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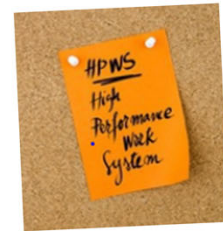
UNDERSTANDING THE LINK BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE

By Kate Houston



Definition

High-performance work systems (HPWS) are bundles of contemporary HR practices which facilitate skill enhancement, motivation and involvement embodying performance culture within organisations exerting more power than if as a separate entities (Armstrong, 2009).



Maximising employees' performance is the main objective of human resource management (HRM). After securing people with the right skills and experience through effective recruitment, selection and employee retention next is ensuring the organisation has a high-performing culture thus higher performing employees (Taylor, 2016; Armstrong, 2009).

HPWS is instrumental to increasing sales, profitability and lower staff turnover in return employees receive greater opportunities, motivation, involvement, commitment and job satisfaction (Stone et al. 2012; Armstrong, 2009).

Key components to HPWS

- Recruitment and selection
- Training and development
- Pay
- Promotion
- Team-based approaches
- Grievance procedures
- Decision-making participation
- Information sharing
- Performance appraisal
- Flexible working
- Job security
- Work-life balance
- High level of harmonisation

(Taylor, 2016)

The bundle has never been formalised, elements likely to promote employee involvement and commitment are:

Rigorous recruitment and selection

Encouraging applications from various backgrounds where decisions are based on evidence-based choices such as who will perform best based on the criteria advertised.

High levels invested in training and development

Kept up-to-date improving capability allowing career advancement.

High levels of pay

Attracting strong performers, retains employees which have been invested in allowing employees to maximise their contribution as pay is an incentive.

Internal promotion systems

Allows those invested in to remain with the organisation for longer whilst encouraging development.

Team-based approaches

Empowering teams of employees to determine objectives such as team-based incentive rewards.

Grievance procedures

Employees who feel wrongly treated can raise issues without resulting in resigning or obtaining alternative employment.

High degree of participation in decision-making

Aiding in organisation policy and practice giving autonomy in their own work remit resulting in engaged and committed workforce.

Information sharing

Allows employee involvement and transparency between managers.

Effective performance appraisal system

Provides goals for each employee, team or department aligning with the organisation's strategy setting expected objectives.

Flexible working

Leading to multi-skilling enabling deployment when new opportunities arise.

High degree of job security

Attracting a strong performing workforce by engagement and commitment.

Good work-life balance

Employees are less likely to become stressed displaying high levels of personal-wellbeing.

High level of harmonisation

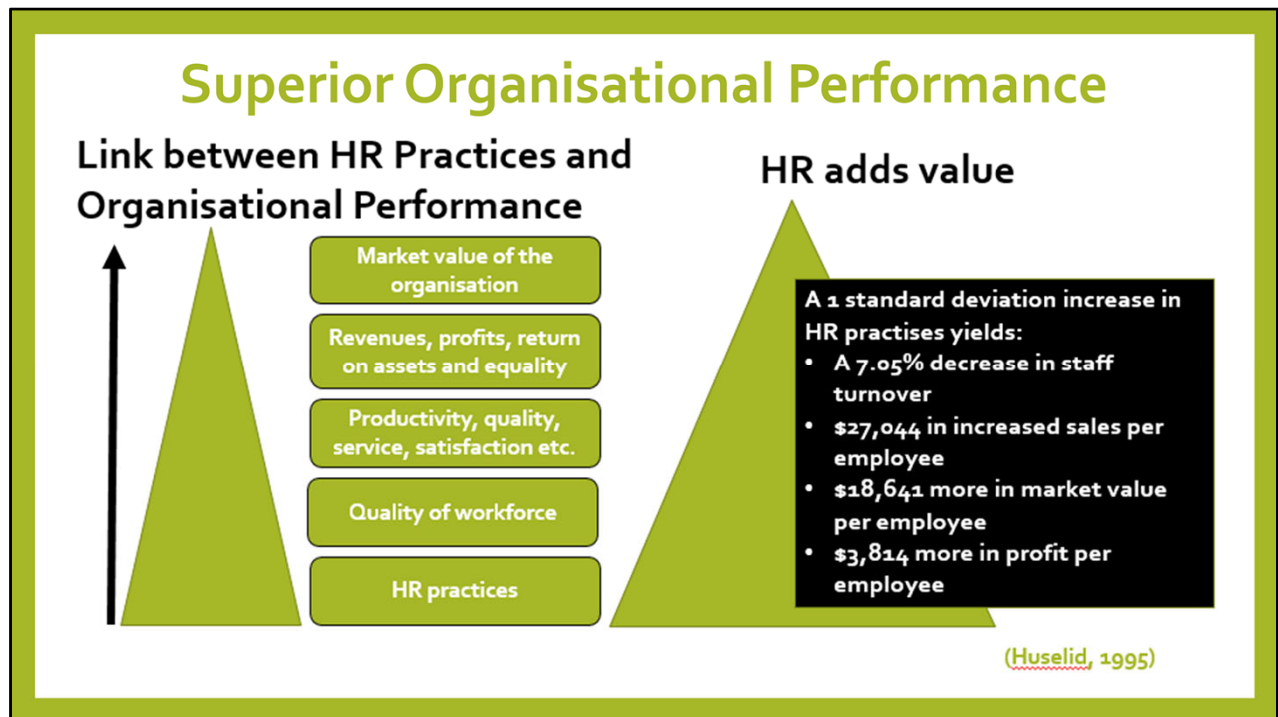
Through terms and conditions such as same holiday entitlements or pensions.

(Taylor, 2016)

The aim of HPWS is achieving a high-performance culture where norms, values and HR practices combined create a climate of achievement of high levels of performance (Armstrong, 2009).

Employees' seek organisation's establishing high levels of organisational performance and a positive reputation in the labour market such as an 'employer of choice'

demonstrating elements in attracting, retaining, engaging employees and are viewed as 'best practices'. Once employed seeking to demonstrate 'discretionary effort' such as going beyond in terms of conditions ensuring engagement and commitment (Taylor, 2016).



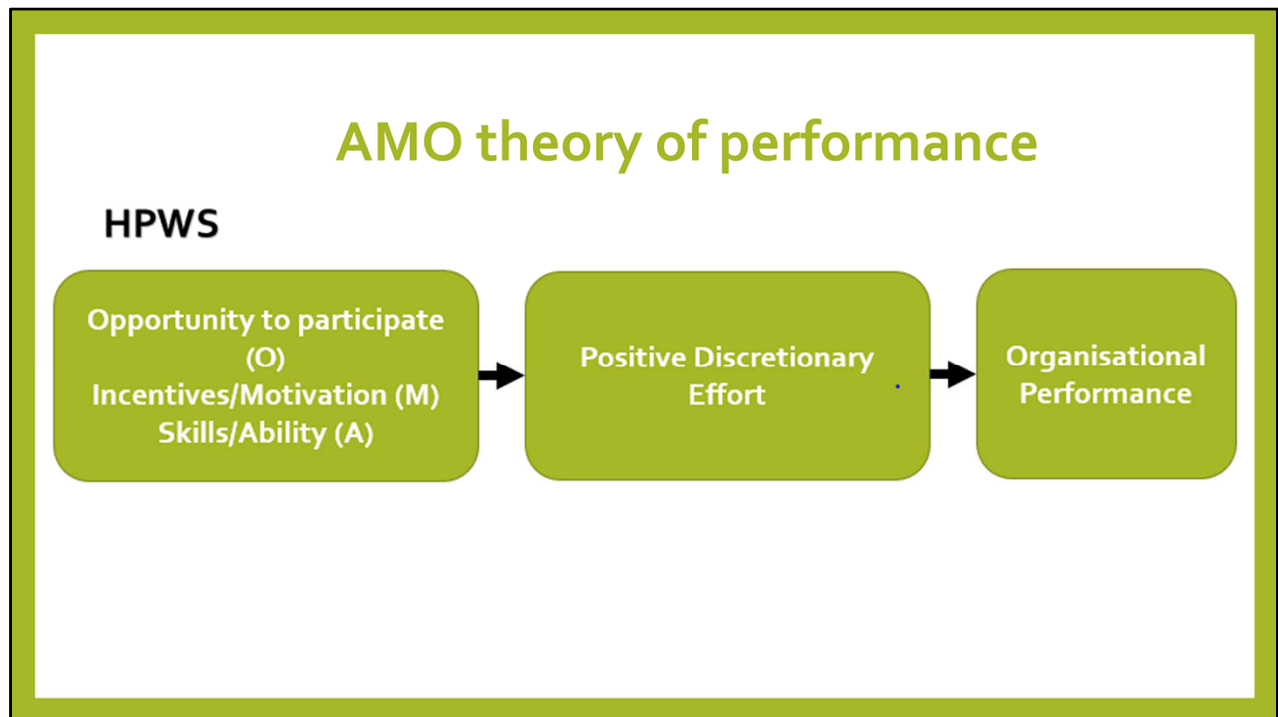
During the 1990s large USA private sector organisations displayed HR practices associated with ‘best practice bundles’ which were more successful and faster growing than their competitors (Taylor, 2016). The UK Commission on Employment and Skills associate HPWS with economic competitiveness and growth (Industry Forum, ND).

Huselid (1995) researched a wide range of industries featuring all types of HR policies and practice. Results measured an organisation’s performance utilising published annual reports on: staff turnover; Tobin’s ‘q’ defining the market value of the organisation dividing the book value of assets and gross rates of return of capital invested. The more sophisticated HR practice: the lower employee turnover; the higher market value; and higher profits.

Studies were replicated and refined drawing comparable results: accepting that ‘best practice HRM’ in a form of bundle practices benefits organisations regardless of size and sector; increasing performance; sustaining competitive advantage for longer; and increasing well-being and employee satisfaction (Taylor, 2016).

Criticisms on the impact of people to a business' performance are: studies focus on manufacturing where productivity is easier to manage and is unable to be replicated in the service sector; that high-performing companies could invest in better people management thus people management practice did not necessarily deliver better bottom-line results. CIPD together with Purcell et al. (2003) identified three specific aims to focus on:

- Improve evidence linking people management to business performance or organisational competitiveness.
- Provide accessible information to managers to act upon when making decisions.
- Improve understanding of how and why people management practices influence a business's performance .



Results demonstrated the role of people management in developing and sustaining a high-performing organisation via a model of people and performance detailing how and why HR practices impact on performance known as the 'black box studies'. The study utilised the performance function Ability+ Motivation+ Opportunity (AMO). It evidenced the right approach to HR, implemented correctly will seek superior organisational performance concluding there was no automatic link other conditions must be present if a bundle of best practices is to achieve high levels of performance.

Ability

Knowledge and skills to do the job influencing motivation by recruitment, selection, training and development. Competency frameworks are a useful tool assessing skills and abilities.

Motivation

Influenced by extrinsic factors such as money and intrinsic rewards such as interesting work. Other factors include: employment security; work-life balance; and career development encouraging motivation.

Opportunity

Deploying skills in their jobs and teams contributing to the organisation's success such as job design, job rotation and involvement initiatives.

In contrast to Taylor's approach where discretion is limited employees are encouraged to exhibit positive discretionary behaviours with a degree of choice of how they perform 'going the extra mile' which is unforced and voluntary.

HRM policies and practices are interrelated and can be bundled together; when a key component is missed discretionary effort is unlikely as an employee may have the ability, skills and motivation, yet if not empowered to decision-make performance is likely to be inhibited. HRM policies and behaviours develop positive attitudes, feelings of satisfaction, motivation and commitment thus discretionary behaviour aids employees to work better improving performance.

Key to HR-performance is the 'Big Idea' underpinned by values and culture of what an organisation is trying to achieve and represent linking heavily to employee commitment and how it is managed. Jaguar's 'Big Idea' is 'quality' and Nationwide is 'mutuality'. It is referred to as 'glue' binding people and processes together for a common goal with a strong sense of shared purpose between managers and employees. It can be managed or measured often via a balanced scorecard to integrate different functional areas of the organisation horizontally and vertically.

(Taylor, 2016; Hutchinson, 2013; Purcell et al. 2003; CIPD 2018)

Employee well-being

HR policies and practices generate superior business performance motivating employees to perform positively in their individual roles
(Taylor, 2016)



Boxall and Macky (2014) studied how involvement processes affect employee wellbeing. Job satisfaction was researched for employees' happiness and complemented by health-related factors: fatigue; stress; and work-life balance.

The high-involvement model refers to employee participation in decision-making aiming to apply discretion and assume responsibility in their work utilising employees' existing skills and opportunities to learn, in contrast to Taylorism work organisations.

It proposed employees' who have greater autonomy, stronger links to rewards and performance, better two-way communication and better opportunities for training and development as with HPWS will have better wellbeing, less fatigue, less job-induced stress, lower demands on managers personal time and better work-life balance than those who experience greater work intensity. Employees with greater involvement in decision-making may feel pressure to work longer, when workloads are reasonable wellbeing is likely to be enhanced enabling employees to lead balanced lives.

Harter et al. (2002) and the Gallup Organization conducted a credible expansive study on employees' emotional and cognitive engagement together with other variables: profitability; customer satisfactions; productivity and employee turnover. Results implied changes in management practices may increase employee satisfaction and increase business-unit outcomes including profit.

The results:

- Employee engagement differs between business units in the same organisation than between organisations hence the variability levels are not specific to type of industry or employee characteristics rather the quality of FLM.
- Business units with the highest employee engagement were more successful than with the lowest employee engagement levels which were measured against productivity, profitability and customer responses.
- Strong relationship between employee involvement and staff turnover rates.

Similar results were derived between the black box studies 'discretionary effort' and the Gallup studies 'employee engagement' where employees respond positively to their organisation's 'best practice bundle' of HPW practices.

(Taylor, 2016)

Definition

'a process which contributes to the effective management of individuals and teams in order to achieve high levels of organisational performance. As such, it establishes shared understanding about what is to be achieved and an approach to leading and developing people which will ensure that it is achieved' (Armstrong and Baron, 2005)



Performance management (PM) is the activity and processes improving employees' performance aligning to the organisation's objectives. It is both strategic and operational allowing employees to contribute positively to an organisation preferably managed holistically.

PM may be similar or different across organisations there is no best approach as practices depend on the specific organisational culture and the difference in the way in which teams or functions operate. Corporate strategic goals are the starting point followed by individual development and performance targets. Managers and employees plan and monitor performance regularly in a continuous cycle (CIPD, 2018).

Performance management (PM) from HRM perspective:

- Strategic
- Integrated
- Shared
- Continuous process
- Specific
- Flexible
- Delivered and owned by line-managers

(Hutchinson, 2013)

FLMs are key drivers in PM engaging and motivating workforce daily utilising various approaches which best suits them (Taylor, 2016; Hutchinson, 2013).

Strategic: long-term goals of an organisation.

Integrated: individual, team and department-led goals aligned with the organisation's strategy and goals thus vertically integrated. Horizontal integrated ensuring organisational effectiveness and complementary HR policies and procedures including: induction; performance appraisals; and capability procedures.

Shared: understanding corporate goals and values improving organisational performance, employee motivation, identification and satisfaction.

Continuous process: unlike one-off events such as the performance appraisal incorporating formal and informal activities.

Specific: tailored to the different jobs each employee undertakes and to the organisation's culture and values.

Flexible: adapting approaches in a changing economic and competitive environment.

Delivered and owned by line-managers: enacting policy through the day-to-day activities such as reviewing performance, appraisals, feedback and supporting underperformance.

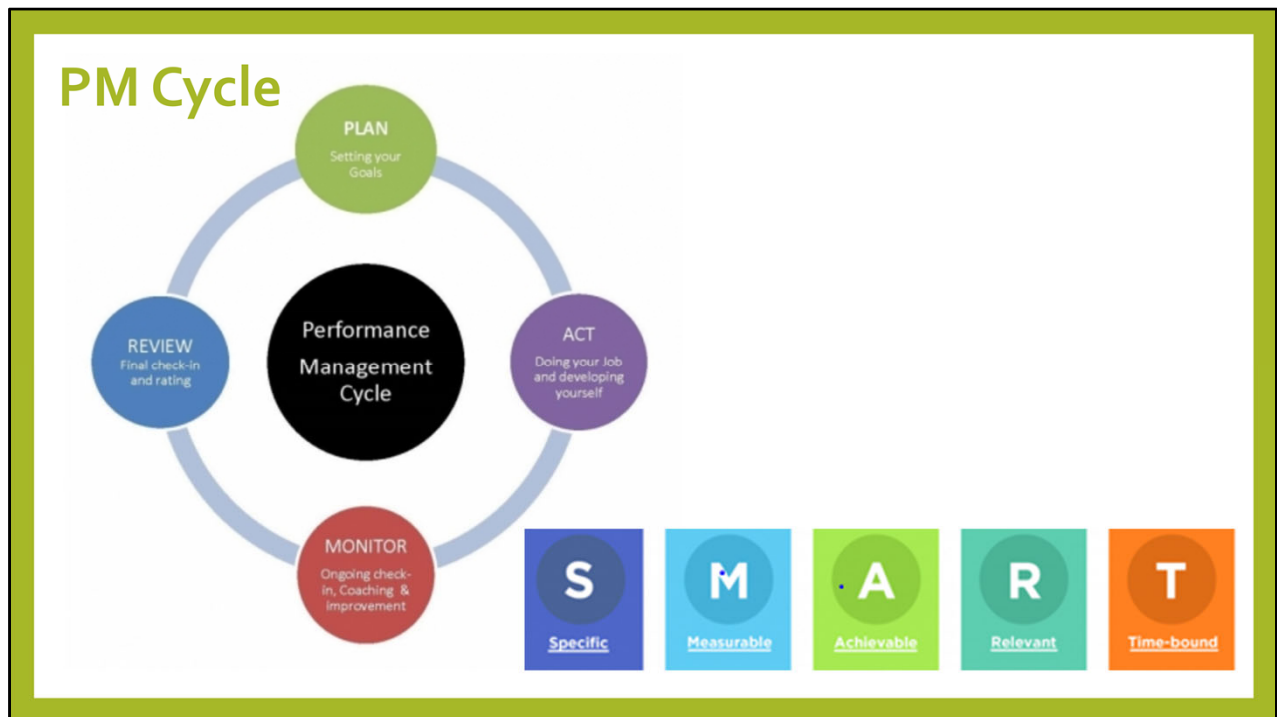
PM illustrates elements of:-

Best fit approach tailoring the organisation both internal and external.

Best practice approach allowing for flexibility in the system with the need for HR practices to be 'bundled'.

The resource-based view emphasising strategic potential of human resource capabilities and processes such as the role of FLMs.

(Hutchinson, 2013)



PM evolves regular feedback, managers are instrumental in reinforcing the link between the organisation and the individual providing feedback which motivates, improves and holds employees to account by supportive performance conversations towards objectives aligned with the organisational strategy (CIPD, 2018).

Planning phase: setting individual SMART objectives contributing to the organisation's goals and vision. Job requirements are reviewed as are strengths and skills formulating a personal development plan linked to the organisation's strategy and individual performance.

Act and track phase: continues throughout the year ensuring objectives are effective. FLMs coach providing feedback tracking progress.

Review phase historically undertaken annually using appraisals with FLMs discussing and evaluating goals achieved throughout the year, performance issues, training and development and career aspirations. This was seen as a tick-box-exercise rather than a meaningful process.

(Hearn, 2017)

Performance reviews focus on the past not the future which results in a negative outcome damaging self-esteem (Zenger, 2017).

Theories



Locke 1976, goal theory (GT) is a great motivator, encouraging self-management and complements a high-involvement culture, based on the notion that a person's goals such as the level of performance wished to be obtained within a specified period of time determines their behaviour. Too many goals can create ambiguity and performance of one goal may be sacrificed for another (Hutchinson, 2013).

Bandura 1986, social-cognitive theory is linked to HRM practices, HR roles and the organisation's performance (Voo et al. 2018). It is based on the assumption that learning is achieved by imitating the behaviour, replicating if perceived positive. Self-efficacy is central, individuals with low self-efficacy lack confidence and performance in comparison to individuals whose high self-efficacy allows them to overcome problems (HRMP, ND).

Control theory relates to feedback controlling the quality of the output by reward and recognition displayed in bureaucratic organisations. It syncs the employees' behaviour and actions to the organisation's standards linking the individuals' objectives to the mission and goals of the organisation (Locke, 1991).



A widely utilised PM system are performance appraisals undertaken annually or bi-annually discussing performance, outcomes and action points reviewing the year ahead (Taylor, 2016). Appraising is meant to have a positive impact on individual and collective performance identifying personal performance and identifying development opportunities. Rather than improving motivation and performance its effects can be negative when linked to remuneration, promotion or redundancy; therefore open and honest conversations are diminished. Disadvantages: unfair bias in managerial assessments of performance; insufficient opportunity for appraises to respond; reluctance of FLMs to carry out the appraisal; and not lending itself to individual management styles.

Appraisals focus on improvements, targets, feedback and objectives and relates to theories such as goal-setting, expectancy and equity theory when handled correctly minimise perceptions of procedural injustice. Studies reflect feedback is linked to enhancing individual performance and intrinsic motivation with negative feedback demonstrating under-performance (Hutchinson, 2013).

Alternative approaches



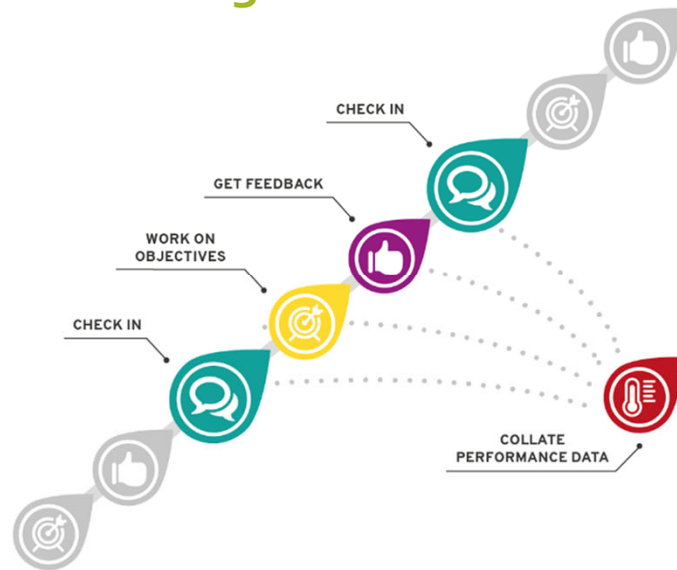
THE MAIN BENEFIT OF USING BELBIN?

"ACCESSIBLE, EASY LANGUAGE TO GRASP. NOT ABOUT PERSONALITY BUT INSTEAD BEHAVIOUR, SO LESS RESISTANCE FROM PEOPLE WHO DON'T LIKE BEING 'TESTED'. IT'S CLEAR THAT BELBIN TEAM ROLES RESONATES WITH PEOPLE WHEN I DISCUSS IT. THEY CAN SEE APPLICATIONS THAT WILL IMPROVE EFFICIENCY AND TEAM CULTURE."

Technological tangible outcomes or output based on work behaviours are increasingly popular measuring quantifiably evidence such as number of calls determining customer service or for jobs which repeat activities utilising key performance indicators or the balanced scorecard. Output assessments together with behavioural assessments considering observations are seen as a constructive and fairer way to measure performance although liable for bias and error (Hutchinson, 2013; Taylor, 2016).

Upward communication including 360-degree feedback and peer appraisal can provide constructive feedback. Eight-seven percent Facebook employees voted to keep performance ratings for fairness, transparency and development alongside peer evaluations (Goler et al. 2016).

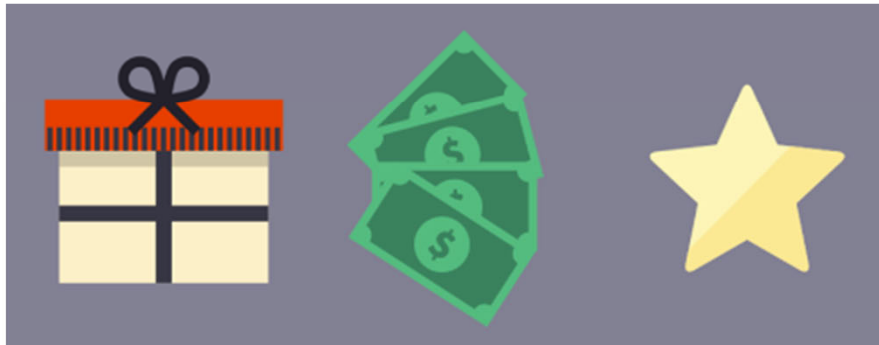
PM cycle shifting



Evolving organisations acknowledge new approaches to PM as its purpose is shifting due to technological innovation, changing nature of work and digital transformation. Organisations' are opting for an agile PM cycle as with Adobe and Microsoft utilising a series of consecutive and smaller cycles centred on smaller near-term SMART goals (Hearn, 2017).

FLMs subjective observations are replaced by data generated apps and tools, with feedback sourced from a variety of places and people such as fact-based near-constant feedback together with science-based methods such AI (Schrage et al. 2019).

Rewarding talent



Extrinsic motivation is the expectation of receiving extrinsic rewards or tangible benefits which employees have no control over such as pay or healthcare provisions. Intrinsic motivation are psychological benefits such as self-esteem or recognition derived from work. Employees are motivated by a mixture of these underpinned by cafeteria-type rewards or total-reward packages. (Hutchinson, 2013).

Herzberg's two-factor theory differentiates between intrinsic (motivators) and extrinsic (hygiene) factors. Motivators are concerned with job content such as personal growth or recognition and is not related to money or style of supervision but the work itself. Hygiene factors relate to the working environment such as working conditions and job security, the lack of these does not lead to dissatisfaction but their presence leads to no satisfaction. FLMs wishing to positively motivate employees should consider intrinsic rewards focussing on job content as extrinsic rewards rarely motivates but can cause dissatisfaction resulting in workplace conflict, absenteeism and low morale (Hutchinson, 2013).

Pay and performance links to an employee's personal intrinsic motivation those

positively seeking this with performance-related-pay will pursue organisations with these. Rewards as a motivational strategy is risky disengaging interest and self-regulation with detrimental effect on performance and can decrease long-term intrinsic motivation.

Recognising talent and rewarding is complex, at best the connection between money and satisfaction may lead to commitment and performance more importantly is motivation. This can be achieved by different factors highlighted by 'content theories' where effective FLMS aid employees gaining motivation using principles such as expectancy and equity theories.

A more contingent view is the expectancy theory individualising performance-related rewards such as 'cafeteria' benefits or lending itself to short-term performance thus to increase sales leading up to Christmas resulting in recognition or extra pay (Marchington et al. 2016).

Retaining employees by reward of better pay seldom works, an employee seeking competitive salary elsewhere is not their only motive, it is likely they have become dissatisfied and demotivated by other factors such as poor management (Rees and Tymon, 2016).

Line-managers role

FLMs act as agents to an organisation shaping the employee relationship influencing employee attitudes and discretionary behaviour by the way they interrupt and apply PM practices and processes for instance deliverers and drivers of policy 'bringing the policies to life' together with leadership (Hutchinson, 2013; Purcell, 2003).

MacLeod and Clarke (2009) referenced that 80 per cent of engagement levels were down to the FLMs relationship with employees' due to the regular and close contact they have with employees stating 'people join an organisation' but leave as a result of FLMs.

FLMs have direct responsibility for recruitment and selection, induction, appraisal, providing feedback, identifying training and development, mentoring, coaching, making-decisions on reward, absenteeism, dealing with under-performance and career management rather than HR.

They must:

- Display leadership behaviours motivating employees.
- Demonstrate greater ownership encouraging greater commitment towards PM.
- Work-life balance enactors.
- Openness and ability to raise grievances.
- Direct positive employee views on job satisfaction, commitment, motivation and job discretion 'unlocking the black box'.
- Able to strengthen or undermine the message conveyed in the 'Big Idea'.
- Involved in formal and informal processes such as socialising employees'.

Problems occur as a result of work overload and competing priorities, lack of competency and skills, lack of willingness and inadequate support (Hutchinson, 2013).

IES researched 'engaging managers' recognising they inspire and motivate teams to perform well regardless of organisation, sector or employee group. Employee-line-manager relationships are crucial to employee engagement and have direct impact on employee attitudes and performance-related behaviours (Hutchinson, 2013). It highlighted FLMs deal with difficult situations from underperformance to delivering bad news which can lead to procrastinating behaviour if not resolved turning into a crisis (Robinson, 2013).

The research had high-performing teams therefore able to evidence team success, individual and team metrics, external recognition and praise. Results demonstrated: keeping a watchful eye on their teams; communication; understanding differences; crediting good performance and maintaining a good working atmosphere. Clarity was important: setting expectations of performance by specific tasks; identifying how this contributes to the bigger picture; and how success is measured. Feedback should be continual: with daily contact; 1:1s; being supportive; and listening adopting a coaching role. Monitoring performance and recognising success is important as is remedial action when issues arise. Collaborative working and encouraging ownership to find solutions ensures a team approach. Assuming you know how employees will react should be avoided, preparing for difficult situations and intervening when a problem arises tackling behavioural issues with impartiality.

(Robinson, 2013)

HR and line-managers relationship



Ebsco Business Source Corporate researched organisations utilising the AMO model determining how HR can support FLMs implementing effective policies and practices. HR have an active role in selecting FLMs based on their HR orientation and their 'fit' to the culture and values of the organisation adding value thus enhancing FLMs ability, motivation to implement practices well and have the opportunity to do so by:-

Ability:

- Ensuring accessibility by sharing information via manuals or toolkits.
- Providing HR practice training.
- Supporting with an open-door-policy.

Motivation:

- Collaboratively working developing new practices via consultation and feedback

with FLMs.

- Recognising good FLMs people management.
- Establishing new approaches to practices benefiting the organisation, FLMs and teams.

Opportunity:

- Hiring consultants demonstrating the organisation values, practices and policies legitimatising the efforts of FLMs.
- Communication and support of the Chief Executive allowing FLMs to implement practices.

(Miller, 2017)

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