
COMPETENCIES MAPPING: A TOOL FOR ENHANCING SKILLS AND ABILITIES OF AN INDIVIDUAL IN ORGANIZED RETAIL SECTOR

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Abstract:

Purpose: – This paper aims to identify the elements of competencies of Sales Personnel in organized Retail Sector.

Design/methodology/approach: – A Simple Random sampling method was employed. A total of 100 self-administered questionnaires were distributed to respondents from different stores, locations and life style were chosen from Indore and Ratlam region .So, that representative sample could be taken for the study.

Findings :- The results show that competency mapping helps companies to achieve competitive advantage by identifying and bridging the gap between the competencies that an employee possesses and the competencies that they expect to perform the job efficiently and according to this study training also helps a lot in performing job in more efficient manner.

Practical implications: – This study will be helpful for the Retail's Company, because from study they will get insight about the impact Training and Improvement on Competency Mapping. This research will be helpful for researchers and scholars for further researches. Somehow this Research study helps to trainers of retail sector.

Keywords: - Skill, Knowledge, traits and Competency mapping.

INTRODUCTION:

The increasing importance and growth of organized retail as a major global industry have been of interest to academics and practitioners alike. Mattsso 1995, and Patterson 1995, stated that there is consensus that economic growth, a higher disposable income and technological advances have contributes to the rapid growth of organized sector and have substantially increased their economic importance.

Retail organizations have unique talent management business challenges. When combined with Success Factors' technology, Performance Framework for Retail offers the retail industry access to robust competencies in their own language," a critical ingredient to improving the quality of talent decisions from the hourly employee to the executive suite."

This suite is built on industry-standard architecture and is composed of distinct capabilities, all of which are fully integrated. Its ease-of-use and rapid deployment features allow organizations to maximize resources while generating robust, powerful data.

The entire suite is highly scalable and modular, allowing customers to add new role-specific modules when they are ready - on-demand. They also added a competency model which includes a valid, observable, and measurable list of the knowledge, skills, and attributes demonstrated through behavior that results in outstanding performance in a particular work context.

With changing business scenario and new challenges emerging in the competitive world, successful performance in any job/task has taken a critical place, for organizational success. Competency mapping is one such process that helps in identifying and mapping competencies required for successful performance in a particular role.

Competency mapping and assessment has gained paramount importance in organizations, for keeping people development strategies and processes in sync with organizational growth & objectives and maximizing the utilization of human potential.

Retail employers struggle to attract and retain the best and brightest employees because of the misperception that jobs are low-wage and lack growth potential.

Though the retail industry has started work on initial training models and skills certifications, they are not yet used consistently across the industry to build skills competency requirements for positions at all levels and to encourage career growth. Retailers are struggling to attract qualified individuals, train them, and have them advance their careers. Over 50 of the fortune 500 companies, and around 25 of the Asian top 500 companies, are retailers.

The level of consolidation within each country has increased significantly over the last few decades. This is most marked in the grocery where large chains have leveraged superior scales of operations and sourcing to capture share from the unorganized players, while offering consumers the best price. This trend has led to organized networks capturing up to 80% of the groceries market in the developed economies.

Competency Mapping:

There are various definitions given for the term competency. Combining the basic ideas embedded in all definitions, competency can be defined as:

“A combination of knowledge, skills, attitude and personality of an individual as applied to a role or job in the context of the present and future environment that accounts for sustained success within the framework of Organizational Values.”

Sometimes competencies are also defined as “cluster of successful behaviors.”

FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF COMPETENCIES:

Motives: Things a person consistently thinks about 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.

The four general competences are:

Meaning Competence: Identifying with the purpose of the organization or community and acting from the preferred future in accordance with the values of the organization or community.

Relation Competence: Creating and nurturing connections to the stakeholders of the primary tasks.

Learning Competence: Creating and looking for situations that make it possible to experiment with the set of solutions that make it possible to solve the primary tasks and reflect on the experience.

Change Competence: Acting in new ways when it will promote the purpose of the organization or community and make the preferred future come to life.

Levels of competencies

1. Organizational competencies — unique factors that make an organization competitive
2. Job/Role competencies—things an individual must demonstrate to be effective in a job, role, function, task, or duty, an organizational level, or in the entire organization.
3. Personal competencies—aspects of an individual that imply a level of skill, achievement, or output

TYPES OF COMPETENCIES

MANAGERIAL: Competencies which are considered essential for staff with 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

GENERIC: Competencies which are considered essential for all staff, regardless of their function or level.

TECHNICAL/FUNCTIONAL: Specific competencies which are considered essential to perform any job in the Organization within a defined technical or functional area of work.

Parts of Competency

1. **Practical competency** - An employee's demonstrated ability to perform a set of tasks.
2. **Foundational competence** - An employee's demonstrated understanding of what and why he / she are doing.
3. **Reflexive competence** (An employee's ability to integrate actions with the understanding of the action so that he / she learn from those actions and adapts to the changes as and when they are required.
4. **Applied competence** - An employee's demonstrated ability to perform a set of tasks with understanding and reflexivity.

Technical or functional competencies: knowledge, attitudes and skills associated with the technology or functional expertise required to perform the role Managerial: knowledge, attitudes and skills required to plan, organize, mobilize and utilize various resources.

Human knowledge, attitudes and skills required to motivate, utilize and develop human resources Conceptual: the abilities needed to visualize the invisible, think at abstract levels and use the thinking to plan future business. One of the ways of improving organizational performance is to focus on an individual performance and to analyze the knowledge and skills need for effective job performance. Relevant literature suggest that need should be studied as gap in competencies.

This study report finding from data relating to a perception of Sales Manager about the important and current state of Managerial Competencies in Retail Sector. Respondents were asked about the importance and also present level of manager competencies required for effective job performance. Jobs were measured by subtracting the importance value ascribed to the competency from the value the ascribed to present competency level.

This reasonably simple though initially tedious method helps everybody to know what the real state of preparedness of an organization to handle new business because it has a clear picture of every incumbent in the organization. It helps in determining the training and development needs and importantly it helps to encourage the best and develop the rest. A win-win situation for everyone.

Competency model is a model that describes the requirements and attributes for competent human performance in one or more roles or performance settings. As such, the elements of a competency model communicate, in clear terms, the circumstances and conditions of performance. Individual competencies are organized into competency models to enable people in an organization or profession to understand, discuss, and apply the competencies to workforce performance. The element to be included in the competency model is decided based on the purpose that the model is going to serve.

LITRATURE REVIEW

According to Gronroos (2000), today firms compete on the basis of services, not the basis of physical product. Moreover the nature of today's business demands that firm interact with their customers and business partners using technology to provide services instantaneously across International borders. Essentially therefore, service encounter relates to "HIGH – TOUCH" (traditional face to face interaction) and "HIGH TECH" those encounters that takes place over a long distance via a technology interface.

Pagey U. (2005) stated that competency-based HR is considered the best HR. In India however competency development and mapping still remains an unexplored process in most organizations despite the growing level of awareness. Competency mapping just about finding the right people for the right job. Most HR departments have been struggling to formulate the right framework for their organization. As a result of competency mapping, all the HR processes like talent induction, management development, appraisals and training yield much better results, 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, he adds, pointing out that before an organization embarks on this journey it has to be very clear about the business goals, capability-building imperatives and core competencies of the organization. The competency mapping process needs to be strongly integrated with these aspects.

PanagarF. (2009) stated that competency mapping is a process of identifying key competencies for a company or institution and the jobs and functions within it. Competency mapping is important and is an essential exercise. Every well managed firm should: have

well defined roles and list of competencies required to perform each role effectively. Such list should be used for recruitment, performance management, promotions, placement and training

Needs identification.

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.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY-

The study aims to achieve competitive advantage by identifying and bridging the gap between the competencies that an employee possesses and the competencies that they expect to perform the job efficiently and according to this study training also helps a lot in performing job in more efficient manner.

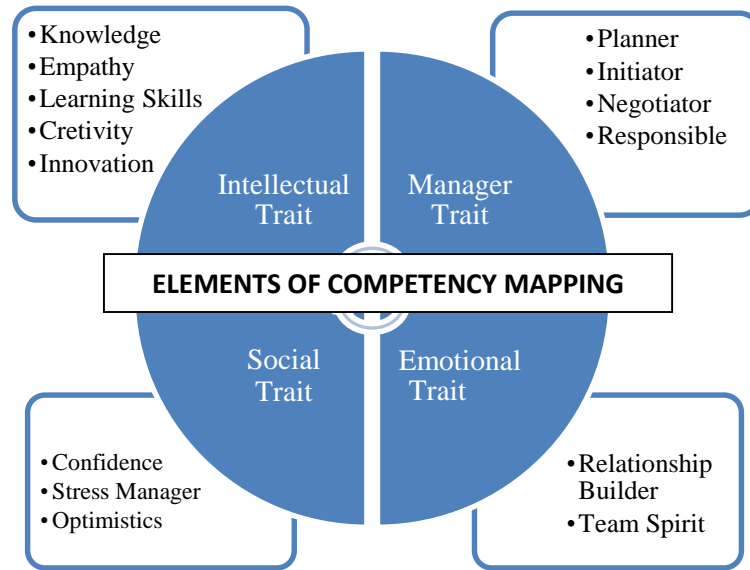
A Simple Random sampling method was employed. A total no. of 100 sales personnel from different self- stores, and departmental stores were chosen from Indore and Ratlam region. Questionnaires were administered and distributed to respondents of different outlets. So, that representative sample could be taken for the study. In questionnaire, twenty questions were asked related to elements of competency. Likert scale was used to know the level of their acceptance associated with the particular question. This research carried out as follows:

First: A job analysis is carried out by asking employees that asks them to describe what they are doing, and what skills, attitudes and abilities they need to have to perform it well. There would be a bit that requests them to list down attributes needed to make it up to the next level, thus making it behavioral as well as skill-based.

Second: Having discovered the similarities in the questionnaires, a competency based job description is crafted and presented to the personnel department for their agreement and additions if any.

Third: Having agreed on the job requirements and the skills and attitudes needed to progress within it and become more productive; one starts mapping the capability of the employees to the benchmarks. There are several index points within the responsibility level.

On the basis of literature review and past research following elements of competency has been identified and after analysis of questioner filled by Sales Personnel results are as follows:



Source: Developed by authors

INTELLECTUAL TRAIT: Intellectual trait is one of the elements of competency. It means endowed with intellect; having the power of understanding; having capacity for the higher forms of knowledge or thought; characterized by intelligence or mental capacity; as, an intellectual person. For services in an Organized Retail Sector an Individual should have clarity in Mind’s Philosophy.

Knowledge: Sales manager must have familiarity with someone or something unknown, which can include information, facts, descriptions, or skills acquired through experience or education.

The practical understanding of a product for subject was there but still expertise is not there about the location, quantity and availability of the brands. There is a gap between existing and expected knowledge which suggest product training.

Empathy: The empathy is an emotion where one understand others feeling by keeping oneself at his position. In this research empathy indicates the understanding of customer’s needs and wants.

According to the present research we found that sales person posses limited extension for being concern about the customers. Thus in Organized Retail Sector an individual must have good understanding of customer’s choice and preferences. So that store can have more footfalls.

Creativity and Innovation: Creativity refers to the phenomenon whereby a person creates something new (a product, a solution, a work of art, a novel, a joke, etc.) that has some kind of value.

Innovation is the creation of better or more effective products, processes, services, technologies, or ideas that are accepted by markets, governments, and society.

This research says that no. of Sales Persons have habit to follow their seniors. Being a face to face interaction with customers Sales Person should possess holding capacity which requires sense of Creativity and Innovation.

Learning Skills: Learning doesn't require a degree, certificate, or a grade to prove its worth, though clearly these have social value that most people would be unwise to ignore.

Learning is the lifelong process of transforming information and experience into knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes and being a part of Service industry an employee must keep him completely aware of every new concept and must possess zeal to learn it. These people acquire less capability to learn as they are expected to. Thus the study indicates to have skills of Learning.

MANAGERIAL TRAIT: Characteristics posed by a manager is termed as Managerial Traits.

Planner: - First to understand the term planner it's very vital to have awareness about the term PLAN which is defined as follows: A scheme, program, or method worked out beforehand for the accomplishment of an objective, a proposed or tentative project or course of action.

Research shows that a proper planning can make their task more convenient for that Sales person in store. Thus they must make planning for a day so that they can make their efforts more efficient and prove themselves more effective for an Organization.

Initiator: A person that takes an initiative in making something happens. A person working with an organization must have Ability to start. Mostly executives hesitate to start to learn a new concept which leads to loss of customer and directly cause impact on sales.

Negotiator: The person who undergo in the negotiation process. In retail sector negotiation doesn't only related to monetary term but it is equally connected to product too. This is mainly for the conversion of visitors into regular customers. Thus an individual should concentrate to make expected customers as consumers who buy product from their store in frequent purchase.

Responsible: When an individual completes his obligations towards his work on time as indicated is said to be a responsible person. In retail sector being responsible (workaholic) is the necessity of demand as it is root cause of target oriented business, but due to advancement of technology it increased their dependency on it.

Study focus on a fact that responsibility plays vital role in completion of task and to earn profit.

SOCIAL TRAIT: The characteristics which an individual have to create a position in a society through his behavior, performance, attitude and outcomes.

Team-spirit: The quality of an individual to work by taking other with him to achieve their organization objective. Being a sales person it's very important to work in a team, so that one can overcome his weakness and learn to improve. Some individual involves their personal biasness in their professional life which leads to conflicts and declination of their career.

Relationship builder: In retail sector it is very important to sustain relations to achieve long term objectives. Employees who believe in long term relations help to create a positive reputation and enhance their market value. So, retail sector sales person must seek to have long term and happy relation with their customers.

EMOTIONAL TRAIT: The traits which arousing or intended to arouse the emotions.

Optimistic: An individual who usually expects a favorable outcome. Usually many sales people do not keep mind set of being positive even on not achieving day to day target. This behavior leads them to negativity and frustration in future which surely disturb their personal and professional life.

Being a part of an organized retail sector an individual must be optimistic towards his outcomes and should have self-confidence.

Stress-Manager: The person who manages the adverse situations and manager the stress is a stress manager and the goal of Stress Management is to help you to manage the stress of everyday life. Many different methods may be employed, such as biofeedback, meditation and massage. Counselors work with individuals in order to determine what stress management program will work best for that person.

Sales person must possess an ability to handle his and as well as his subordinates stress .So, that they can give their 100% at their workplace and achieve their targets.

Confidence: An emotion of assurance, especially of self-assurance and the state or quality of being certain. Confidence helps a person to carry all the obstacles smoothly and reach to the goal. Research found some get influenced with hurdles and unable to perform as good expected from them. So, sales person confidence makes other to get motivate and upraise him to reach to the final destination and to get greats promotions ahead.

CONCLUSION:

An almost (but not quite) arbitrary level of attainment is noted against each benchmark indicating the areas where the assessed is in terms of personal development and achievement. These give an adept HR manager a fairly good picture of the employee to see whether he (or she) needs to perform better or to move up a notch on the scale. Once the employee tops ' every indicator at his level, he moves on to the next and begins there at the bottom -in short, he is promoted.

The research clears that competency mapping helps companies to achieve competitive advantage by identifying and bridging the gap between the competencies that an employee

possesses and the competencies that they expect to perform the job efficiently and according to this study training also helps a lot in performing job in more efficient manner.

RESEARCH LIMITATIONS/IMPLICATIONS

Following research involve limitations as Lack of information, lack of cooperation, dependence on external consultants , the study is restricted only to the Indore and Ratlam region , many respondent were mildly interested in the survey and were not eager to give me more time for the answer the questions.

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