

Company background essay example

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Personal and Professional Development

Introduction

All of us wish to do well in our life and in order to do well we need to develop ourselves constantly in a way to excel in our personal and professional life. To keep in pace with the ever-changing world, the organizational needs also go through a transformation over time. As and when the changes take place in the organizations, it is mandatory for every employee to develop himself with the changing trend to fit into the emerging work environment. In case of an employee failing to develop himself with the changing time, chances of his falling behind the race are galore. Therefore, personal and professional development is instrumental for survival in this dynamic world. Developing oneself personally and professionally is not a cinch as it requires a lot of planning. In order to keep the process of our development in motion, first we need to decide upon our goals in life. Once the decision is made, we need to make endeavors to fulfill our dream. This essay will demonstrate how my experience as trainee in Cathay Pacific has precipitated my development planning, making me more responsible for my actions and organized in my learning process.

Cathay Pacific Airways based out of Hong Kong is an international airline organization offering scheduled passenger and cargo services to over 150 destinations in 42 countries around the world. Founded by American Roy C Farrell and Australian Sydney H de Kantzow on 24th September in 1946, the airline's major shareholders include Swire Pacific and Air China. Since its inception in 1946, many types of aircraft had been operated by the airline.

The first two aircrafts were World War II famed Douglas DC-3s which were called Niki and Betsy. Betsy which was the first aircraft of the company was sold in 1955 but was bought back again 30 years later and now the aircraft is showcased in the Hong Kong Science Museum (Cathay Pacific). Its second aircraft Niki was lost and so an identical DC-3 was bought as a replacement which was renovated and repainted and now it is on public display at the Flight Training Centre of Cathay City. Now the company owns a fleet of aircrafts comprised of Airbus A340, Airbus A330, Boeing 777 and Boeing 747 equipment.

Cathay Pacific signed a deal in 2006 that integrated Dragonair into the group as a wholly owned subsidiary. This merger helped the company combine its international network with Dragonair's vast network of over 20 cities in Mainland China. With the support provided by the Cathay's international network, Dragonair reinforced its services and started operating in eight more regional destinations, thereby providing passengers with more travel options. As per the report of the International Air Transport Association, Cathay Pacific is regarded as the third largest airline of the world in terms of its market capitalization. It earned the title of the world's largest international cargo airline in 2010 and its main operational hub Hong Kong International Airport received the reputation of the busiest airport of the world in terms of cargo traffic. The mission and vision of the company is to become the best airline of the world. In order to fulfill its mission, Cathay Pacific and its subsidiaries recruit over 20, 000 staff in Hong Kong and the dynamic team of professionals strive to give the best quality of service to make the customers happy (Cathay Pacific).

What is Self-Managed Learning?

Self-Managed Learning refers to the learning style in which individuals manage their own learning by taking responsibility for making decisions on what they will learn, how they will learn, when they will learn, where and why they will learn. The key aspects of self-managed learning include self-initiation, goal setting, personal orientation, setting milestones and self-reflection. But in order for self-learning, it is very important to choose the right approach to learning. There are different ways one can learn skills and self-develop himself such as by enrolling in training courses, observing others in the work place and attending seminars and conferences. There are various training courses available right from colleges to universities and commercial organizations. By enrolling in the required training courses one can learn a lot about the required skills.

What is Lifelong Learning?

In order to make learning sustainable, it is important to continually evolve through self-directed learning. Education about life and skills does not end with the finish of a course and therefore, in order to keep up the process of personal development one has to learn from the environment he is in, from his workplace and social contexts. A lifelong learner is he who continuously motivates himself to engage in the process of learning by planning and monitoring his own learning path, engaging in self-evaluation and reflection and taking into consideration the feedback for change and improvement. One can always go through formal training and learning to develop himself professionally. But formal trainings and learning are temporary and that is

why, to keep the learning curve active, one has to observe others.

Observation not only benefits the learner to learn about new things but also benefits the organization he is in because the learner learns about new skills without the organization having to invest on his training. One can also learn new skills and experiences from supervisors, coaches and mentors by discussing and sharing about ideas in the workplace.

Benefits of Self and Lifelong Learning to the Organization

In personal context, one can learn following the theory of Kolb. One can learn from experience by making mistakes and picking up lessons from those mistakes. One can also learn through experimentation or trial and error just to see what would happen if he tries a particular thing that is full of risks. One can make reflective observation by working out possible solutions in his mind before attempting a thing or one can make abstract conceptualization by weighing the pros and cons of things before trying.

Self-managed learning involves lot of benefits for both the individuals and organizations. To keep in pace with the changing organizational environment, one has to continually improve and develop himself by learning new skills that are in alignment with organizational as well as individual development goals. This way the employees will remain capable of working amidst demanding situations. Their expanded knowledge would help the organizational development needs and the employees themselves would be able to fine-tune their career ambitions. Further, the enhanced expertise of the employees would make them more adaptive to changing situations and would make the growth of the company more resilient.

Self-Responsibility: Personal and Professional

There is nothing called an ideal set of skills. Skill sets and behavioral requirements vary from one situation to another. Cathay Pacific has some defined competencies based on which the skills and performance of employees are measured. For example, Cathay Pacific wants to reduce the number of scheduling errors for its cargo business. Over a period of time Cathay Pacific has observed that people coming from the supply chain background does a better job in scheduling than people coming from other backgrounds. Therefore, it is decided that competency in supply chain management is essential for the role of a scheduler. Also it has been seen that people who have attended internal IT software training on enterprise software and know how to operate it do better scheduling than others. Cathay Pacific identified competency in IT ERP system as another requirement for the job. Cathay Pacific evaluates these competencies before recruiting new people in the job. However, it is not always possible to get the right candidate from an open market. In situations like this when the rightful resources are not easily available in the market Cathay Pacific tries to make the existing employees develop the competencies required for the job. For example, right now I am a technical and operational management trainee in Cathay Pacific and in future if I would like to see myself promoted to junior managerial position, I need to develop the required skills that the company identifies as essential for a manager. Cathay Pacific as one of the best airline company in the world sets very high standard for individual skill requirement for the job. As an operational executive, Cathay Pacific wants an employee to do flight schedules, cargo movement planning, engineering and

maintenance scheduling and airport operation management. As an employee grows in that role to become a junior manager, he will be initially required to manage a team of people from the same region and ultimately would be responsible for managing an entire global team. As the employee grows in the operational domain and becomes manager of that area, he needs to interact with other internal divisions to get feedback about the operation efficiencies and incorporate changes in the operational departments which will positively impact the organization.

In order to develop my skills for the junior managerial position, the first thing I need to learn about is the supply chain and operational techniques that are used in scheduling and planning. Also I need to study about the cost optimization techniques. I also need to enhance my inter-personal skills and language skills. These will give me an edge over others to do my job. As a management trainee Cathay Pacific expects me to do cargo and passenger flight scheduling. Attending supply chain class will help me understand and do scheduling in a better way. Developing interpersonal skills and language skills will help be interact in a better way with other employees and customers which is a basic requirement to be in a junior managerial role.

Personal and Professional Development Plan

Creating a personal and professional development plan is no different than developing a company's business goals. Only difference being, a company needs to define its vision and mission statement and an individual needs to determine where he wants to be in life by making medium and long term goals. Once these primary objectives are determined the process from

thereon is fairly similar for both a person and a company. Then it is only a matter of setting milestones and defining tasks which will be useful for achieving the set target. This process also should have a feedback and improvement mechanism (The University of Glasgow).

Cathay Pacific wants me to do well in my function and it has a defined growth plan for all its employees based on their potential. Cathay Pacific will give me ample opportunity to do well in my job. It will also provide lot of in-house trainings to help do my job in a better way and prepare me for the next level. After providing those developmental opportunities, periodically Cathay Pacific will review of my performance and based on that Cathay Pacific will decide the career path for me. If it finds me suitable for junior management level then it will ensure that before promoting me to the next level I attend managerial training. This will then be followed by enhancement of my job responsibility slowly so that I can handle the increased job pressure of a junior manager from that of a management trainee without any hiccup.

In parallel I also would like to have a plan for personal development. My first plan is to get involved into all kinds of operational activities as a management trainee. Another personal target will be to get involved into special projects and advanced assignments so that my on the job learning is maximum as a management trainee. Simultaneously I will also start studying the supply chain concepts from any professional institute which gives exposure to the best supply chain practices in the world. My plan is to complete this course in next three years. Also I have plans for improvement of interpersonal skill in my short term developmental agenda. I will try to

achieve this once I am through with my supply chain course. The plan is to take professional help in understanding my current skill level and then enhance it to a much higher level. Having a good supply chain knowledge and great interpersonal skill will give me an edge over other management trainees for the position of junior manager. The other thing I would like to do is to learn few more languages and enhance skills in major languages of the world. Airline industry is a global fraternity. It handles and employs people from all over the world and so knowing few extra languages will help me communicate in a better way and help me grow. This is a skill which may not help me directly but will act as an added advantage when I will be compared with other trainees.

Implement and review Personal and Professional Development Plan

Plans are often made by a lot of us but execution of that plan becomes a real challenge. In order to overcome the challenge of executing our plans successfully, first we need to define our goal and based on that we need to create a realistic short, medium and long term plan. Once the planning is done, more detailed activities need to be identified. For example, if a student wants to learn about classical art, he first needs to develop a plan of attending classical art classes. Once that decision is made, next he needs to decide whether or not he will attend the art class held by Mr. Jones from September 2013 to October 2013 and further the class of Mr. Blixt from Dec 2013 to Jan 2014.

Similarly, I will also need to put in a more detailed plan for my courses and classes planned in previous section. Then I also need to identify the criterion

based on which I can evaluate myself as to how much the developmental plan will be helping me personally and professionally. The first plan is to join the course ' Masters Diploma in Supply Chain Planning and Logistics' in Hong Kong University. This course is of 3 months duration. The plan is to join the curriculum in the winter of 2013 and finish the course by summer of 2014. Once that is done and the diploma is received from the university, next plan is to join the Dale Carnegie ' Interpersonal relationship' course in 2014 and finish the course by 2014 end. This course will give not only the academic background of the subject but will also give huge exposure to real life scenario. Once these two personal milestones are achieved, I think from personal knowledge and skill perspective I will be ready for junior management level in Cathay Pacific.

Personal development will make me skill and knowledge wise ready for the next level. However, without proper professional development plan from Cathay Pacific I will not be able to climb up the ladder. Cathay Pacific needs to make sure that I follow their professional development goals for junior management level. Cathay Pacific has different development paths for its employees. It chooses the path for an employee based on his performance. If it sees that I am more capable technically and can contribute more in operations and logistics planning and system management, then Cathay Pacific may not recommend a managerial growth path for me. On the other hand if they feel that I have required skill and knowledge to become a successful junior manager then they will design my developmental path in such a way that I will get trained in all the competencies required for the role of a junior manager. It will then groom me by providing managerial exposure

and responsibility. It will provide training on managerial aspects and help me grow as a manager.

Demonstrate The Skills at Work and Personal life

Acquiring skills will not help me alone until and unless those can be demonstrated and measured at work place. The main question here is how do I demonstrate my acquired skills at work place and how do I know that those are working for me and the organization. Getting a degree or diploma in any subject is an easy way to say I have the required skill and I can do the job. However, that is not always true. Knowledge acquired from learning, years of experience and personal traits constitute the effective work behavior. While I will be acquiring the skills based on my personal development plan and also company provided development plan, the most challenging would be to demonstrate those acquired skills at workplace. Once the company trains me on managerial aspects, they would want me to demonstrate that skill at work. As a management trainee I will be required to acquire interpersonal skills and lot of transferable skills. Demonstration of transferable skills like better communication, initiatives, teamwork, leadership skill, academic achievement, adaptability, technical expertise and integrity at workplace will help my growth professionally and personally (The University of Texas). All those skills should come as a byproduct of my personal development plan and professional development plan provided by Cathay Pacific. As I want to become a junior manager whatever developmental plan I follow, I need to demonstrate the basic interpersonal and transferable skills like leadership, communication and so on. If I fail to

demonstrate those skills at workplace then it will not go well with my growth plan.

Conclusion

Having a personal and professional developmental plan is essential for everyone to grow as a person and also do well in any organization. Self-learning goals will not only help an individual to grow personally but will also help him grow professionally. Organizations generally plan for professional growth of an employee. To complement organizational developmental plan an employee should have a personal self-development objective. Cathay Pacific chooses the development plan for its employees as per the potential and performance of them in the workplace. Cathay Pacific provides employees training and skill enhancement opportunities which will help them grow professionally in the organization. Employees on the other hand should have their own development plan to complement that. Cathay Pacific depending on the potential of an employee will put a management trainee in the growth path to become a junior manager. But an employee who wants to become a junior manager also should create his own self developmental goals. Then it will be easier for that employee to grow to a junior manager level. Professional developmental plan by the company if complemented well by a personal developmental plan then the future for that employee will be bright.

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