

COMPETENCY EVALUATION: A CASE STUDY

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Abstract

Developing employees entails proper observation of their behaviors at work place by their respective Managers. Mapping these observations on the relevant competencies helps in evaluating current level of employees in each competency. This leads to the creation of a 'Development Plan' for each employee. This case study illustrates, with the help of an example, how an EmpXtrack client utilized the system for effectively deploying their competency framework.

Problem Areas

A company highly focused on employee development had identified a set of competencies which were uniformly applicable to all levels of employees: Junior Executives, Managers & Senior Managers. They needed a process (preferably automated) to evaluate competencies. This was a PCMM requirement from their Quality Department.

HR Consultancy

Linking 'observed behaviors' at work place with one or more of the competencies chosen by the organization, and assigning appropriate weights to each behavior at different employee levels, was the approach followed by our business analysts to create a competency evaluation model. A scale was then evolved to estimate the current 'Proficiency level' for each employee.

An Example:

'Focus on Results' was one of the nine (9) competencies on which each employee was to be evaluated.

- (i) Competency Definition: Ability to manage available resources to produce desired results .

(ii) <u>Positive Observed Behaviors:</u>	<u>Weights</u>			
	<u>JE</u>	<u>Mgr</u>	<u>SM</u>	<u>OB</u>
* Knowledge of available resources	5	10	20	
* Good people manager	5	15	15	
* Work-Planning skills	10	20	20	
* Fire fighter	20	10	5	✓
* Hands on approach	25	10	5	✓
* Proactive elimination of bottle-necks	5	10	20	
* Domain knowledge/ Functional expertise	15	10	5	✓
* Focus on work floor problems	15	10	5	

- (iii) Negative Observed Behaviors:

* Lack of knowledge about ground realities	20	15	10	
* Too much <u>or</u> too less control	5	15	20	
* Too theoretical in approach	5	15	15	✓
* Poor relationships	10	20	20	✓
* Uses short-cuts to achieve goals		5	15	
* Physical & mental exhaustion	5	10	15	✓

Index : JE -> Junior executive Mgr -> Manager SM -> Senior Manager OB -> Observed Behavior

(iv) Recording of Observations

- * The Manager/supervisor to whom the employee is reporting fills the OB column.
- * Any behavior (Positive or Negative) which the employee has mostly exhibited at the work place will be tick-marked (☐)
- * All other behaviors which were seldom observed are to be left blank.
- * Weights allocated in the above table to various attributes (ie, behaviors) were not kept visible to the Manager/ Supervisor filling-in the OB column.

(v) Evaluation Process:

- * Refer to the OB column filled-in for an employee by his Manager.
- * System ascertains from the data base that the employee for whom the OB column is completed is a 'Junior Executive'.
- * Exhibited positive & negative behaviors, as per the weights assigned at JE level, were computed as 60 & 20 respectively.
- * Current score of the employee in this competency was thus 40 (60-20) , which in terms of 'Proficiency Level' was interpreted as under :

Score	Proficiency Level	Meaning
<20	1	Unclear about issues & situations
20-30	2	Inadequate drive for results
31-50	3	Can focus on Vitals & manage results
51-75	4	Can solve complex issues & produce results
>75	5	Creates an environment which is fully focused on results.

- * For the case under examination, employee's Proficiency Level is mapped at '3'.

Employee Counseling & Development

Based on the above analysis, the employee receives counseling from his Manager to:

- (a) improve his domain knowledge.
- (b) acquire work planning skills.
- (c) improve his relationship with other team members.

For other eight (8) competencies the observed vital behaviors were captured in the same manner and included in the Manager 's counseling notes.

The gap between the desired and current proficiency levels for each competency lead to the training needs identification of the employee and was reflected in the 'Employee Development Plan' (for the case in view , the desired proficiency level for 'Focus on Results' was 3. The gap being 0, this competency did not feature in his Development Plan.

However, as per their succession planning logic, which is based on the overall performance & potential profile of an employee, he was considered fit for induction into the succession pipe-line. And since for succession to the Manager's position, this competency: 'Focus on Results' carried a 'desired level' of 4, the succession based Development Plan' for this employee did reflect this competency indicating a time frame of 2 - 3 years to enhance the level from 3 to 4.

Lessons Learned

- ▲ Employee development planning requires detailed evaluation of the competency profiles.
- ▲ Competencies management has a deep process orientation. It is a difficult process to be managed manually in mid-size & large organizations.
- ▲ Performance Appraisal, Employee Counseling, Training & Development plans and succession planning are co-related with competencies evaluation.
- ▲ Automation of the above activities requires an integrated & holistic approach.

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