

# GETTING STARTED WITH TALENT ANALYTICS

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# INTRODUCTION

What is your company? The truth is your company is many things, including a history, values, processes and systems, and much more. What is the single most valuable resource in your company? It is the people who work for you. In this paper we'll look at how to use the power of analytics to help the people who work for you do their very best job.

We will look at three practical steps your company can take to get started using talent analytics:

1. Have a powerful vision for your talent analytics team
2. Design processes and goals consistent with that vision that everyone can use
3. Ground the results in evidence and data.

We will look at each of these three steps in turn. Let's start with vision.

If you are working on something exciting that you really care about, you don't have to be pushed.  
The vision pulls you.  
Steve Jobs



TALENT IS  
THE  
GREATEST  
RESOURCE IN  
YOUR  
COMPANY

# 1. HAVE A POWERFUL VISION FOR TALENT ANALYTICS

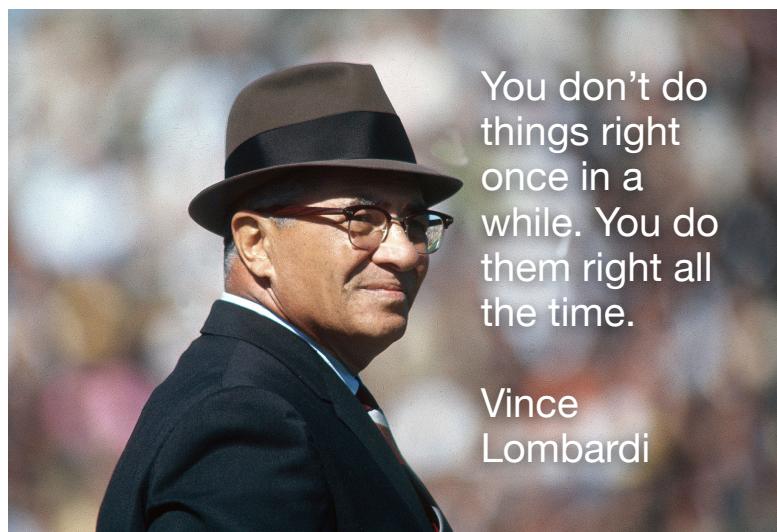
A powerful vision can get people motivated to do the difficult work to achieve the vision

## Your vision should be based in your real world

Here is a little bit about my story. I've been an employer for many years, mainly as a recruiter. The people I hired were also my employees. This included all the responsibilities any employer has in the United States, such as payroll, coaching and counseling the employees, and terminating employment if that was appropriate, among many other responsibilities.

It became clear to me that my employees wanted more than "a job". They wanted to work at a company that gave them recognition and valued their contribution. They wanted to work at a company where their skills matched what they were doing. These values are very solidly grounded in the real world. These are some of the things my employees wanted from their employer.

## Go beyond the present to the best of all possible situations



You don't do things right once in a while. You do them right all the time.

Vince  
Lombardi

Your vision can be more than "A place to work that values you". Explore the possibility that the vision for the your employees can be one that brings out the very best in all of them because it values them and the company, and does the right thing all the time. No exceptions. Ask yourself "What is the best my company can possibly be?" Build your talent analytics vision around your answer to that question.

## 2. DESIGN GOALS AND PROCESSES THAT SUPPORT THE VISION FOR THE TEAM

**Set goals and processes that solve actual problems for your employees, not just for you.**

One of the companies I worked with had a goal of reducing employee accidents. The accident rate was extremely high. The question was how to achieve that goal. We needed new data on improving employee safety.

There are only two ways to get new data. One is a scientific experiment. That method is expensive and might take a lot more time than your company has available. The other way to get new data is a survey. This can work wonders to help you understand what is happening on the company floor.

Surveys are not based on the questions, contrary to popular belief. The purpose of an intelligent survey is to elicit evidence about the questions at hand.

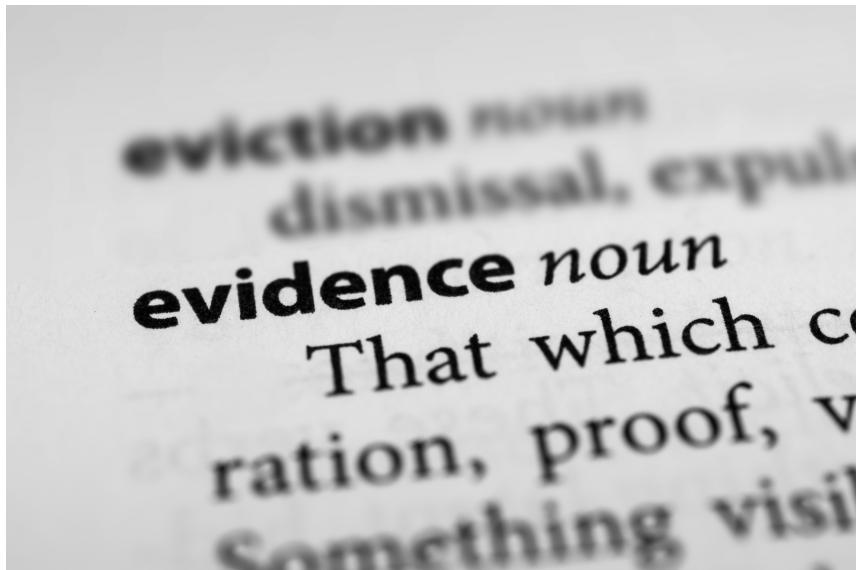
The questions are best asked in a way that is consistent, neutral and fair. For example, I found it extremely useful to ask, "How many times did you call off in the last six months?". This was a much better predictor of their future attendance than asking them if they would show up every day.

Eventually a process was developed that allowed us to select well qualified candidates for our open positions. We were able to reduce accidents to zero by using questions that had the highest predictive power. The survey did not involve any math or statistics, but instead empowered staff to learn how to make the best hiring decisions.

In our case zero accidents for our employees was the result of a set of processes that everyone supported. It can be done.



### 3. GROUND THE RESULTS IN EVIDENCE AND DATA



Many companies I've worked with have missed excellent candidates because they decided "with my gut", or "I can just tell". These kinds of decision rules are not nearly as successful as evidence and data.

One of the findings of modern psychology is that humans are inaccurate when it comes to predictions of virtually any type. One specific finding, the Dunning-Kruger effect, found

that the more confident people were in their evaluations, the greater the error they made. Evidence and data have the advantage of being closer to neutral and impartial. While nothing is perfectly unbiased, evidence and data are much closer to the truth than opinions or hunches.

**A practical result is to ask yourself if your conclusions about your talent are based on evidence. If the results are not based on evidence, take steps outlined in this paper to find the evidence and use it to make a decision about the people who work for you.**

# CONCLUSION: IT IS POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE TALENT ANALYTICS RESULTS

The most basic finding in Talent Analytics is that it is possible to significantly improve results. Several of the companies I have worked with have benefitted from Talent Analytics and set records for employee safety.

Talent analytics can be used to improve engagement, reduce turnover, and improve the quality of work that employees produce. The steps are outlined in this paper: Have a vision, based the vision on realistic goals and processes, and finally ground the results in evidence and data.

The path to improved results for your talent is straight ahead of you, the opportunity is yours for the taking, and it promises to be a very exciting journey!



