



# PETRA PROCESS

**FOUR STEPS TO FINDING YOUR COMPANY'S  
DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH**



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### LIFE LESSONS for BUSINESS OWNERS

I've uncovered a lot of truths for leaders in just about every business I've coached over the years. For example, regardless of company size or industry, honesty and transparency are critical to a team's success. In the same way, the power of gratitude is essential to boosting business success. But one of the most important (and most overlooked) truths for leaders is this: Every business has valuable, hidden assets that may be underutilized.

I was reminded of this important lesson recently, through a Timehop photo on Facebook of a notecard on which I had jotted that timeless insight. That's right — while most people reminisce about old photos of friends, I'm excited to see old business lessons from years ago. Go figure. The reminder couldn't have come at a better time.

As 2018 arrives, many businesses around the country will look outside their organizations to inject “fresh blood” into their teams. Executives who think their organizations are missing some secret ingredient to success will begin hunting for shiny new talent. But I have found, in my numerous coaching sessions with entrepreneurs and leaders across the country, that the external searches should not usually be the first step. I suggest that, instead, businesses look inward for these hidden assets.

In G. Michael Maddock's book *Free The Idea Monkey*, Maddock explains that innovative and creative individuals with big ideas (the idea monkeys) should be allowed to thrive within an organization, but that all too often these individuals are constrained and kept in roles for which they're ill-suited. You probably have innovative people in your company right now, but in positions that don't allow their creativity to shine.

While you may not be able to uncover existing creatives in your teams for every role or responsibility, you will find out new and interesting details for existing team members that broaden your possibilities and expand future capabilities.

Here are four steps to start uncovering your diamonds in the rough.

## **1. DON'T HIRE TO FIT A TITLE.**

It may be the way business has been done for half a century, but that doesn't mean it's right. You've got to look at individual strengths for each candidate and determine if he or she is right for your company and culture. Once identified, you can then build a position that will enable your new team member — and your company — to succeed. The right candidates will not only blow your socks off in the short term, but they'll shape the role for years to come.

In addition, make sure you have a process in place that makes hiring efficient. And, as part of that process, take time to identify those creative and out-of-the-box individuals you already have on your team. With everyone you consider for a given role, ask interview questions that allow you to get a sense of how they think.

## **2. MINE FOR THE GEMS.**

As you refine your hiring methods, you'll likely discover that the talent you're looking for might be right under your nose. Dig into your roster of existing team members. Create a company-wide survey for those interested in taking on creative or challenging initiatives, and give them the opportunity to be considered.

Hold company-wide brainstorms and invite everyone — at all levels — to contribute. See who comes up with the best ideas, and pay particular attention to those who can take the germ of an idea and build on it in a creative way.

The true innovators and idea champions (even if they're currently not in a role that's a perfect fit) know what they can bring to the table. If you give them the opportunity to shine, they'll come forward.

## **3. REFINE AND POLISH.**

Once you've identified your gems, spend some additional time with them. Find out what inspires and motivates them. You may decide to modify your team member's role or transfer some responsibilities to someone else, in order to utilize their strengths and unleash their creative prowess.

Set clear expectations up front with each person, and explain why you're making the change. This will empower each team member to do what he or she does best and help you grow your business.

#### 4. FORMALIZE YOUR PROCESS TO FIND MORE GEMS.

So, you found your diamonds in the rough and now they're beginning to shine. It's time to evaluate your process and make any necessary adjustments so you can continue to uncover the hidden gems in your organization. Did you get the results you wanted? Are you seeing team members exhibit skills that you didn't know they had? Are those skills impacting the business positively? I bet you'll find the answer is "yes."

This process isn't a one-and-done kind of thing. It's important to meet regularly with people to find these hidden assets. Consider making surveys and brainstorm sessions a regular part of your company culture. That way, new team members will come onboard knowing that there's an opportunity to "flaunt what they've got" (even if it's not what they were originally hired to do). Focus on embracing and developing internal individuals with relevant skill sets before looking at hiring. The process will be much easier — they are already there, and they know your company and what you value.

As we close out 2017, think about how many underutilized assets could be in your organization. My bet? There are more than you even realize — ready to exceed expectations in 2018. Let them shine brightly.

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# THE PETRA EXPERIENCE

**The Petra Experience is like a Mental Marathon of focused effort to create a specific set of priorities and a planned process to achieve them... as a team.**

## **Looking to change your business life - forever?**

The daily grind of growing a business is tough... it doesn't have to be that way. We work from our own business experiences while focusing on your business – as coach and an accountability partner. We implement the Petra Process in a way that ensures it “sticks” then we stay engaged to keep you on your path to success and less frustration. We don't want this to be just another thing you start – then it gets ignored and finally dies... let's stop that cycle in your business. The Petra Program 'clarifies' what is most important to be done – by whom, by when – **AND** creates an accountability structure to ensure **IT GETS DONE.**

*Andy Bailey is lead entrepreneur coach with business coaching firm Petra and serves as the Entrepreneur Organization's global membership director. Visit his blog at [www.petracoach.com](http://www.petracoach.com) for more business and leadership insight.*

### **PETRA COACH**

342 Cool Springs Blvd., Suite 203, Franklin, TN 37067 | 888.330.1020  
[www.petracoach.com](http://www.petracoach.com) | [www.facebook.com/petracoach](https://www.facebook.com/petracoach)

