identification

Observe patterns of behavior, performance issues, or conflicts. Look for signs of decreased productivity, negativity, or disrespect toward colleagues.

### 2 Open Communication

Address concerns with the employee directly, in a private and respectful manner. Discuss specific issues, provide constructive feedback, and set clear expectations.

### 3 Performance Improvement Plan

Develop a structured plan outlining specific goals, timelines, and support measures to help the employee improve their performance and address problematic behaviors.

### 4 Consistently Enforce Consequences

If the employee fails to make progress, be prepared to implement disciplinary actions, including warnings, demotion, or termination, depending on the severity of the issue.



# Conclusion

Building a successful global teams is not easy, and it takes continuous work to keep them running as well-oiled machines. But in my opinion, the two most important elements to being successful are:

- Build a culture of **transparency**
- Build a culture of **trust**

You teams needs to know that you have their backs, but most importantly, that they need to know that they have each others backs.

F

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