

task 1

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Submission date: 22-Jun-2023 09:30AM (UTC+0100)

Submission ID: 209304222

File name: 20467_Daniela_Cioranu_task_1_504400_1301275555.docx (42.61K)

Word count: 5507

Character count: 30399

MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MANAGING PERFORMANCE

LCMB7013 – Assignment 1

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1. Introduction

Continuous performance management (CMP) represent a new global trend in Human Resource Management that is changing the way performance management is implemented and completed now in organisations. From a transactional process in the past, the continuous performance management developed performance management into a more employee focused process (Pagdonsolan et. all, 2020).

Performance management plays an important and vital role in an organization. Through performance management, organisations need to make sure that the employee`s performance and goals are aligned with the organisation`s goals (Pagdonsolan et. all, 2020).

At the moment, organisations are going through massive changes, and more and more are swapping from their traditional way of performance management to continuous performance management. CMP is focused on a close relation between managers and employees. Managers setting mutual goals with employees, frequent conversations and feedback from managers to employees, two-way discussion about performance and continuous support represent the main focus in CMP (Pagdonsolan et. all, 2020).

Since CMP represent quite a new process there is not too many articles published regarding this matter. This report will provide a detailed background of continuous management performance and it will outline its massive importance. Moreover, how continuous performance management is affected by different organizational factors and which theory explain the best the importance of this process will be defined in this report.

A personal reflection on managing people module and how can practice can be improved based on new knowledge enhanced will be detailed and the bottom of the report combined with recommendations.

2. Background and importance of continuous performance management

Everyone agree that the Covid 19 pandemic was a disaster but for the employers to realise how important their employees are, it was a great wake up call. Since then, more and more organisations are re-evaluating the way they support their employees and what impact on process has. The continuous performance management has been implemented by more and more organisations after the pandemic (Aguinis, Burgi-Tian, 2021).

As mentioned before, continuous performance management, from a human resource point of view, is represented by an ongoing catch up between managers and employees. It helps them through continuous feedback to build a healthy relationship based on trust. The catch ups are meetings based on personal and professional objectivities, priorities, issues, concerns, new objectives/projects and developing new action plans (Kumaraguru et. all, 2014)

Based on current literature 95% of managers are not happy with the way their organisation manages their annual performance management process and 75% of employees feels that their yearly reviews are unethical and unfair. Continuous performance management represent the key that will provide in any company instant communication and will empower the employees to become independent (Kumaraguru et. all, 2014).

Principal aim of performance management is to create an environment based on a culture where employees are interested and committed to contribute to the overall organisation's growth. Employees are committed to enhance their skills and to continue improve the processes in a company when they are managed by effective leaders (Armstrong, 2021).

From a more specific point of view, continuous performance management represent the process that aligns together the individual and organisation's goals ensuring that the employee is upskilling and following the organisation's core values (Armstrong, 2021).

CPM is best described by a long-term process based on feedback, agreement, dialogue with the outcome of performance improvement, creating personal development plans, and achievements against objective. Moreover, continuous performance management is considering values and inputs. When employees are working together and they develop, empower, upskill, they still need to demonstrate a proper behaviour and respect the core values (Armstrong, 2021).

The process of continuous ² performance management in the public sector has a different approach and is not as effective, successful as in the private sector. For example, the Covid Pandemic had a big impact on performance management at NHS (public sector). The NHS was not ready for a catastrophe like that, and it did not have the right number of resources in order to deal with everything. There was a lot of pressure on the staff, and they felt helpless. The individuals that are working in public sector with a fixed budget cannot have the same targets as one that works in a private sector. Usually, a public sector provides a set number of resources, and the performance is directly influenced by this (Kearney, 2018).

When applying the process of continuous performance management in a private sector, the process align organisation's goals with employee's goals. It also brings the following benefits:

- Provide a secure process when setting goals: during a one-to-one meeting, the manager is setting goals and objectivities for the employee regarding work environment and processes, but the manager could also set SMART objectivities regarding employee's career path (Kloot, Martin, 2000).
- Enhancing engagement in the team: through an open dialog and effective communication between employees and managers they build a strong relationship. The manager can identify the employee potential, how to motivate/ develop that

individual and what kind of coaching that individual needs in order to develop. The employee can communicate personal opinions regarding older projects or future improvements (Kloot, Martin, 2000).

Improve productivity: when continuous performance management is implemented and applied in an effective way it will boost the organisation's productivity. When ²³employees feel that they are encouraged and empowered by their managers they do more work in less time based on their commitment and sense of belonging (Kloot, Martin, 2000).

- Establish transparency: by sharing company's goals in a wide-open plan with the employees those employees know exactly where they are, where they need to go and how. They know what steps to take in order to achieve the clear stated aims.
Empower employees: based on continuous feedback regarding performance, the employees can closely analyse how well they do, where they are lacking and how can they improve themselves (Kloot, Martin, 2000).
- Leadership development: during the meetings, the managers have the opportunity to analyse each employee's qualities and their skills. Some of them can be offered future training in order to join the management team when potential is in place (Kloot, Martin, 2000).

As mentioned before, ²¹in the public sector, the process was not as successful like in the private one. In the public sector the following limitations apply:

- Poor management: when managers are not taking the process of CPM seriously and they have an inconsistent attitude, instead of growth the company will get performance decreasing, turnover and unhappy employees. The continuity is vital in continuous performance management and the managers need to focus on development, upskilling, how employees achieve certain goals instead of the numerical part of the business. The autocratic managing style should be avoided when an individual want to develop the employees to their maximum potential (Kloot, Martin, 2000).
- Time consuming: for this process to be effective time is most important aspect. Based on the size of the organisation, the human resource management department need to analyse if the managers possess the right amount of time to put in these meetings. If they will rush through the meeting or it will become a tick box exercise, then the process of continuous performance management will become ineffective (Kloot, Martin, 2000).

3. The effect of organizational climate on continuous performance management

If a company wants to be successful and possess high performance, then the organizational climate (OC) becomes the most important factor in making that happen. The set of variables that form the OC have a massive effect on the company's efficiency and effectiveness and its representing and forming the employees work personality (Nickols, 2023).

As previously mentioned, a negative environment will affect in a negative way the continuous performance management. When employees are happy at work, motivated, energized and they share the same set of values and behaviours, the performance is going through the roof, and it means that the continuous performance management process has been implemented in an effective way (Nickols, 2023).

Below, there are few factors that are part of organizational culture (private and public) and have an impact of continuous performance management:

- Stress:

No individual enjoys stress, it does not make a difference if it is work related stress or personal stress. Based on studies that investigated stressed employees working in a negative organisational climate it is proven that the employees have a high rate of turnover. The stress is created by the negative organizational work climate, and it represents the main reason for low performance, low job satisfaction, absenteeism or job dropout (Nickols, 2023).

To avoid situations like this it is more than mandatory for managers and human resource managers to create and maintain a positive organizational climate that promotes an open workplace, focused on aims and performance, supportive, feedback friendly and so on (Nickols, 2023).

- Culture:

The culture in an organisation reflects on organisation's failure or effectiveness. If the culture is one that supports employees, the performance will boost alongside organisation's standards, philosophy and values (Neal, Hart, 2000).

- Resources:

To avoid a negative impact on the continuous performance management, the company needs to ensure that employees have access to whatever resources they need in order to perform the task provided, and also, the employees need the set skills required to do so. The machines need to be serviced by a maintenance department and the disposal of tangible assets need to be in place. In the public sector, all the technological changes have been put in place by the government (Neal, Hart, 2000).

- Compensation:

Is represented by the tool that some organisations use in order to retain, attract and inspire talented, knowledgeable employees and it can be monetary related or career, pride related. Employees these days are not interested just in monetary compensation. They desire career development, enhancing skills, more responsibilities. The salaries and compensations should make the employees feel that they are valued (Hansen, 2007).

- Management style:

The management style must be developed based on company's behaviours and values because it represent the connection between board managers which set up the goals and the employee. Managers needs to ensure that a two way communication system is in place (Sharpe, 1992).

4. Performance management theories

When an organization is setting up the foundation of their core values and behaviours, the need for theories of applying a continuous performance management process is mandatory. These theories will improve production by boosting employee's motivation and development. Based on the literature, there are several theories that are improving the performance, but we will focus on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and the Expectancy Valance Theory. Both improve the performance management through motivation. The two motivation theories represent how a company can understand what motivates its employee's behaviour in order to achieve a specific goal.

4.1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

It describes what it takes for employees to feel happy and be motivated at work. The hierarchy is divided in five layers, the first two represent the deficit needs (very important, if these needs are not meet, the individual will not be able to function) followed by the other three that are related to the individual need to growth, develop (if these needs are met, the individual will be motivated to perform better). The company Pets at Home operates in a private sector, food industry, and they apply the theory as following:

- Physiological needs: the organisation is providing a safe and comfortable environment. Clean, safe, well-equipped bathrooms, kitchen, office is a must. The workplace environment is built to offer a pleasant experience at work. The company try to control even the climate to be under control (when possible), not to high, not too cold. The shift pattern needs to allow the employees to get the right amount of sleep. The company is accommodating lots of different patterns is order to satisfy the needs (Gambrel, Cianci, 2003).

- Safety needs: as previously mentioned, employees need to feel as safe as possible at work. Employees are provided with safe places where they can store their personal items, a good fire measurement in place and whatever other precautions depending on the industry. On top of the physical harm, the company make sure that they protect the employee`s mental health. No one should feel bullied, harassed or threatened in any way in a workplace environment. Moreover, the job security has a massive impact on employee's safety needs. Pets at Home is providing each employee with a secure job contract that covers job description, pay, rewards, etc (Gambrel, Cianci, 2003).
- Love and belonging needs: perhaps love is not the most suitable feeling to have when in a work environment, but belonging is what every employee desire. Work as team is mandatory at this level. Social events or team buildings activities are organised by the company in order to build rapport and friendship between employees. When employees get along well, they will cooperate better in the workplace, and they will boost performance (Gambrel, Cianci, 2003).
- Esteem needs: the employees want to feel that they are recognised for their hard work, for their unique contribution. Managers are made aware that they need to constantly praise the employees that are performing well and offer them the recognition that they deserve. If the right people do not receive this, then the others that are under performing can take the credit for other employee`s hard work. By empowering hard working employees and by giving them new responsibilities, the manager will increase the job satisfaction in the workplace, fact that will contribute to the overall organisation`s performance (Gambrel, Cianci, 2003).
- Self-actualisation needs: the last part of the hierarchy is the hardest one to complete in the workplace. The company trained the managers to complete the 360 feedbacks with their employees in order to encourage self-awareness. By doing this the employees can have the feeling of growth and engagement so they will want to stay longer in the company, to seek more responsibilities or a different role fact that benefit both the employer and the employees. Training, coaching, mentoring has a massive impact in this step (Gambrel, Cianci, 2003).

4.2. Expectancy Valence Theory

The theory proposed by Victor Vroom in 1964 focuses has in a way the same aims as the Maslow`s Hierarchy of Needs but contrary to it, this theory focuses on outcomes and not on employee`s needs. Based on the expectancy valance theory an individual will put a certain level of intensity to perform a task only because that individual think that a reward will follow. Basically, the more an employee thinks that a reward will follow a good performance that will determine the level of intensity that the employee will put into the task (Furlich, 2016).

Expectancy valence theory explain that employees are motivated if they are able to make themselves think that a desirable reward is the outcome of a good performance and that reward will satisfy at least one of them needs, the positive between effort and performance is in place and, the employee feeling to satisfy that need is strong enough. The main three beliefs that form the theory are: valence (represent the reward that an employee desire: extrinsic or intrinsic; it is up to the manager to find out what motivate that employee), expectancy (different employees, different level of knowledge, skills, confidence; managers needs to sort out what kind of support every employee might need) and instrumentality (it is related to the employee`s perception; some employees will think that they will get some rewards even if the manager did not say so; it is very important for managers to clear communicate if there is a reward in place and what kind of reward). Using these three beliefs, Vroom suggests in his work that the employee create a motivational force that will make that employee perform in a way that avoids pain and bring pleasure (Kominis, Emmanuel, 2007).

For example, in a warehouse like Pets at Home, employees are motivated to achieve great performance and high KPIs while picking (all new employees are starting at this level) because they are being informed from the induction that based on that performance, they will be developed and planned to work in different departments. The employees believe that the high the performance, the high are the chances to get promoted in a better department.

Based on the background of both theories, it is demonstrated that the ²⁰ Maslow's hierarchy of needs offer to the employees a greater level of motivation that the Expectancy Valence Theory because in the employee's eyes is it easier and more realistic to achieve. Both theories focus on employee's motivation and how their input on the task can change depending on how much importance the reward followed completing the task impact the employee. Authors also explained in their work that Maslow's hierarchy of needs represent the base on which the Expectancy Valence Theory will develop. Organisations will use this fact to motivate employees by providing them different rewards in order to feel job satisfaction with the outcome of receiving better results from the employees and boosting performance. Moreover, by implementing theories, the company is aligning the company's goals to employee's goals (Suciu, 2013).

4.3. Implications from managers when implementing these theories:

When operating in a private sector, the managers should be responsible for the following:

- Align manager`s words with the organisation`s policy: as a manager, before you promise to the employee the rewards, make sure that the company can provide and allow you to provide that reward to that employee (Lloyd, Mertens, 2018).

- Set clear, realistic goals: delegating and trusting the employees with a certain level of responsibility will increase the motivation. The goals need to be realistic so the employee can feel the confidence when achieving them and more motivation and enthusiasm for the next ones (Lloyd, Mertens, 2018).
- Set goals depending on the skill set: the goals that managers set need to be in concordance with the set of skills that the employees possess, otherwise they will never achieve them.
- Fair distribution of rewards: the rewards should be allocated depending on the level of effort and commitment. Moreover, all the members in the team need to be rewarded (Lloyd, Mertens, 2018).

4.4. Benefits of implementing performance theories in the workplace:

There are numerous benefits after applying theories in the workplace. The outlined ones for Pets at Home are:

- Motivation, engagement: because these theories help organisations to develop and implement processes that manage the employees to focus on achieving organisation's targets and they are most of the time successful, the self-improvement regarding the employees is growing. When employees have a clear direction, they maintain a great level of performance during their carrier, and they feel that somehow, they have control over their personal goals, so they are motivating themselves to strike for even better (Solomon, Annis, 1990).
- Productivity improvement: the processes implemented in the workplace offer managers the option to oversee which areas needs improvement. Once pointed out, through feedback, training, support, there areas will improve.
- Low rate of turnover: when managers are implementing performance management theories effective, they have great chances to create a positive and fulfilling work environment for their employees. These employees will become more likely to stay in the company for longer. Moreover, through following processes effective, managers can offer the right support to them in need (Solomon, Annis, 1990).

4.5. Examples of successful companies that effectively implemented continuous performance management:

Below are a few global private companies that shifted from an old annual performance process to the new continuous performance management:

- Accenture – Dublin, Ireland

Few years ago, 2016, the firm abandoned their old approach of annual performance reviews, and they implemented a continuous performance management process that facilities the open

discussion and promoting feedback between managers and employees. Their performance period is fixed, between June to May every year. In this year, the employees, no matter the job role, are provided with different projects, objectivities, goals that need to be completed in one year. During the year, the employees can ask for as many meetings, catch-ups, support as needed in order to complete their tasks (Cheng et. all, 2006)

- Juniper System – Logan, Utah, United States

At the start of year 2019 the company wanted to define better their vision, mission, brand, values to their stakeholders and most importantly, their employees. The employees asked for more feedback and the company believed that their annual performance review was not enhancing trust, so they came up with a new continuous performance management process (Cheng et. all, 2006)

- Kelly Services – Troy, Michigan, United States

In 2011, the leader of the company realised that their annual performance appraisal did not fulfil the desire outcome and it was ineffective, so they implemented a continuous performance management system that was able to outline what was needed in order to develop talent in the workplace and gain competitive advantage. They focus of constant feedback and they created a trend for their customers saying that their employees are working for the company but with the customers. They also hired qualified talent development individuals that are able to help both employees and customers (Cheng et. all, 2006).

- Adobe – Mountain View, California, United States

In 2012, the Senior Vice presided swapped from a bureaucratic and paper-heavy process to a new process based on regular check that allows managers and employees to set future goals on a regular basis. They implemented a system called “check-in” where employees are given specific, clear objectivities and feedback. Employees are now more motivated and engaged (Cheng et. all, 2006).

- Deloitte – London, United Kingdom

In 2015 the company decided that their once-a-year reviews are not boosting the performance, nor the motivation or engagement. The company decided to implement a continuous performance management based on recognizing performance, seeing performance and fuelling performance (Cheng et. all, 2006).

After implementing all the changes as they saw fit, the company's above improved their performance, increased employee's motivation and engagement and the turnover rate decreased. The employees are coming happy at work because they feel that they are

important assets to the company and they do not work based on the clock. They are determined to get the job done before they go home. Their sense of belonging activated and they feel committed and loyal to the company that make time to invest in them (Moynihan, 2008).

5. Personal reflection

For a better structure of my reflection, I will follow the steps of Gibb's Reflective Cycle. ²⁵It ¹⁹provides a better understanding of what happened during a situation and it provides clear instructions of what to do different in the future. The cycle is divided in 6 stages: description, feelings, evaluation & analysis, conclusion and action (Adeani et. al, 2020). For my personal reflection I choose to combine two steps together.

- Description

Starting my studies in 2020 at level four, I have understood that I was hungry for information so I kept going until I achieve the level seven stage, as a Human Resource Management Master student. The module I am learning and on which this report is based is called performance management. Basically, as a student, I have learned how to manage, improve, enhance employee's performance in an organisation where the most important assets are people. One of the requirements of this module is to explain how can we use the information learned to improve our personal or in work processes.

- Feelings

I should start by saying I am proud of myself due to the results I have received so far and due to the knowledge I have enhanced and I have managed to apply in my job. I feel very content with myself for following the human resources path. I believe that whatever job an individual might have, the people skills are always needed. At the moment I work as a first line manager in a distribution centre so people skills and how to manage my team in order to achieve company's and individual employee's goals are my main aims. One of my aim that I am constantly working on is supporting, developing my team. I want them to feel that they belong in my team, in the company, and see me as a coach or a mentor. In that way, based on literature, they will perform better and they will feel motivated, committed, loyal to me and indirect to the company, fact that will boost company's productivity and boosting competitive advantage (Bartlett, Ghoshal, 2002). One negative side to being a student can be the assignments pressure, but if time management place is in place, everything should short out itself.

- Evaluation and analysis

The positive side about being able to complete this module is that I have developed a lot as a person and I have improved my knowledge about the workplace. Being able to attend the course it motivated me to want to achieve more at work, to want to develop and invest in my team even more than before. When I apply different theories or exercises learned I can see how the results are beyond my expectations.

The only negative part about this experience I can say that it was the pressure I felt upon my shoulders. Being a mature student, attending different modules, raising a child, work full time and no time for social events can affect the mental health if you do not set the right aims and keep the expectations from yourself high.

I can also say in here that the lecturers and the colleagues I had, pushed me to achieve all I did. There is no way I could have done it without them.

The knowledge enchanted so far in this module it felt like a brainstorm. It felt that is so easy in theory and anyone can apply it or benefit from it, but in reality, it feels it is a lot more complicated that it looks.

- Conclusions

Overall, being a part of managing performance management, it feels like a personal satisfaction. Human resource management, in simple words, represent everything that is related to people, in my opinion. Performance management is about people to. So, in my opinion the connection between them is a must and after I got so much information and I know how to apply it I know I will be able to create that connection and achieve whatever work related aims I set up for my team. A process for measuring and controlling performance management should be in place as well.

- Action

Again, based on the enhanced knowledge, guest speaker in class and the multiple examples provided by my lecturer, I have decided to implement few changes in my team regarding the process of how the company is managing performance. From my human resources department, the only form given was great conversation. As a manager I am expected to complete that every quarter with my team. On top of that, effective from 01/06/2023 I will implement formal and informal catch-ups with my team. The formal ones will happen every four weeks and we, together, will go through what good / bad experiences the employee had in the last four weeks, what kind of development is interested in, how can I support his development, two way feedback and focus points for the employee or / and myself. The informal ones will happen as often as I see fit. If any notes will be taken I will assure the

employee that they are confidential. From the same date I want to introduce personality test and learning style checks in my team. In that way, I will be able to understand better what motivates my employees as individuals and what learning style makes them learn, develop faster. The emotional intelligence skills learned in the past and my coaching / mentoring skills helped me develop the individuals in my team. Their evolution and records of all their meetings and objectivities will be kept in their personal file cabinet that I will provide to them in the first meeting (the finance department, maintenance and board managers already agreed to support me in this).

I also understand the fact that employees are tended to give me a positive feedback rather than tell me how they are actually feeling. Again, with support and acceptance from my superiors, I attached a box on my desk that says anonymous feedback. Every week on Monday I collect whatever is in that box and if there is something I find negative, by the following Monday, when possible, I try improve it as much as I can.

Little things such as Secret Santa or an individual card from time to time from me to my team or the other way around helped me create a strong connection with my team. The employees in my team do not see me anymore as their manager but as their leader, support.

6. Conclusion and recommendations

Continuous performance management has is changing the way performance is managed and controlled around the globe. Organisations must understand that the focus should be on aligning their goals with the employee`s goals in order to achieve them. The focus on employees in order to achieve it is mandatory. Employee`s wellbeing and needs represent the key on which a company should build their culture, behaviours and values (Pagdonsolan et. all, 2020).

With that in mind, the companies should get rid of their old annual performance review and adapt a new form of supervise employee`s performance based on the theories and processes presented in this report that are related to continuous performance management. Based on the examples provided in this report, several companies changed their process and they have improved their overall performance. The companies adapted a more employee focused approach. The employees have now regular meetings, feedback and the chance to develop, to make an impact (Cheng et. all, 2006).

Maslow`s hierarchy of needs and the Expectancy valence theory are worth implementing in the workplace. They boost employee`s motivation, engagement, commitment, characteristics that boost achieving goals and performance. In order to implement them successfully, the hierarchy of needs should be in place before adding the valence theory, as stated previously, the hierarchy of needs represent the base of the expectancy valence theory (Suciu, 2013).

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