

# Up or Out!

Smarter Ways to Get Library  
Employees Back on Track  
or End the Ride

James LaRue  
[jlarue@jlarue.com](mailto:jlarue@jlarue.com)



# Takeaways

- Hire for emotional maturity and the right skill sets.
- Ensure workplace and individual job expectations are communicated and understood.
- Make feedback concrete and specific.
- Plan and practice for employee meetings to ensure feedback is unambiguous, with deadlines and consequences.

# Worst Case?

## It's not working

- The 20 second talk
  - We need someone who...
  - Right now that's not you
  - I want you to take some time to decide what you want to do
- What happens next?
  - They straighten up
  - They kind of try, but need help
  - They fight you every step of the way
  - They leave

the sad truth

Waiting till it's too late serves no one

# Questions

## Whose failure?

- Easy to blame employee
- Did the supervisor
  - Hire the right person?
  - Orient them?
  - Invest in their growth and engagement?
  - Coach them when needed?
  - Recognize that this employee can't be saved

We do want the employee to succeed. Right?

It doesn't do any good for the bad apple to leave if you don't know how to recognize a good one.

# Hiring for emotional intelligence

Recognizing EI

# What is EI?

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to identify and manage

- one's own emotions
- the emotions of others

# Knowing how to recognize the skills you need

## The qualities you seek

- Adaptable
- Alert
- Collaborative
- Communicative
- Courteous
- Curious
- Humor
- Shows Initiative
- Has Integrity
- Friendly

## What does that look like?

- Can flex on the fly
- Situational awareness
- Enjoys working with others
- Clear statements
- Polite
- Genuine interest
- Smile lines
- Steps up
- Holds to values
- Approachable



# Talent Spotting & Recruitment



- Know what you need  
(based on organizational goals & talent gaps)
- Keep looking
- Ongoing spotting
- Diverse workforce that represents population you serve

# Behavioral interviews

- Don't just talk about your skills.
- Show them.
- Examples:
  - Intellectual Freedom challenge
  - Work up a budget for \$2,500 for YA

# Onboarding

- ❑ Culture - who are we?
- ❑ Customer Service - first things first
- ❑ Library Organization - how things are decided
- ❑ Communications - systems of knowledge
- ❑ Training (building, software, etc.)

# Growing Talent

Abilities

Engagement

Aspiration



From Martin, J., & Schmidt, C. (2010). How to Keep Your Top Talent. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(5), 54-61.

# “Engaged Dreamer”

Abilities



Engagement

Aspiration

From Martin, J., & Schmidt, C. (2010). How to Keep Your Top Talent. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(5), 54-61.



# “Disengaged Star”

Abilities

Engagement

Aspiration

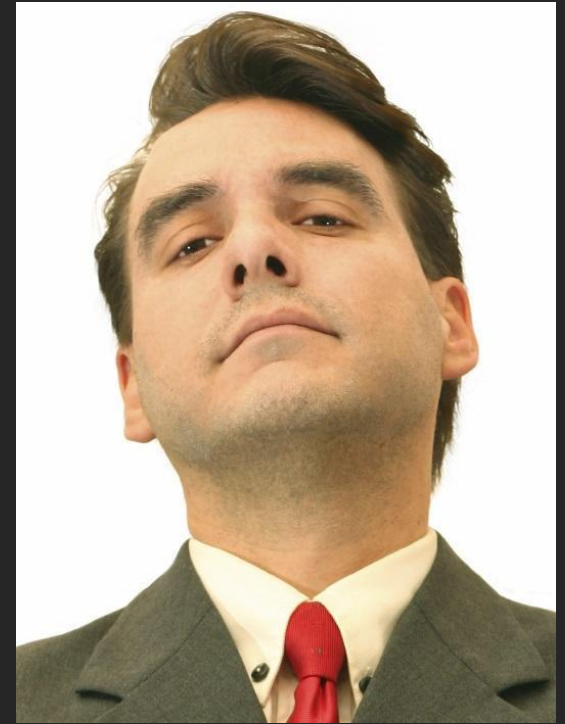
From Martin, J., & Schmidt, C. (2010). How to Keep Your Top Talent. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(5), 54-61.

# “Misaligned Star”

Abilities

Engagement

Aspiration



From Martin, J., & Schmidt, C. (2010). How to Keep Your Top Talent. *Harvard Business Review*, 88(5), 54-61.

# Growing Talent

Abilities

Engagement

Aspiration





Key systems of support

document document document

# Coaching script

- Set an appointment
- Begin with strengths (asset-based)
- Rationale for behavior (the why)
- Specific behavior, not judgment
- The 3 point contract with timelines
- Check in follow-up appointment
- Begin next session with self-assessment
- Honest feedback
- Keep a record

a word about consequences

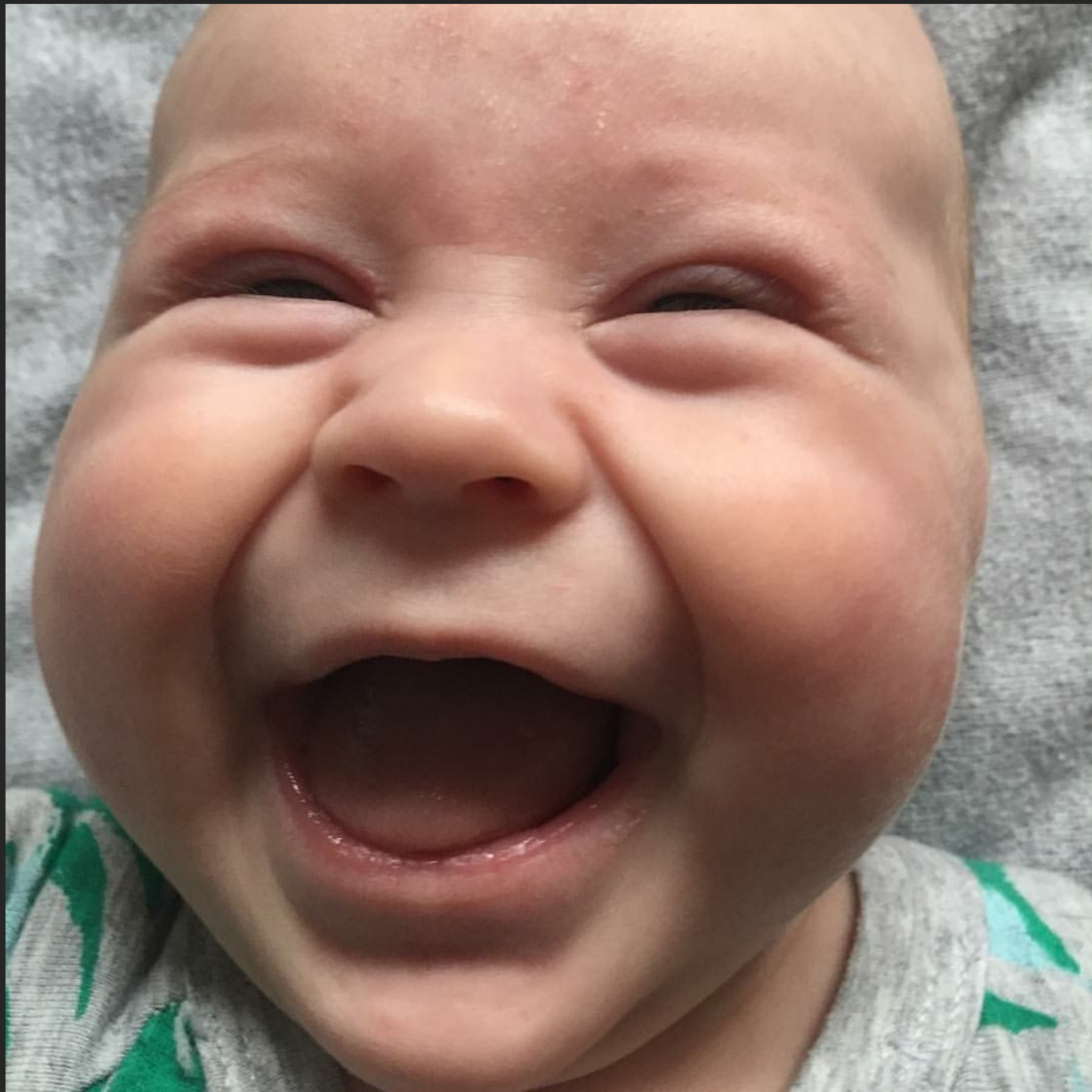
opportunity and acknowledgment

OR

PIP and separation

The library is a center for public happiness first,  
of public education next

- John Cotton Dana



# Questions?

[jlarue@jlarue.com](mailto:jlarue@jlarue.com)