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“COMPETENCY MAPPING- A TOOL ENHANCING EMPLOYEE’S PERFORMANCE”

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ABSTRACT

HR people have a bundle of responsibility like recruitment, training and development, succession planning, performance appraisal and job evaluation. But in today’s scenario the most important of all these is assessment of individuals for their ability for different functional tasks and development of their potential to be effective and outshine in the assigned tasks. Competency Mapping enables an organization to identify the key competencies for a particular job and reduces the fissure between the job requirements and the individual competencies.

The competency framework serves as the bedrock for all HR applications. As a result of competency mapping, all the HR processes like talent induction, management development, appraisals and training yield much better results.

This paper tries to present an overview of how organizations implement competency mapping to enhance employee’s performance. How the competency mapping helps the employees to improve their performances in the organization. It also highlights current trends in competency mapping & the benefits that help to grow industries.

Key Words: Competency Mapping, enhancement of employees’ performance, New HR Techniques

INTRODUCTION

HR people have a bundle of responsibility like recruitment, training and development, succession planning, performance appraisal and job evaluation. But in today’s scenario the most important of all these is assessment of individuals for their ability for different functional tasks and development of their potential to be effective and outshine in the assigned tasks. Competency Mapping enables an organization to identify the key competencies for a particular job and reduces the fissure between the job requirements and the individual competencies.
Competency mapping is a process an individual uses to identify and describe competencies that are the most critical to success in a work situation or work role. The performance of companies depends mostly on the quality of their human resource.

The first competency maps were invented by Joseph Navk in the 1960s. In the current scenario, organizations constantly undergo structural changes, strategic shifts, merger & acquisitions. Sometimes, new roles get created, different hierarchical levels are merged, or exceptions from the current roles change. Under these circumstances, unless properly measured & taken care of employee performance can become seriously impaired or can become superseded.

The competency framework serves as the bedrock for all HR applications. As a result of competency mapping, all the HR processes like talent induction, management development, appraisals and training yield much better results.

Competency mapping is helpful for the employee and the employer. The employer can enumerate what characteristic needs to be directed and how to imbibe those characters. Once this task is done it becomes easier to achieve progression.

Competency mapping involves devoting immense amount of time and money to enhance the performance. Because of the high expense incurred, numerous companies do not adopt this development plan. Competency mapping also actuates the level of intelligence that the employee possesses and exhibits. Knowledge and experience are the two vital ingredients to enhance in life. Along with knowledge, the emotional quotient that an employee bears is also determined.
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Competency mapping is about identifying ideal behavior in employees and personal skills which distinguish exceptional performance from average performance. It aids in setting standards of behavior, and concrete and objective information usable in all employment decisions.

This paper tries to present an overview of how organizations implement competency mapping to enhance employee’s performance. How the competency mapping helps the employees to improve their performances in the organization. It also highlights current trends in competency mapping & the benefits that help to grow industries.

COMPETENCY MAPPING

The word competency is derived from the Latin word “COMPETERE” which means “to be suitable”. The competency concept was originally developed in psychology denoting individuals’ ability to respond to demand placed on them by their environment.

Competency is an underlying characteristic required to perform a given task, activity, or role can be considered as competency. Competency has the following forms:

Knowledge, Skills, Attitude

These three factors are important for identifying competency in a person.

Competencies are generic knowledge, motives, trait, social role or a skill of a person linked to superior performance on the job. [Hayes 1979]

Competencies are personal characteristics that contribute to effective managerial performance. [Albanese, 1989]
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Competency mapping is a process through which one assesses and determines one's strengths as an individual worker and in some cases, as part of an organization. It generally examines two areas: emotional intelligence or emotional quotient (EQ), and strengths of the individual in areas like team structure, leadership, and decision-making. Large organizations frequently employ some form of competency mapping to understand how to most effectively employ the competencies of strengths of workers. They may also use competency mapping to analyze the combination of strengths in different workers to produce the most effective teams and the highest quality work.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPETENCY MAPPING:

**Motives**: Things a person consistently thinks about or wants that cause action, motives drive, direct and select behavior towards certain actions. Example achievement motivation people consistently set challenging goals for themselves, take responsibility for accomplishing them and use the feedback to do better

**Traits**: Physical characteristics and consistent responses to situations. Good eyesight is physical traits of a pilot. Emotional Self Control and initiative are more complex consistent responses to situations.

**Self Concept**: A person's attitude value or self image. A person's values are reactive or respondent motives that predict what a person would do in the short run. Example: A person who values being a leader would be more likely to exhibit leadership behavior.

**Knowledge** (Information a person has in a specific work area) Example: An accountant's knowledge of various accounting procedures.

**Skill** (is the ability to perform certain mental or physical tasks) Example: Mental competency includes analytical thinking. The ability to establish cause and affect relationship.
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TYPES OF COMPETENCIES

MANAGERIAL

Competencies essential for staff having managerial or supervisory responsibility in any service or program area, including directors and senior posts.

Some managerial competencies could be more relevant for specific occupations, however they are applied horizontally across the Organization, i.e. analysis and decision-making, team leadership, change management, etc.

GENERIC

Competencies which are essential for all staff, regardless of their function or level, i.e. communication, program execution, processing tools, linguistic, etc.

TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL

Specific competencies which are essential to perform any job in the Organization within a defined technical or functional area of work, i.e. environmental management, industrial process sectors, investment management, finance and administration, human resource management, etc.

PROCESS OF COMPETENCY MAPPING

Competency = Intelligence + education + Experience + Ethics + Interest.

In order to integrate competencies with business process the following steps are to be taken.

First Step
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Activities of any organization have to result into economic value to the customer directly or indirectly. In the business world, organization’s are interested only in the products and services required by the customers. Therefore organizations have to define their OUTCOMES.

Second Step

Then organizations have to define their business process to enable them to deliver outcomes to customer requirements in a brief time at an economical cost with out sacrificing quality.

Third Step

Then companies have to define the time, cost and quality standards of each task of the business process.

Fourth Step

Then define the competencies required for each task in terms of knowledge, skills and attitudes to complete the task within the quality standards defined.

Fifth Step

The crucial element of defining competencies is the one that relates to behavioral indicators for each competency. Behavior indicators essentially talk about the evidence of competence or otherwise

Benefits of competency mapping:

For the Organisation

- Establish expectations for performance excellence
- Improved job satisfaction and better employee retention
- Increase the effectiveness of training and professional development programs by linking them to success criteria
- Provide a common understanding of scope and requirements of a specific role
- Provide a common, organization wide standards for career levels that enable employees to move across business boundaries
For Managers

- Identify performance criteria to improve the accuracy and ease of the selection process
- Provide more objective performance standards
- Easier communication of performance expectations
- Provide a clear foundation for dialogue to occur between the managers and employees and performance, development and career-oriented issues

For employees

- Identify the behavioral standards of performance excellence
- Provide a more specific and objective assessment of their strengths and the tools required to enhance their skills
- More clear on career related issues

BUILDING COMPETENCY BASED PEOPLE PROCESSES

1. COMPETENCY BASED SELECTION

Competency based selection can be a way to gain competitive advantage. The market for human talent is imperfect. A firm that knows how to assess competencies can effectively hire the best at a reasonable price, for example hire under priced but highly entrepreneurial MBA’s from lesser-known business schools.

There is a need for competency based selection because:

- The person employed performs poorly in a critical job for he lacks the competencies required for that role.
There is high turnover due to high failure rate among new hires.

The organization needs to identify new hires with the potential to become future managers or leaders.

A gap between the competencies needed and what the organization can hire for indicates the training new hires will need.

A lengthy training period may transpire before new hires become productive. New hires with the competencies to do a job become fully productive faster.

Therefore if the selection is based on competencies i.e. if the selection interviews are competency based then the above mentioned, commonly faced problems by organization can be taken care of.

2. COMPETENCY BASED PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Performance has two dimensions

a) Achieving business results

b) Developing individual competencies

These days performance appraisal is seen by managers and employees as a bureaucratic “paperwork” exercises that they do not take seriously because it has little impact on employee development. Performance appraisals do not address the employees’ questions about skill development or career advancement.

- Competency based performance management would Focus on “HOW” of performance and not on “WHAT” of performance i.e. not on results but how the results are achieved
- Link to development of the individual and not just rewards
Competency based PMS shift the emphasis of appraisal from organization results to employee behaviors and competencies demonstrated and hence help identify development gaps.

3. COMPETENCY BASED TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

If the training programs can be aligned to the development needs emerging out of the appraisal system and to the market led training needs they can contribute better to both individual and business objectives.

- Firstly there is a need to determine the competencies for a particular position
- Secondly identify the competencies of the person holding that position
- By mapping the competencies, gaps can be identified in terms of the competencies for that role and the competencies of the person doing that role to diagnose the training and development needs.
- Identify the most appropriate training and development methodology for each trainable competency

Accordingly, the person can be trained only on those competencies. Competency based training programs clearly tell what should be the competency level of the person entering the program. This would drastically reduce the training cost for the organization. It is also helpful in career planning. Employees can match their proficiency in competencies with the competencies requirements of various jobs. Based on the match employees can apply for a job or consider other job opportunities.

4. COMPETENCY BASED COMPENSATION
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Competency based compensation is compensation for individual characteristics, for skills and competencies over and above the pay a job or organizational role commands. Various elements are considered for arriving at compensation increase. Enhancement in competencies has to be one of them.

There is a need for competency based compensation system

- To attract more competent than average employees
- To reward for results and competencies developed
- To motivate employees to maintain and enhance their skills and competencies regularly.
- By rewarding employees who develop relevant competencies the organization can benefit by improving its own capability to face the future

All these competency based people process will help the organization to enhance employee performance and helps in retaining them in the organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- In India, however competency development and mapping still remains an unexplored process in most IT organizations despite the growing level of awareness.
- The underlying principle of competency mapping is not just about finding the right people for the right job. The issue is much more complex than it appears, and most HR departments have been struggling to formulate the right framework for their organization.
- Unless managements and HR heads have holistic expectations from their HR departments, the competency movement is unlikely to succeed as it requires lot of time, dedication and money.
- Before an organization embarks on this journey it has to be very clear about the
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business goals, capability-building imperatives and core competencies of the organization. The competency mapping process needs to be strongly integrated with these aspects.

- Experts agree that the competency mapping process does not fit the one-size-fits all formula. It has to be specific to the user organization. Models that draw from but not defined by existing research can be developed, using behavioral interview methods so that the organization creates a model that reflects its own strategy, its own market, its own customers, and the competencies that bring success in that specific context (including national culture).

- It is better to focus on one or two key areas of implementation rather than the whole HRD agenda in one scoop. Competency mapping can be good at providing organizational relief when applied effectively. It is better to begin with a 'horizontal' slice of the management or senior-most team as the benefits will percolate down to the whole organization.

CONCLUSION

Competency Mapping” is a process through which the competencies of the necessary process are identified. It is done to determine the critical activities of the mandatory processes of the organization. If Competency Mapping is done, then the organization can identify its area of thrust and can take necessary actions for future implementation of the activities.

Organizations perform the task of Competency Mapping to determine the areas which are crucial for its proper working and success. The competencies which are included in the identification are Managerial, Behavioral, Technical, Skill based, Attitude based and Conceptual Knowledge based. All these aspects together lead to determine the actual status of the activity completion and process functioning which is important for the organization.
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Competency Mapping is not rocket science. It can be explosive in terms of re-energizing employees and building a dynamic organization. Competency based HRM has the capacity to actually drive organizational change rather then simply enabling change to take place.

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