DEVELOPMENT OF A PLAN MEETING THE IDENTIFIED PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS AND EXPECTATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL EMPLOYEES AT GOOGLE

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Table of Contents

Introduction 2
Project: Personalized Education Platforms 2
Performance Management 3
Performance Management Cycle 3
Planning 4
Monitoring 5
Reviewing 5
Rewarding 5
Performance Drivers 6
360-degree Feedback 6
540-degree Feedback 7
Management by Objectives (MBO) 7
Professional Development Plan (PDP) 8
Recommendations 9
Conclusion 10
References 10
Appendix A 12
Professional Development Plan Table 12

Introduction

Google is a search engine created in 1996 by Stanford University students Larry Page and Sergey Brin. After finding investors in 1998, Google was officially turned into a company. After many years in the market, google evolved to create products and services that are used by billions of people, such as YouTube, Android, Gmail, Google Drive, and many others (Google, n.d.). As Google is a large organization that offers many technology products, training their staff could be helpful to develop the abilities of staff as well as helping to attain more efficiency in the company's operations teams.

In this report, the author approaches a fictional project to be implemented by Google. After that, the core ideas of Performance management will be introduced as well as the Performance management cycle followed by performance drivers. These factors can be used for companies to develop training, provide insight to employees about their responsibilities, exchanging feedback, maintaining employees within the company, and predicting future events throughout the company (White, 2023).

In the last section, a Professional Development Plan will be made based on the project to help define priorities and deadlines to facilitate the accomplishment of the endeavors needed to complete the project.

Project: Personalized Education Platforms

Google is planning to start a project to implement a platform for personalized education of its employees. As they have realized that some employees might have gaps on their knowledge, they have decided to create this platform with the help of AI to make education fit to each student's needs, preferences and learning style.

To achieve this, they first need to build a team to develop that resource and gather all the data needed to implement the service. They will first need to gather data about their employees, which might include their learning history, previous training attended, strengths, weaknesses, and how they prefer to learn. To retrieve this data, company HR information and quizzes can be applied. This data can then be inserted into a database so that the AI can build the employees profiles by using machine learning.

Once the profiles are ready, the platform customizes the learning content. They gather a variety of educational materials like videos, articles, quizzes, and interactive activities, and tag them with information about how hard they are, what they're about, their format, and what they teach. This helps create learning paths that fit each employee. The platform also offers quizzes, assignments, and projects for real-time assessment, giving instant feedback and helping AI understand how well the employee is doing.

To make the platform better, machine learning analyzes how different teaching methods and content types work. The insights help improve the AI's suggestions and content recommendations. Ethics are important too, as the platform follows strict rules to protect student data and make sure AI decisions are fair and clear.

Performance Management

Performance management is a continual interaction between a manager and an employee occurring throughout the year. The aim is to assist the organization in achieving its strategic goals. This can include tasks such as establishing transparent anticipations, outlining objectives, pinpointing benchmarks, providing constructive input, and assessing outcomes (UC Berkeley Administration, n. d.).

Implementing performance management is crucial for setting clear expectations, offering feedback, and providing growth paths to employees. Without it, employees might not know what's expected, making it hard to progress. Performance management also ties into rewards and addressing issues. Top-performing employees can earn merit rewards, while those needing improvement get action plans. This dual approach keeps high achievers motivated and doesn't overlook lower performers. Creating a good performance evaluation system is key. It starts with management's acceptance and training, then spreads across the organization. Properly training leaders, supervisors, and assistant managers ensures a smooth process without HR complaints (Koskarova, 2022).

Performance Management Cycle

The performance management cycle acts as an organized framework, helping both management and employ ees achieve organizational goals by focusing on employee growth.

As a key part of the broader performance management strategy, this cycle follows a concise four-step process: planning, monitoring, reviewing, and rewarding. This approach brings benefits like increased competitiveness, improved adaptability, and higher employee motivation (Valamis, 2023).

The four stages of Performance Management Cycle are: Planning, Monitoring, Reviewing, and Rewarding.

Planning

Initially, the leadership team of the organization starts the process by setting the goals and objectives that will cover the performance management cycle, usually for a year or six months. Afterward, the employee works together with their manager to create personal performance goals for the specified period. Often, companies use the SMART goal-setting approach (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Timely) for this task. These goals should help improve existing skills and develop new ones. It's essential that the organization's overall goals guide this process, ensuring each goal clearly connects to at least one of these main objectives (Personio, 2023).

SMART Goals are:

- Specific: To plan a goal and make it specific, it is important to consider the people involved in the goal, what do they would like to achieve, and ultimately, where, when and why this goal needs to be accomplished.
- Measurable: There needs to be a method to measure the goals to make sure you are moving forward with it. One needs to determine how much needs to be done, how can someone detect that the goal was reached, and what could point out the achievement.
- Achievable: Goals need to be considered and, although they should be challenging, they may also be defined so that they can be achieved. The resources for completion of the task should be considered and if other people were successful at a similar goal in the past.
- Realistic: The plan needs to be set in a realistic manner, the goal needs to be within reach according to time and resources, and people also need to be able to commit to it.
- Timely: A deadline must be set for the goal so that a sense of urgency is established, improving motivation to accomplish this plan.

(CFI, n.d.)

Monitoring

In this phase of the performance management cycle, employees participate in training or complete tasks outlined in the development plan for the specific timeframe. At the same time, managers ensure they provide the required support and resources to help tasks go smoothly as planned.

Equally important is the role of managers in having regular check-ins with employees, preferably every month, to monitor their progress. This isn't about micromanaging, but a proactive way to make sure goals are reached within the set time. It also helps identify any problems early on, preventing them from becoming bigger issues and ensuring objectives are successfully met (Personio, 2023).

Reviewing

Performance reviews are highly valuable as they promote a mutual understanding between managers and employees about what's going well and where improvements are needed. Importantly, these reviews help organizations identify exceptional talent, allowing them to recognize and reward their contributions appropriately (Test, 2022).

An important part of a review includes evaluating performance and giving feedback. Besides self-assessment, employees might benefit from a 360° feedback process, which involves getting input from peers and their manager. Some models of feedback and evaluation will be discussed further in this report (Personio, 2023).

Rewarding

Regularly recognizing and rewarding hard work helps motivate employees, increase productivity, and strengthen their loyalty to the company. Additionally, this practice helps build a culture of appreciation, where every employee knows their contributions and successes will be recognized and rewarded appropriately. Some factors that might be considered are an increase of salary, bonuses, promotions, and time off (Test, 2022).

Performance Drivers

360-degree Feedback

360-degree feedback is an evaluation method that gathers performance insights from various sources like supervisors, peers, subordinates, colleagues, and customers. This approach gives a well-rounded view by considering different viewpoints, helping people understand their strengths and weaknesses.

The benefits of 360-degree feedback include getting input from different perspectives, promoting teamwork, and uncovering hidden issues. It involves input from supervisors, peers, subordinates, and customers, often with self-assessment included.

To make 360-degree feedback work well, careful planning is necessary to avoid problems and smoothly integrate it into the performance management system. This kind of feedback helps individuals see how effective they are, align their actions with what the organization wants, and meet customer expectations.

Picking who gives feedback involves collaboration between the organization and the employee, focusing on regular interactions. Feedback can be about meeting goals or how people work together.

Advantages include diverse feedback sources, better teamwork, finding problems to fix, getting personalized career insights, less bias, helpful feedback for improvement, spotting training needs, and highlighting strengths. Disadvantages include potential mismatches, challenges with rushed implementation, not fitting with existing plans, potential problems interpreting anonymous feedback, focusing too much on weaknesses, inexperienced feedback providers, and managing data.

Doing 360-degree feedback well helps with leadership development, team unity, career growth, reducing bias, improving customer service, and figuring out what training is needed. Still, if not done the right way, it might lead to not meeting expectations, not fitting with how things work, not getting clear feedback, overemphasizing weaknesses, having inexperienced feedback providers, and dealing with lots of data. Careful planning ensures that 360 degree feedback adds value by helping employees grow and making the organization successful.

(Heathfield, 2022)

540-degree Feedback

The 540-degree feedback approach changes how we evaluate employee performance by involving many evaluators: supervisors, coworkers, subordinates, oneself, suppliers, and vendors. It goes beyond the 360-degree feedback idea by looking at every part of someone's work interactions. This detailed feedback aims to find strengths and weaknesses, and it's meant to motivate. It also includes viewpoints from outside, like customers or clients, to get a full picture.

The importance of 540-degree feedback is that it adds what customers think, which is useful in tough markets and makes customers happier. This information can give a competitive edge or make a company stand out. This approach also helps with training, processes, and solving problems based on how customers see things, leading to more money and better spotting of problems compared to usual feedback methods.

Benefits of 540-degree feedback include finding problems that normal ways cannot, getting important customer views, and making business relationships stronger by involving feedback from relevant suppliers and vendors.

What makes 540-degree feedback special compared to the 360-degree model is that it has everything from the 360-degree way, and it adds outsiders like customers or clients. This change makes it better at finding problems beyond the usual feedback methods.

For example, in sales, if a salesperson treats some customers unfairly, getting feedback from customers is crucial in finding and fixing those issues. 540-degree feedback helps with finding and solving these problems by asking customers through surveys or ratings. For delivery workers, customers can say how they look and act when they bring products.

In conclusion, 540-degree feedback goes beyond the usual by bringing in external views like customers. This helps companies understand customer feelings, fix problems, and make employees perform better for better business results.

(MBA Skool, n. d.)

Management by Objectives (MBO)

Management by Objectives (MBO) is a strategy to enhance how an organization performs. It involves setting precise goals for the company and communicating them to employees, so they work towards achieving those goals. This approach includes defining clear targets for both the organization and its employees, regularly checking how things are going, evaluating performance, and giving guidance.

The main steps of MBO include creating big goals for the organization and then making specific goals for each employee. Keeping track of progress is important in MBO, and managers usually do evaluations to see how well people are doing. People receive guidance often to help them understand how they're doing and make improvements. Regular performance evaluations have become a routine in companies using MBO.

Benefits of MBO include better understanding of jobs, personal goals for each employee, improved teamwork, clear expectations, a sense of importance, aligning what employees do with what the organization wants, and better communication.

However, there are also drawbacks. These include not considering the existing company culture, focusing too much on goals instead of overall growth and involvement, putting too much emphasis only on goals, not looking at the bigger picture when setting goals, and thinking MBO can fix everything.

In summary, MBO is about making clear goals for the company and its employees, making sure everyone knows what they should be doing, and ensuring that what people do contributes to the organization's success. When done right, MBO helps organizations do better, but if not done well, it can narrow people's focus to just goals and make them miss the bigger picture.

(CFI, 2023)

Professional Development Plan (PDP)

To guarantee the completion of the task, a Professional Development Plan (PDP) should be made to consider the knowledge and tools required to perform the steps needed to accomplish the final project (Isaacson, n.d.). The PDP made by the author can be found in Appendix A, and it lists the following steps:

- Gather internal team of experienced developers to build the application: In this crucial step, courses and selection processes must be created to help in selecting internal and external employees that could contribute to the project.
- Data gathering and profiling: Collect diverse employee data that could be used by AI models to create personalized profiles. This should identify strengths, weaknesses and learning preferences.
- AI Recommendation Engine: Develop an AI application that recommends learning materials based on the student profiles gathered.
- Create Learning Paths: Create a dynamic learning pathways that adapts according to the student profile and updates in real time. This pathway will help guiding employees on what they should learn next.
- Teacher support: Invite lecturers and teachers to help with the pedagogical aspects of the project. The professionals could help shaping the platform and defining better practices for an online learning environment.

Recommendations

The recommendations that can be given for this project are:

1. **Ethical data handling:** Being ethical in how data is managed is important. It means keeping the data collected safe and private to protect all employees. Doing this helps in keeping sensitive information secure, builds trust, and shows that their safety is a top concern. Following ethical rules creates a strong base of honesty and responsibility in the company.
2. **Regular check-ins:** Following the PDP and checking-in is often important for the completion of the project. It can establish a way for managers to keep connected with employees, and it can provide insight into what needs to be changed before it becomes a larger problem (People Goal, 2020).
3. **SMART Goals:** Establish goals using the SMART framework introduced previously in this document. Ensure that the goals of the project are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely are imperative for the completion of the project.
4. **Implement performance drivers:** Introducing frameworks as the 360-degree feedback, 540-degree feedback, and MBO are important to maintain high team

performance and improve relationships between employees and management (Steben, 2022).

Conclusion

In conclusion, by following these recommendations, Google's effort to develop a personalized education platform has the potential to be successful. This includes improving the learning experiences of employees, addressing any existing knowledge gaps, and creating a culture of growth and development inside the organization.

This document also stresses the importance of performance management and how the different performance drivers can help in attaining goals and developing employees and collaborators. Also, using the performance development cycle and setting up SMART goals could help in developing plans that are reachable by the organization.

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Appendix A

Professional Development Plan Table

Development Objectives	Priority	Activities to be undertaken	Resources	Target Start Date	Target End Date	Criteria for Success
Gather an internal team of experienced developers that could build the application	High	Interview employees, selection tests and activities	HR staff, organizers, laptops, meeting rooms, snacks	Now	1 to 2 months	Checked every week
Data gathering and profiling	High	Gather data from employees	HR staff, researchers	now	2 months	Checked every two weeks
AI Recommendation Engine	High	Build an AI content recommendation engine.	Employee data, developer team, computers	2 months	6 months to 1 year	Checked every two week
Create Leaning Paths	Low	Build pathways that facilitate learning a subject	AI Recommendation Engine	6 months	1 year	Checked every month
Teacher support	Medium	Have teachers to present ideas on how the platform would be more effective	Educators, Lecturers, books	6 months	1 year	Checked every week