

# STRETCH

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The BRIGHTON GROUP

 iPartners<sup>Inc.</sup>

The Brighton Group, an OI Partners company is a locally owned and managed consulting firm specializing in career and organizational transition services. In-depth, one-on-one consulting is the core of our distinctive approach.

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Frequently, executives make the mistake and think that they don't need to provide leadership to some employees. We often hear, "The High Performer is different. They are so talented, skilled and motivated; I rarely need to see them." With few exceptions, our clients strive to be magnets for the best talent available. But, we often observe the leadership guard relaxing when it comes to engaging top talent causing us to come to the conclusion that "High Performers need leadership, too!"

When facing the High Performer, staring back is a talented, motivated individual who is able to handle more responsibility than most. They understand the big picture, make their own project plans, possess great relationship skills, and take exactly the right amount of initiative without overstepping. Given all the upsides, how does one effectively lead top talent? Some leadership difference makers:

**Provide a Power Boost.** Top performers are drawn to a boss who is highly engaged, who knows precisely who they are, and exactly what they are doing. High Performers seek to be around leaders who let them know that they are important and their work is important. They are energized when they feel leadership is a mentor they can count on to provide a sounding board for guiding feedback, firm direction and thoughtful support.

**Leverage Time.** Most self-starting top performers probably need to talk with their leadership about their work more often than they currently do. By providing "high touch – short duration" connection moments, leadership can engage the productive capacity of the High Performer with high returns from the time investments.

**Check the Dashboard.** Top performers desire a clear success path defined by the "what" and "how" to get to the finish line. It's no time for ambiguity or assumptions. Monitoring their performance well and providing real-time coaching is important. Provide honest, firm, even blunt feedback on how they are measuring up to expectations. The objective viewpoint of the boss is invaluable.

**Reward Creatively.** Top performers are drawn to leaders who foster communities of practice that go past the normal mechanisms for compensation. Be generous and flexible with the available discretionary resources. Use influence over work conditions, scheduling, recognition, task assignments, training, work location, and exposure to decision-makers to motivate the High Performer to go above and beyond.



When leading the highest caliber of talent, it's not the time to loose your objectivity or let go of the reins. In fact, the High Performer is looking for the leader who says, "I'm going to be a difference maker in your work. I'm going to partner with you and celebrate your success every step of the way." By stretching yourself to find better ways to respond in-kind to top performers, you will discover yourself stretching them far beyond the acceptable to new levels of unanticipated opportunity.

*"A better human experience...for a better business outcome"*

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