

Building Leadership Pipeline



Challenge

Build leadership bench strength in competitive, relationship-oriented industry

Arrow, a Denver-based electronics parts distributor with global upstream and downstream connections, recognized that delivering future growth would depend on preparing its current leadership bench. In an industry driven by relationships with suppliers and customers, deep company experience was critical. At the same time, the business and industry were evolving, and future-oriented leaders who could innovate, adapt, and drive change would be critical to its growth strategy. Arrow could foresee the retirement of key executives in the near future, and with each replacement, a cascade of crucial openings that would have to be filled with top talent. The company needed a high-impact way to assess its pipeline, identify gaps, and prepare the resources necessary for the next generation of leaders.

Solution

Create and apply an annual process for talent review, alignment, and development

RHR International partnered with Arrow's CEO, CHRO, and other top executives to create a multi-tiered, repeatable approach to leadership development. The process was owned

at the top with support from RHR to bring objective data, deep insights, and a partnership approach to development. Their work included:

Identifying the most critical

roles: For efficiency and impact, Arrow focused on the most critical roles—those with enterprise scope, strategic importance, significance for growth, and/or large P&L ownership.

Applying The Winning Formula®

scorecard: RHR interviewed stakeholders with the most intimate knowledge of key functions to develop a prioritized list of skills, experiences, and capabilities necessary for successful leadership in each role, today and in the future. These scorecards served as the foundation for assessing current leaders, near-term bench, and next-generation talent.

Accelerating readiness: Once the assessments were complete, RHR partnered with Arrow executives to set objectives and planned ways to close capability gaps. Support for leaders included a holistic approach that engaged the entire system to accelerate performance—quarterly management check-ins, annual pulse checks, observations, and team sessions.

Tracking progress: Arrow conducted annual alignment meetings to form goals for the coming year, and to ensure that the company remained focused on talent opportunities of greatest strategic impact. Diverse voices were brought to the table to share insights for critical decisions regarding talent gaps, talent potential, and where new talent investments should be made.

Integrating live business issues:

In addition to the annual cycle of talent management, RHR maintained close connections to the day-to-day challenges and opportunities of the business, ensuring close alignment to Arrow's long-term business development goals and its emerging business needs.

Results

Many years of progress, more than a dozen smooth transitions

Arrow continues to engage with RHR to sustain the pipeline and adjust the company's development efforts as circumstances change and strategies evolve. At every step, Arrow retains ownership of its talent pipeline, with support, guidance, and objective advice from RHR. Through this partnership, Arrow has successfully navigated more than a dozen key internal executive transitions, and is helping prepare the next generation of leaders.

ABOUT RHR INTERNATIONAL

RHR International LLP is a global firm of management psychologists and consultants who understand the distinctive challenges and pressures that CEOs and senior executives face. Its singular focus on senior leadership and research-based practice sets it apart from other executive and organizational development consultancies. For more than 70 years, RHR has been helping leaders and their teams transform themselves and, in turn, the performance of their organizations. RHR offers Board & CEO Services, Senior Team Effectiveness, Leading Transformational Change, Executive Development, and Executive Assessment.