

Module: Developing Relationships and Workplace Achievements

**Development of a plan by meeting the identified personal development needs
and expectations of individual employees in**

ASDA

Report - A2

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Executive Summary

This report highlights the value of performance management (PM), focusing on the exploration of the effectiveness of three PM approaches in the context of ASDA's organizational change pertaining to the incorporation of kid-friendly areas in its stores. Moreover, the paper underscores the importance of cultivating crucial change management abilities among employees and provides a Professional Development Plan (PDP) and recommendations aimed at guiding ASDA in successfully completing its transformational journey.

Performance Management (PM)

Performance management (PM) comprises a systematic process used by organizations to evaluate and bolster the performance of their employees, teams, and overall operations. It is a crucial part of contemporary business management and entails continuous communication, aligning individual and team efforts with company objectives, and identifying areas for improvement to enhance overall productivity and effectiveness (Aguinis, 2009).

The PM cycle consists of several interconnected stages. It commences with goal setting, where the formulation of clear and measurable objectives, guided by the SMART criteria (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound), takes precedence, providing a strategic roadmap to guide subsequent stages of the PM process. Subsequently, the process advances to the implementation of consistent monitoring and feedback mechanisms. At this stage, managers engage in regular check-ins with employees to provide guidance, assess accomplishments, and address issues. This continuous interaction fosters a heightened sense of ownership and involvement among employees, facilitating systematic progress tracking, performance enhancement, and prompt resolution of any challenges that may arise. As the performance period unfolds, periodic evaluations and reviews serve as integral components of the cycle. These assessments provide a comprehensive overview of employee achievements and areas for improvement. Finally, the culmination of the cycle entails a comprehensive performance appraisal, where

accomplishments aligning with established objectives are evaluated and employees are rewarded for their contributions. This recognition not only affirms excellence but also fuels a culture of achievement, motivating employees to excel, hence promoting ongoing high performance (Armstrong and Baron, 2005; de Waal, 2007).



Figuree 1. The PM Cyclee (Engagedly, 2022)

Within the contetx of ASDA effective PM is particularly crucial due to the vast and complex nature of the company's operations. As a major grocery chain, ASDA manages a vast network of suppliers, numerous store locations, and a diverse range of products and the implementation of robust PM strategies is essential to enable the organization to ensure operational efficiency and optimal employee performance. This, in turn, ensures consistent product availability (Trautrim, 2011), excellent customer service, and overall operational excellence (Rogers and Blenko, 2006), ultimately contributing to ASDA's success in the competitive grocery market (Bouckaert and Halligan, 2007).

PM assumes even heightened significance for ASDA during its present stage of implementing an organizational change involving the integration of kid-friendly areas within its stores. Amidst this strategic endeavour, PM emerges as a guiding compass, steering ASDA's workforce towards the successful realization of the initiative by ensuring their motivation, alignment, and readiness for effective organizational change implementation (Moynihan, 2008).

PM Approaches

As ASDA navigates its current transformative phase, it can leverage various PM methods to ensure smooth organizational change implementation. One such approach is the 360-degree feedback method, which harnesses employees' personal reflections, together with insights from their peers, supervisors, and subordinates, to yield a comprehensive evaluation of their individual performance in the context of broader organizational goals (Kathpalia, 2018). The resultant holistic perspective offers insights into an employee's strengths, areas requiring improvement and potential growth opportunities (Sharma, Sharma and Agarwal, 2016). Consequently, companies can cultivate an accurate and insightful understanding of their workforce, enabling targeted interventions which can drive enhanced overall employee performance in alignment with their overarching goals (Buckingham and Goodall, 2015).

Moreover, the 360-degree feedback method also contributes to the establishment of a robust performance-driven and continuous development-oriented culture within organizations, whereby employees are empowered to take ownership of their growth trajectories and are encouraged to proactively seek avenues for self-improvement and skill enhancement (Peiperl, 2001). This fosters a dynamic and collaborative work environment that nurtures professional evolution and synergy (Stefanovic, 2014).

Additionally, the method stimulates the establishment of candid and impactful communication between organizational members of different levels, contributing to an organizational culture where feedback is valued as a catalyst for growth (Stefanovic, 2014).

However, alongside its benefits, 360-degree feedback presents certain challenges. One concern concerns the potential for biases and subjectivity to infiltrate the feedback process, as evaluators' diverse perspectives may lead to interpretations of behaviours and performance being coloured by personal viewpoints or relational dynamics. This can result in assessment disparities, potentially affecting the accuracy, fairness and utility of the feedback (Karkoulia, Assaker and Hallak, 2016).

Furthermore, another limitation lies in the potential discomfort or reluctance of individuals to provide candid and constructive feedback, particularly when evaluating supervisors or higher-ranking colleagues. This apprehension can stem from concerns about potential repercussions or strained professional relationships, potentially leading to withheld or diluted feedback (Bracken, Rose and Church, 2016).

It is also noteworthy that the collection and management of feedback from multiple sources can be resource-intensive, demanding substantial time and effort to collect, analyze, and manage the feedback effectively, hence posing logistical challenges to organizations (Tidy, Wang and Hall, 2016).

Notwithstanding these challenges, the 360-degree feedback method has the potential to effectively support ASDA's organizational change initiative if applied effectively and in tandem with proactive limitation mitigation strategies. The method's capacity to provide a comprehensive evaluation of individual performance can help the supermarket chain ensure that its employees possess the requisite skills and attributes to adapt swiftly to the changes and excel in their roles, ultimately facilitating the initiative's implementation.

Another potential option within the realm of PM tools is the 540-degree feedback method which expands upon the principles of the 360-degree feedback to incorporate additional layers of input by gathering feedback not only from a worker's peers, supervisors, and subordinates but also from external stakeholders, such as customers, clients, or partners (Khoshnevis et al., 2015).

The inclusion of external perspectives provides insights into how employees' actions directly impact the organization's external relationships and customer experiences. It enables a deeper understanding of an employee's effectiveness in customer service, stakeholder engagement, and collaboration with partners. Consequently, the method establishes a clear connection between individual performance and the organization's performance and strategic vision (Pulakos et al., 2015).

As employees glean insights into how their efforts reverberate through external stakeholders, they can become more attuned to the needs and preferences of customers, clients, and partners (Mone and London, 2018). This heightened awareness can translate into enhanced customer service quality, thereby fostering stronger relationships, improved customer satisfaction, and a competitive edge in the market (DeNisi and Smith, 2014).

Moreover, by illustrating the tangible link between employees' work and the resultant impact on customers and external partners, the 540-degree feedback method can stimulate increased employee engagement. As per the Expectancy Theory, when employees acknowledge the significance of their efforts in shaping the company's broader ecosystem, they become more inclined to experience a stronger sense (Wright, 2016; Zigu, no date). As a result, an organizational culture of dedication and excellence is fostered, propelling both individual growth and organizational success (Bakiev, 2013).

Nevertheless, the 540-degree feedback method, while offering its own set of advantages, also builds upon certain drawbacks inherent in the 360-degree approach, as well as introduces additional challenges to consider. For instance, the inclusion of additional feedback sources intensifies the possibility of subjective biases (Brown, Inceoglu and Lin, 2016).

Furthermore, the expanded scope of the 540-degree approach elevates the complexity of the feedback gathering and evaluation process, with the coordination of feedback from a wider range of sources necessitating the allocation of a greater amount of resources, time, and strategic planning to ensure its effective execution (Dewettinck and van Dijk, 2013).

Additionally, the involvement of external stakeholders might also pose challenges related to their willingness and availability to participate in the feedback process. Unlike internal sources who are directly engaged with the organization, external stakeholders may have competing commitments and limited availability to engage in the feedback process. Consequently, their potential participation reluctance or constrained availability could lead to uneven or sparse feedback contributions, hence compromising the comprehensiveness and accuracy of the assessment (Raffoni et al., 2017).

Lastly, the implementation of the 540-degree feedback method may have the unintended consequence of diminishing employees' morale, as the inclusion of additional feedback sources, may create a sense of heightened scrutiny and criticism which might result in employees feeling overwhelmed or disheartened, ultimately leading to a potential decrease in their motivation and job satisfaction (Magenuka, 2021).

Nonetheless, given the customer-centric nature of ASDA's organizational change concerning the incorporation of kid-friendly areas within its stores, the 540-degree feedback method holds significant promise. By soliciting insights from stakeholders toward whom these spaces are intended, the company can develop a nuanced understanding of their needs and preferences, thus enhancing its ability to effectively align the initiative with their expectations. This alignment can create a compelling and impactful customer experience, leading to improved satisfaction, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth endorsements (Daugherty, Bolumole and Grawe, 2019). Hence, in spite of the challenges arising from the method's expanded scope, the potential benefits for the company suggest that the 540-degree feedback method's advantages could ultimately outweigh its drawbacks, especially if proactive negative impacts mitigation measures are undertaken.

The Management by Objectives (MBO) method is a third viable PM option that could be embraced by companies in their endeavours to promote high organizational performance, facilitate employee development and ascertain the workforce's alignment with the overarching business objectives (Berry, no date). This approach entails a collaborative process wherein managers and employees jointly establish SMART objectives which serve as a foundational framework upon which performance evaluation and developmental activities are built (Islami, Mulolli and Mustafa, 2018).

By focusing on the creation of well-defined and achievable goals, the MBO method cultivates a results-driven organizational culture where individual endeavours are closely tied to the strategic aspirations of the organization. This alignment can not only enhance employee motivation and engagement but can also enable a seamless cascade of objectives from higher management levels to individual contributors, ensuring a cohesive and synchronized pursuit of any company endeavour (Young et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the collaborative nature of the MBO approach necessitates ongoing interaction between employees and managers, fostering an environment of open communication and shared clarity regarding expectations (Schneider, 2023). This dynamic encourages a sense of ownership and accountability among employees, as they actively engage in shaping their goals and aligning them with the organization's strategic direction (Aksoy and Bayazit, 2014).

In addition, the ongoing monitoring and evaluation of progress provided by the MBO framework stimulate continuous improvement, as by assessing employee performance against established objectives, both individuals and the organization as a whole are more equipped to identify specific areas of strength and opportunities for growth (Gladisa and Susanty, 2018). The resultant systematic feedback loop encourages a culture of learning and adaptation, contributing to enhanced overall business efficiency and positioning organizations for sustained success in the dynamic business landscape (Wallace, 2017).

Still, as with the previously discussed methods, the MBO approach is not without its limitations. One potential drawback is the risk of overemphasis on quantitative targets and objectives, which might inadvertently lead to a narrow focus on measurable outcomes at the expense of qualitative aspects of job performance. This can result in employees prioritizing short-term gains to fulfil their objectives, potentially compromising the overall quality of their work and neglecting broader aspects that contribute to sustained organizational success, such as creativity, innovation, and long-term relationship building (Ashfaq, 2018).

Furthermore, the rigid nature of MBO objectives may not adequately account for unpredictable external factors or evolving market conditions, potentially hindering employees' ability to respond effectively to dynamic challenges and diminishing companies' agility and adaptability (Djumaniyazov and Randall, 2022).

Moreover, the collaborative nature of the MBO method requires effective communication and alignment between employees and managers and in the absence of clarity or miscommunication regarding objectives, there is a risk of confusion, frustration, and a disconnect between individual efforts and the organizational goals (Abdallah and Elhoss, 2019).

Despite these potential drawbacks, the MBO approach can still be highly valuable for organizations when implemented thoughtfully. In the case of ASDA's current organizational change, this method's structured approach to goal-setting and performance evaluation can help ensure that employees are focused on outcomes that directly contribute to the success of the initiative, while also fostering a culture of accountability and continuous improvement. Furthermore, the collaborative nature of the MBO approach aligns with the need for effective communication and alignment between employees and managers during times of change.

Employee Skill Enhancement Planning

Alongside PM, effective planning also emerges as a pivotal factor in the pursuit of organizational change, as it lays the groundwork for a well-structured and managed transformation (De Bruecker et al., 2015). As ASDA embarks on the project of incorporating kid-friendly areas into its stores, several critical skills need to be identified and developed among the chain's employees to ensure their capability to drive the successful implementation of the initiative. The formulation of a comprehensive plan aimed at fostering these skills would empower employees to embrace their roles effectively, swiftly navigate the complexities of organizational change and drive positive outcomes (Ramdhani et al., 2017).

Firstly, adept project management skills are of key importance as they form the foundation of the employees' capabilities, enabling them to define clear objectives and efficiently allocate resources, and monitor progress. These skills serve as the linchpin, guaranteeing that the change implementation maintains alignment with predetermined milestones, can progress seamlessly, and ultimately attain its overarching objectives (Ziek and Anderson, 2015).

Secondly, effective communication skills are vital for employees to possess to ensure their ability to effectively convey the purpose and benefits of the kid area initiative to both internal

and external stakeholders. By adeptly articulating the initiative's value proposition and addressing any concerns, employees can facilitate a smooth transition and foster a positive reception among all parties involved (Magenuka, 2021).

Furthermore, cultivating a culture of collaboration is also critical for the successful realization of organizational changes, as the capacity to collaborate seamlessly within cross-functional teams amplifies coordination, stimulates the exchange of innovative ideas, and instills a sense of collective ownership in the achievement of common objectives (Benson, Murray and Taylor, 2019). By nurturing a collaborative spirit, companies can enhance the synergy among various departments and individuals, creating an environment where diverse expertise converges to drive business prosperity (Belias and Koustelios, 2014).

Problem-solving acumen is equally essential to navigate the complexities that may arise during the implementation of an organizational change. Employees equipped with strong problem-solving skills can swiftly identify potential obstacles and devise innovative solutions to address them. This proactive approach not only ensures their resilience in the face of challenges but also contributes to a work environment of adaptability and continuous improvement (Miller and Maellaro, 2016).

Lastly, fostering a customer-centric mindset is crucial to ensure that employees can tailor the kid area experience to best resonate with customers' desires and preferences (Liu and Huang, 2014).

Conclusion

Effective PM stands as a foundational cornerstone for organizations aiming to thrive in today's dynamic business landscape, serving as a strategic approach to elevate workforce productivity, align individual efforts with overarching goals and foster a culture of accountability, growth, and innovation. Amidst organizational change, tools such as the 360-degree and 540-degree feedback method, along with the Management by Objectives approach, can effectively aid in enhancing employee skills, aligning them with strategic objectives, hence ultimately facilitating successful organizational transformation. Alongside the implementation of such methods, the development of a well-crafted plan centred around the cultivation of essential change management skills such as project management, communication, collaboration, problem-solving, and customer-centricity further fortifies the workforce's readiness and capability to effectively embrace transformative initiatives. By focusing on effective PM and planning, ASDA can equip its employees to drive positive

outcomes during times of change, such as the current one concerning the incorporation of kid-friendly areas in the supermarket chain's stores. This strategic approach can not only reinforce ASDA's stature as an industry leader but also underscore its commitment to excellence and innovation.

Recommendations

Upon the comprehensive review of ASDA's PM and employee skills development needs, the following recommendations are to be outlined:

1. Integrated Approach

- Focus on effectively combining the 540-degree feedback method with the MBO one for a holistic PM strategy.
- Capture comprehensive insights while aligning individual goals with organizational objectives.
- Evaluate both quantitative outcomes and qualitative contributions and build flexibility into established objectives.

2. Address PM Tools' Limitations

- Mitigate the risk of biases and subjectivity through the provision of comprehensive training programs.
- Establish clear feedback guidelines to facilitate meaningful and clear feedback exchanges.
- Develop tailored engagement strategies to encourage effective stakeholder participation in the feedback loop.
- Utilize advanced data analysis tools to streamline feedback collection and analysis.
- Ensure employees feel supported in their growth journey.

3. Emphasis on Employee Skill Development

- Implement the provided PDP (featured in the Appendix)
- Foster a culture of adaptivity, continuous learning and growth.

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Appendix

Professional Development Plan

Objective	Priority	Activities	Resources	Target Start Date	Target End Date	Evaluation
Enhance Project Management Proficiency	High	Enroll employees in project management training, workshops, and seminars. Assign team members to different aspects of projects. Practice project management skills.	Training budget, project management tools, experienced mentors	September 2023	November 2023	Pre-and-post training assessment, application in mock projects
Strengthen Communication Skills	High	Conduct communication workshops, role-playing scenarios, and regular team huddles. Develop communication guidelines and templates.	Communication experts, communication tools, role-play sessions	September 2023	December 2023	Stakeholder feedback, reduction in communication challenges, application in change scenarios
Cultivate a Collaborative Culture	Medium	Organize team-building events, cross-functional brainstorming sessions, and problem-solving workshops. Establish regular team meetings and knowledge-sharing platforms.	Team-building facilitators, meeting spaces, collaboration tools	September 2023	February 2024	Cross-functional team satisfaction, collaborative activities efficiency, participant feedback
Advance Problem-Solving Skills	Medium	Provide problem-solving training, encourage participation in real-time scenarios. Establish platform for sharing insights.	Problem-solving experts, training materials, digital platforms	November 2023	March 2024	Effectiveness of applied solutions, overcome challenges rate, adoption of problem-solving techniques
Enhance Customer-Centric Mindset	High	Conduct customer interaction workshops. Train staff on responding to feedback. Create a feedback loop.	Customer experience specialists, survey tools, feedback platforms	September 2023	December 2023	Customer satisfaction metrics, feedback analysis