

Organizational objectives of royal mail



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In recent years, challenging economic conditions have stressed organizations, some to the breaking point. Rather than waiting for external improvements, such as market growth or technological advances, many organizations are looking internally for performance and productivity gains. Consequently, the concept of performance management is receiving increased attention as a route to improved results (Boxall and Purcell, 2003). At the same time, regrettably, lingering concerns over the effectiveness (Coens and Jenkins, 2000) and dissatisfaction (Bernardin et al., 1998) have not been resolved.

Royal mail operating in the postal business in UK for almost 350 years as the only service providers in postal market. In January 2006, Govt announce regulations in the postal business and allow other national and international postal companies to operate as a direct competitors of Royal mail in the letters market.

The above regulatory changes has change the external envoinment for Royal mail as it has direct impact over the company triditional structure and process and more importantly the way they do business (organizational culture), and the only way the company can cope with this situations is to change its structure and culture. As a re-active response Royal mail management announce about £1. 2b to invest as a automation plan to compete in the market and also made some structural changes like downsizing and changing employees contract hours to save money etc.

Even though management made some major changes in the company to cope with pressure of external envoinment but still because of traditional

organizational structure , significant Trad Union impact on management decisions has limited management choices to implement effective performance management system where staff specially lower employees performance can hardly be questioned which resulting poor quality service to the customer at high cost. As a result of this poor performance Royal mail has lost about 40% of its corporate market to rivals according to royal mail management.

To overcome the above issues Royal mail need a systematic approach to improve the performance of teams and individuals in the shape of proper performance management system if they are going to survive and compete in the market. The main purpose of this research work is to see what kind of performance management system exist in Royal mail and how it contribute to effective performance and achievement of organizational objectives.

Three key variables of performance management system, performance measurement, feedback and personal development programme will be analyzed in this research to see how these variables contribute to performance management implementation in Royal mail to achieve its objectives.

Introduction to Royal Mail.

Royal Mail is the national postal service of the United Kingdom. Historically, the General Post Office was a government department, which included – and still does – the Royal Mail delivery business; but it became The Post Office, a state-owned corporation, in 1969 and then a Public Limited Company wholly owned by HM Government in 2000. The name initially

registered with Companies House was Trushelfco (No 2758) and this was changed to Consignia plc on 26th January 2001.

This new name was aimed at ending the confusion that had existed between the terms The Post Office (the whole organisation) and Post Offices (the customer accessible counters). Another reason was to have a unique name for the international market. This new name was unpopular with employees, the unions and the general public; and Consignia plc became Royal Mail Group plc in 2002, and then Royal Mail Group Limited in 2007. Unlike other former state monopolies such as British Telecom, Royal Mail was not privatised in the 1980s and 1990s, but remains a limited company wholly owned by the UK government.

A wholly owned subsidiary of Royal Mail is Post Office Limited, which operates the national network of post offices. As the activities of Royal Mail have been reduced, so the network of post offices has contracted.

Royal Mail remains responsible for the universal mail collection and delivery service in the UK. Letters are deposited in a pillar or wall box, taken to a post office, or (by arrangement) collected in bulk from businesses. Deliveries are made at least once every day (except Sundays and Bank Holidays) at uniform charges for all destinations within the UK.

According to its annual report for the year ended 26 March 2006, Royal Mail delivers 84 million items every working day and has a network of 14,376 post offices. Revenue for the year was £9.056 billion, and profits before tax were £312 million.

Historical Background

The Royal Mail traces its history back to 1516, when Henry VIII established a “ Master of the Posts”. The Royal Mail service was first made available to the public by Charles I on July 31, 1635, with postage being paid by the recipient, and the General Post Office (GPO) was officially established by Charles II in 1660.

Between 1719 and 1763, Ralph Allen, Postmaster at Bath, signed a series of contracts with the post office to develop and expand Britain’s postal network. He organised mail coaches which were provided by both Wilson & Company of London and Williams & Company of Bath. The early Royal Mail Coaches were similar to ordinary family coaches but with Post Office.

Research Aim

The aim of this research will be to find out how systematic performance management system can create better understanding amongst employees about the goals and objectives of the organization and a mind set how to achieve these objectives with the help of management through proper training and development plan.

Research Objectives

In order to the aim for which this research is being undertaken, following objectives need to be accomplished which will lead to provide us the clear view how effective and proper performance management system will help management to achieve the goals of Royal mail in the dynamic business environment.

A. To critically analysis the literature reviews on the research topic.

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- B. To undertake a primary research based on questionnaires and unstructured interviews from selected sample.
- C. To analyse the findings from the primary research.
- D. To find the role of Performance measurement, Feedback system and Personal development plan in achieving organizational and individuals goals.
- E. To identify the needs and expectations of employees from Royal mail to ensure they performing at their best and going in the right direction in terms of goals achievement.

Research Questions:

Subsequent research questions have been drawn from the aims and objectives, which by answering will provide a direction to purpose for which this research is being put forward.

1. How does an Organization can be facilitated by an effective performance measurement process?
2. What are the implications of Feedback system in the Royal mail?
3. How an effective Development Plan can achieve the organizational objectives.

Literature Review

Performance Measurement:

Performance Management can be defined in different ways:

Performance management can be defined as a systematic process for improving organizational performance by developing the performance of individuals and teams. Performance management is a means of getting better results from the organization, teams and individuals by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and competence requirements (Armstrong 2006). This thought was further elaborated by IPD (1992, p. 7) that ‘ performance management is now widely held to signify an approach to setting and meeting of organizational objectives through a process involving the setting and meeting of objectives by business units and individuals’.]

Performance measurement is “ the process of determining how successful organizations or individuals have been in attaining their objectives” (Evangelidis. K pp-45-7, 1992) Total quality-based performance measurement can be defined as the measurement of non-financial performance at all levels within the organization (including individuals, teams, processes, departments and the organization as a whole), with a view to the continuous improvement of performance against organizational objectives.

The balanced scorecard

A performance measurement and strategic management system proposed by Kaplan and Norton (1996, 2001), can be an invaluable tool to measures

the performance of an organization and its employees. The balanced scorecard is a customer-based planning and process improvement system, with its primary focus on driving an organization's change process by identifying and evaluating pertinent performance measures. It is an integral part of the mission identification, strategy formulation and process execution, with an emphasis on translating strategy into a linked set of financial and non-financial measures.

The original balanced scorecard

Source: Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy

Volume 10 . Number 5 . 2000 . 439±450

Feedback

Multi-source, multi-rater (MSMR) feedback techniques (i. e. 360-degree feedback) have become increasingly widespread within UK organizations (Warr & Bourne, 1999). As the name implies , MSMR feedback systems involve a number of the target individual's colleagues (seniors, peers, direct reports and perhaps even clients) providing ratings of the target's current level of competence along a number of behavioural indicators. The target individual will also usually provide a self-assessment of their competence along the same behavioural dimensions. All ratings will then be compiled by system administrators into a feedback report, with the intention that the report will enable the individual to identify where their strengths and weaknesses lie, whether their current behaviour meets a criterion level of competence, and where there is disparity between raters in these

perceptions (i. e. between self- to ‘ others’ perceptions and ‘ other’ to ‘ other’ perceptions). In providing this information,

The main objective of most systems currently in use in the UK is to facilitate individuals’ development (Garavan, Morley, & Flynn, 1997).

Potential raters in multi-source appraisal systems

Source: Journal of European Industrial Training 25/1 [2001] 5±32

Employee’s development

Kavanagh’s (1997) statement shapes the focus and structure of this monograph. He refers to the idea of employees wanting to know how they are performing; the issue of how best to provide effective feedback to employees; and the challenge of providing feedback to employees which facilitates both performance improvement and effective career development processes. A relatively recent development in this context is a concept that has been termed “ 360 feedback’ ‘ or “ multi-rater performance appraisal” Coates (1998) claims that multi-source appraisal became popular on the corporate scene only in the 1980s and at the time was mostly used as an executive development tool.

Key Variables: Performance Measurement, Feedback System, Development Plan.

Research Design and Methodology:

In order to accomplish the end objectives for which this research is being conducted, in Greenford mail centre which has about 1500 staff, about 35 front-line managers three shift mangers and mail centre manager, both

qualitative and quantitative techniques will be used, which are discussed further. Data collection, both primary and secondary has been divided into two phases. Phase 1 constitutes exploratory research aiming to look for secondary data from different sources as well as qualitative method of conducting focus groups in order to gather primary data necessary for the next step. Phase 2 accompanies quantitative techniques in the form of survey to gather finalized results to be analyzed.

Data Collection (Phase 1):

Exploratory research is investigation informal studies to provide background information. It is not intended to provide conclusive evidence from which to follow a concrete direction, rather it provides a basis that subsequent research will be a requirement to achieve final results. The basic purpose behind exploratory research is to exhaust inexpensive readily available data which may help to prevent mistakes like rushing into expensive detailed surveys (Zikmund, 1997). Exploratory research can be conducted using various techniques. For our research objectives, and considering the mind in limitations, the most suitable are secondary data and focus groups.

Secondary Data: Also termed as holistic data previously collected for some project other than the one at hand. It is relatively inexpensive and readily available, but we need to make sure it is consistent with the problem definition as they are not designed for the purpose to serve research needs (Zikmund, 1997). External sources where we can gather secondary data for this research includes

Libraries (Huge source of information including databases, books and periodicals, journal articles) British Library, EBSCO database, Emerald Management full text database, Athens DA Resources etc.

The Internet (Provides secondary data, authenticity is a bit doubtful but in many cases huge information can be acquired).

This secondary data will help us to prepare a final questionnaire based on previous researches on the subject matter.

Focus Groups: The second step of phase 1 is conducting focus group which is a qualitative method of data gathering. It is an unstructured, free flowing interview with a small group of people. Focus groups are not rigidly structured; rather they are of a flexible discussion format. The moderator introduces the topic to the participants who in turn carry out the discussion and as this discussion progresses, new topics emerge. It freely allows the participants to truly reflect their feelings and emotions in their own words (Zikmund, 1997). The role of the moderator is to ensure that all members participate in the session and none dominates it. Though focus groups are the least expensive ways of gathering information; it should be kept in mind that data gathered from focus groups only provide qualitative information. Another limitation to them is that since the members are not selected scientifically, they may not truly reflect the opinions of the whole population at large. However, the exploratory information collected through focus groups can be a basis for further scientific research (Sekaran, 2003).

We will be conducting two focus groups of 6 postmen each. One group will contain a random sample from each shift and specific area.. The objective of <https://assignbuster.com/organizational-objectives-of-royal-mail/>

the focus groups is to generate further insights about employees and the factors they might feel important to them.. We may or may not come up with factors other than discussed earlier. There is no scientific method to analyze qualitative data. Therefore recording of the whole focus group discussion will be carried out which will help to reduce any risk of biases. Face expressions is a short coming, and it solely based on moderators interpretation.

Data Collection (Phase 2):

The second phase of collecting data is by gathering quantitative data by asking respondents to fill in the finalized self administered questionnaire. We have selected a sample size of 200 employees both postmen and manager's male and female purely based on judgment and keeping in mind the limitations of the study. However, if further we might feel that the sample size is not justified; further alterations may be carried out. Non probability sampling technique is one in which sample is selected on personal judgment or experience and the probability of any member from the population is not known and within that framework, we will be using Quota Sampling (Zikmund, 1997). Quota sampling is a procedure which ensures that all the sub groups present in the population will represent the sample to the extent on the desire of investigator. A logical drawback of quota sample is it tends to select people which are easily available therefore careful supervision is required in order to gather a true representative sample of the population (Zikmund, 1997).

Obviously, the logic for using quota sampling for questionnaires is that we want employees in Greenford mail centre working various shifts from

different geographical backgrounds and have different level of skill and expertise to be part of the sample. Quota allocation is explained below:

Total Sample = 200

100 Postmen

100 post women

50 working early shift

50 working late/night shift

50 working late shift

50 working night/early shift

10 postmen from each geographic division

America's

Asia

Europe

Australia

Africa's

10 postmen from each geographic division

America's

Asia

Europe

Australia

Africa's

Data Analysis:

The number of questions in the final questionnaire is not known as yet since they will depend on the findings from the primary data from focus groups.

However, a few sample questions are listed below (not necessarily the part of final questionnaire):

Q: What are the general procedure for giving targets to staff and monitoring their performance?

Q: What feedback system is in use to judge individual's skills and abilities in Greenford mail centre?

Q. What criteria using by management in Royal mail for their staff career development plan.

The most appropriate technique for measuring the attitude of employees for this research is through Likert scale which is a type on an ordinal scale. It is a bipolar attitude measurement technique most widely used which allows respondents to rate how strongly they agree or disagree with these carefully constructed statement (Zikmund, 1997). Therefore, for our research we will construct a 5 point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree and weights are assigned to answers accordingly. An example is shown below:

Q: The achievements of the organization for you?

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Uncertain

Agree

Strongly

Agree

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

(5)

Each dimension as mentioned will contain certain questions which will reflect the attitude towards the overall dimension. Therefore in order to achieve this, we will use the method of cross-tabulation. It is a technique for organizing data by groups, categories comparison between them (Zikmund, 1997). For individual question, calculation of confidence interval will be conducted using the distribution. This will help us in finding out attitude of postmen that how many respond favourably or unfavourably to a certain question. The results will be measured and analyzed with the help of most extensively used statistical software called SPSS. Once data is input, immediate reports are generated and there is no probability of human calculation error.

Time Scale for Research

Write about which part of dissertation you will complete

In what time

e. g Introduction and Back ground (Covered form March to April)

LITERATURE REVIEW (Covered from April to May)

Result and Analysis (May To June)

ETC.

Research Limitations and future direction:

The research design section has described the pros and cons of every technique adapted from sampling to focus groups, however utmost care will be taken place to minimize the impact. Other limitations which should have been avoided or may be part of future research are:

Due to limitations, we have included employees only from Greenford mail centre as sample which is one of the stakeholders of Royal mail Plc.

Therefore, future research may include employees, from others mail centre and delivery offices etc.

The sample size drawn for the study is too small to make it a generalization.

Results will lead to a unified conclusion which may not be helpful for the management to make any strategic decision etc.

Employee's expectations skills, preferences changes with experience therefore the difference in the dates of collecting data may lead to different result.

Conclusion:

ADD YOUR OWN CONCLUSION RELATED TO YOUR TOPIC

Points,