

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Jen Jorgensen
404/266-7538
jjorgensen@webershandwick.com**

PDI *Pulse on Leaders* Study Identifies What High Potential Leaders Find Important

Challenging and Stimulating Work, Belief in the Mission Lead the List while Compensation and Advancement Fall Near the Bottom

MINNEAPOLIS (January 22, 2008) – A recent *Pulse on Leaders* study by Personnel Decisions International (PDI) offers surprising insight into what high potential organizational leaders consider most important in their job. The study shows that they consider non-tangible elements such as stimulating and engaging work and a belief in the organization’s mission much more important in a job than traditional perks such as compensation and advancement opportunities. In fact, less than 10 percent of leaders surveyed selected those two factors as the most important aspects of a job.

“Organizations that are facing leadership shortages need to know how to engage and retain their current top leaders and those who have the potential of filling top leadership positions,” said PDI’s Susan Gebelein, executive vice president. “It’s too superficial to think a good salary will keep top performers around for long. Most organizations, even after seeing research that supports the idea that compensation is not the cure-all to retention or continued motivation, still spend enormous amounts of time on pay-for-performance models and compensation systems to reward and retain top leaders. It would be well worth it for organizations to spend more time on matching people with challenging work or engaging high potential leaders in the organization’s mission and vision.”

For the study, PDI took a sample of 2,500 mid-level leaders and business unit leaders. From that group the study then focused on the 465 mid-level leaders and 298 business unit leaders who were also ranked by their organizations as high potentials – those identified as having potential to move up to higher leadership positions within the organization. Individuals were asked to rank, in order, the top five factors from a list of 19 they consider most important in a job. While each group had the same five factors overall, the groups varied in precise ranking:

Top Five Factors	Mid-Level Leaders	Business Unit Leaders
1	Stimulating/Challenging Work	Belief in the Mission
2	Personal Accomplishment	Stimulating/Challenging Work
3	Work-Life Balance	Personal Accomplishment
4	Belief in the Mission	Influence on Direction of Organization
5	Influence on Organizational Direction	Work-Life Balance

“One important finding is the difference in belief in the mission between mid-level leaders and business unit leaders,” Gebelein notes. “This shows that the higher up a leader is in the organization, the more important it is for them to believe in the mission and strategic direction of the company and to have responsibility for strategic decisions. Companies will need to be sure their top leaders are connected to the mission and strategy of the organization if they want their top leaders engaged. Otherwise, they will look to other companies where they might have more of an impact.”

To address the top issues that will keep leaders engaged, PDI warns companies not to assume they know what motivates leaders. Instead, PDI suggests:

- Conducting individual discussions with key leaders and high potentials about what work they find challenging and stimulating, the work they wish they could do, and the experiences they want to have.
- Having conversations about what work-life balance means to each leader.
- Acting on the insight gained through these discussions with leaders. This will demonstrate a real understanding of what leaders want and the value that the organization puts onto leaders' satisfaction and continued commitment to the organization.

MEDIA NOTE

Look for future data releases from the *PDI Pulse on Leaders*.

The *PDI Pulse on Leaders* analyzes different workplace questions on a regular basis and can be used as a source for gaining insight on the inner values of talent management and leadership development.

ABOUT PERSONNEL DECISIONS INTERNATIONAL

Personnel Decisions International (PDI) is a global human resources consulting firm with distinctive expertise in building leadership talent that provides real competitive advantage. With more than 700 team members in 29 offices around the globe, PDI partners with the world's leading organizations, enabling them to make consistently effective talent decisions about leaders.

Using field-tested strategies and tools that are unique in the industry - we help clients identify, develop, and deploy superior leaders. Our aim is simple - the well placed confidence that your current and future leaders are distinctively stronger than the competition, resulting in sustained, superior performance. For more information, contact PDI client relations at 920.997.6995 (in the U.S. 800.633.4410) or visit PDI's Web site at www.personneldecisions.com.

-###-