Competency mapping analysis essay

How does the HR department avoid making the mistake of hiring a round peg for a square hole? By using competency mapping, says Sudipta Dev Competency-based HR is considered the best HR. In India however competency development and mapping still remains an unexplored process in most IT organisations despite the growing level of awareness. After all, Level 3 of PCMM is focused on the competency framework in an organisation. Is the underlying principle of competency mapping 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 organisation. Competency mapping is a process of identifying key competencies for a particular position in an organisation, and then using it for job-evaluation, recruitment, training and development, performance management, succession planning, etc. " 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," states well-known HR consultant Ullhas Pagey. He however points out that the competency movement has caught on much better in the non-IT sector than the IT sector. Only a few IT organisations which are at the higher end of the HR value chain are known to be doing some work in this area; most are more busy handling recruitment and compensation-related matters. 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 organisation embarks on this journey it has to be very clear about the business goals, capability-building imperatives and core competencies of the organisation.

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 organisation. My suggestion is to develop models that draw from but are not defined by existing research, using behavioural interview methods so that the organisation 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). Start with small, discrete groups or teams, ideally in two directions-a ' horizontal slice' across the business that takes in a multi-functional or multi-site group, more or less at the same organisational level, and a ' vertical slice' taking in one whole department or team from top to bottom.

From that, the organisation can learn about the process of competency modelling, and how potential alternative formats for the models may or may not fit the needs of the business," explains Stephen Martin, an international authority in the field who is also the president of ITAP Europe. Martin believes that it is important to focus on one or two key areas of implementation rather than the whole HRD agenda in one scoop. So if recruitment and selection or performance management are the key strategic needs of the business, and where the pain is being felt, then start there," he advises, adding that competency mapping can be rather good at providing organisational pain relief when applied effectively-and so making the case

for extending it. Further, it is advisable to begin with a ' horizontal' slice of the management or senior-most team as the benefits will percolate down to the whole organisation.

Methodology for designing The following methodology for designing and developing competency frameworks is suggested by Martin. In my experience, the most effective route is to employ recognised best-practice internal research methodology using behavioural event interview (BEI) techniques to selectively sample the target population (supplemented with expert panels and ' Competency Requirement Questionnaires' to engage wider population samples) and so build up the models from the data that emerges. This data should be triangulated against clear top-down input in terms of organisational strategy and business objectives, and also against external research relevant and analogous to the organisation's situation-not as a driver, but as a reference point.

He adds that once the behavioural data is collected, it should be sorted, categorised and levelled carefully to create models that are both concise and comprehensive, simple and sophisticated. Developing BEI skills within the organisation has the added benefit that once the model is complete, it can be used more effectively by transferring these skills to selection interviewing, development assessments, and so on. Martin cautions that international organisations must ensure that the methodology does not screen-out those competencies that do not match the culturally-influenced re-conceptions of the head office (wherever it is situated) of what high-performance competencies are. " This is a common error…the universalist, all-powerful ' global leadership model'.

There is so much evidence to support the idea that culture is a business issue, is a management issue, that it seems obvious that mono-cultural lists of ' exemplar behaviours' will work only to exclude those who do not conform to the originating culture. The point is not to get everybody to behave the same, but to get everybody to perform to the same high standards. Recruitment and retention Competency mapping can play a significant role in recruiting and retaining people as it gives a more accurate analysis of the job requirements, the candidate's capability, of the difference between the two, and the development and training needs to bridge the gaps, asserts Martin.

As far as meeting an individual's career aspirations are concerned, once the organisation gives an employee the perspective of what is required from him to reach a particular position, it drives him to develop the competencies for the same. Competencies enable individuals to identify and articulate what they offer-regardless of the (usually misfit) job they happen to have at the time-so that their organisation (current or future) can see, value and utilise what capability is actually available," says Martin. Lynette D'Silva, manager, learning & development, HR, Zensar Technologies, points out that competency mapping helps identify the success criteria (i. e. behavioural standards of performance excellence) required for individuals to be successful in their roles.

It helps to: * Support specific and objective assessment of their strengths, and specify targeted areas for professional development. * Provide development tools and methods for enhancing their skills. * Provide the basis for a more objective dialogue with their manager or team about

performance, development, and career-related issues. " If an individual is able to discuss the above with his manager, it will help him to chalk out his growth perspectives in the company," states D'Silva.