

Applied Leadership and Management in the Workplace Module Assignment Submission

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1.0 Introduction

Employee development is an important part of running a successful organization. Businesses need employees who have the right skills, knowledge and confidence to carry out their daily responsibilities. However, employee development is not only about improving individual performance. It also helps to build better relationships between employees and managers, improve communication and create a more positive working environment.

In the logistics industry, employee development is particularly important because workers often operate under pressure and need to meet strict performance targets. Delivery drivers are expected to manage their time effectively, follow safety procedures and provide a good level of customer service. For this reason, organizations need to provide suitable training and ongoing support to help employees meet these expectations.

This report focuses on Amazon Logistics, using practical examples from my personal experience as a delivery driver. During my employment, I received practical training with an experienced driver before starting independent deliveries. I was also given easier delivery routes, known as nursery routes, which allowed me to develop my skills and confidence before taking on a full workload. My performance was monitored by management, mainly through delivery statistics.

The report will critically examine the benefits of employee development for both the organization and its employees. It will also discuss how managers can understand and manage employee expectations, compare different methods of workplace development and consider the importance of communication and feedback.

2.0 Benefits of Employee Development

Employee development is an important part of improving organizational performance and creating a positive working environment. When organizations invest in their employees, they can improve productivity, increase motivation and develop stronger working relationships.

The success of employee development depends on the quality of training, management support and the individual needs of workers.

Senge (1990) suggests that organizations should encourage continuous learning and knowledge sharing to improve their performance. His concept of a learning organization highlights the importance of developing employees and creating an environment where people can learn from their experiences.

This approach is particularly relevant in logistics, where employees need to adapt to changing workloads, delivery procedures and customer expectations.

2.1 Benefits to the Organization

One of the main benefits of employee development is improved productivity. Employees who receive suitable training are more likely to understand their responsibilities and complete tasks efficiently. In the logistics industry, this can lead to better time management, fewer delivery mistakes and improved customer satisfaction.

For example, during my employment as a delivery driver at Amazon Logistics, new drivers received practical training alongside an experienced driver. This allowed them to observe how deliveries were organized, how to use the delivery application and how to deal with different situations during the working day.

This type of training can benefit the organization because employees gain practical knowledge before working independently. It may also reduce the number of mistakes made by inexperienced drivers.

The effectiveness of this approach depends on the experience and communication skills of the person providing the training. An experienced driver may understand the job very well but may not necessarily be a good trainer. Organizations should ensure that employees responsible for training others receive suitable guidance and support.

Another important benefit is improved employee retention. According to Becker (1964), investment in human capital can improve employees' knowledge, skills and productivity. Employees who feel supported by their organization may also be more motivated to remain in their jobs.

2.2 Benefits to Employees

Employee development also provides important benefits for individuals. These include increased confidence, improved knowledge, better job performance and opportunities for career progression.

One example from my experience at Amazon Logistics was the use of nursery routes for new drivers. These routes involved a reduced workload compared with standard delivery routes, allowing new employees to become familiar with their responsibilities before managing a full delivery schedule.

This approach can help employees develop confidence because they have time to practice their skills without immediately facing the same level of pressure as experienced drivers.

Bandura (1977) explains that self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to complete tasks successfully. This theory is relevant because employees who gradually develop their skills through practical experience may become more confident in their abilities.

Employees learn at different speeds. Some drivers may become confident after a short period, while others may need additional training or support. If managers expect everyone to progress at the same rate, this could create unnecessary pressure and reduce motivation.

For this reason, employee development should consider individual learning needs rather than applying the same approach to every worker.

Another benefit is improved communication and working relationships. Employees who receive constructive feedback are more likely to understand their strengths and identify areas for improvement.

Feedback must be delivered appropriately. If managers only focus on mistakes or performance statistics, employees may feel that their efforts are not recognized. During my employment, driver performance was mainly monitored through delivery statistics. Although this provided management with useful information, statistics alone could not always explain the difficulties drivers experienced during their routes. For example, traffic conditions, difficult delivery locations and customer availability can affect performance. Therefore, managers should combine performance data with individual discussions to develop a more balanced understanding of employee performance.

2.3 Challenges and Limitations of Employee Development

Despite its benefits, employee development can create challenges for organizations. Training requires time, resources and financial investment. In a busy logistics environment, managers may find it difficult to balance daily operational targets with employee development activities.

Another limitation is that training does not always produce immediate improvements. Employees may understand new information but require additional practice before applying it effectively in their daily work.

Kolb (1984) argues that learning involves experience, reflection, developing understanding and applying new knowledge. This suggests that practical experience is important, but employees also need opportunities to reflect on their performance.

For example, a delivery driver may complete practical training successfully but still experience difficulties when working independently. Regular discussions with a manager or experienced colleague could help identify these problems and provide suitable support.

3.0 Managing Employee Expectations

Managing employee expectations is an important responsibility for managers because employees need to understand what is expected from them and what support they can receive from the organization. Clear expectations can improve motivation, communication and workplace relationships. However, if employees feel that expectations are unrealistic or unfair, this can lead to stress, dissatisfaction and reduced performance.

In the logistics industry, employees often work under pressure to meet delivery targets and complete their tasks within specific time limits. For this reason, managers need to balance organizational requirements with individual employee needs.

3.1 Understanding Employee Expectations

Employees may have different expectations depending on their experience, personal goals and responsibilities. Some employees may be interested in career progression, while others may mainly expect job security, fair treatment and a supportive working environment.

Maslow (1943) suggested that people have different levels of needs, including basic needs, safety, belonging, esteem and self-actualization. Although this theory is widely recognized, it has limitations because employees do not always follow the same order of needs.

For example, an experienced delivery driver may value independence and recognition, while a new driver may be more concerned about receiving suitable training and feeling confident in their role.

Herzberg et al. (1959) also identified two groups of factors affecting employee satisfaction. Hygiene factors, such as working conditions and salary, can help prevent dissatisfaction, while motivators, such as achievement, recognition and responsibility, may increase job satisfaction.

This theory suggests that organizations should not focus only on financial rewards or performance targets. Employees may also need recognition and opportunities to develop their skills.

Managers should recognize that employees have different priorities. Therefore, regular individual discussions may be more effective than assuming that everyone is motivated by the same factors.

3.2 Communication and Feedback

Effective communication is essential for managing employee expectations. Employees need clear information about their responsibilities, performance standards and development opportunities.

During my employment at Amazon Logistics, driver performance was mainly monitored through delivery statistics. These statistics allowed managers to review productivity and identify possible performance problems.

Yet, performance statistics do not always provide a complete picture of an employee's working day. For example, traffic delays, difficult delivery locations and problems with accessing properties may affect the number of deliveries completed. Although performance monitoring is necessary, managers should also consider the circumstances affecting individual employees.

Constructive feedback can help employees understand their strengths and areas for improvement. It can also encourage better communication between employees and managers.

According to Kluger and DeNisi (1996), feedback does not always improve performance and can sometimes have a negative effect, depending on how it is delivered and how employees respond.

This highlights the importance of providing feedback that is clear, supportive and focused on improvement rather than criticism.

For example, instead of only informing a driver that their delivery performance is below expectations, a manager could discuss possible reasons and agree on practical improvements.

This approach could help employees feel supported while still maintaining organizational performance standards.

3.3 Performance Management

Performance management involves setting expectations, monitoring progress and supporting employees in achieving their objectives. It should be an ongoing process rather than simply reviewing performance statistics.

Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory suggests that employee motivation is influenced by whether individuals believe their efforts will improve performance and lead to outcomes they value.

This theory is relevant to delivery drivers because employees may be more motivated when they understand how their performance is measured and believe that their efforts are recognized fairly.

However, if drivers feel that performance targets are unrealistic or that external difficulties are ignored, their motivation may decrease.

For example, a new driver who has recently completed nursery routes may need additional time to adjust to a full delivery workload. Comparing this employee directly with an experienced driver could create unnecessary pressure.

Managers should therefore consider individual experience and development needs when setting performance expectations.

Regular performance discussions can also help identify employees who require further training or support.

Total managing employee expectations requires clear communication, realistic objectives and fair performance monitoring. Organizations should balance productivity targets with employee wellbeing and development. This can contribute to stronger working relationships, increased motivation and a more positive working environment.

Employee development can improve productivity, confidence and workplace relationships. However, organizations must recognize that effective development requires more than providing initial training. It also involves ongoing communication, realistic expectations and regular performance reviews.

Finally, the report will examine how a personal development plan can help employees improve their skills and performance. Relevant management theories will be considered alongside practical workplace examples to evaluate how employee development can contribute to better working relationships and organizational success.

4.0 Employee Development Methods

Organizations can use different methods to develop employee skills, knowledge and performance. The choice of development method should depend on the employee's experience, individual needs and organizational objectives. In the logistics industry, where employees need practical skills and good time management, workplace training is particularly important.

No single development method is suitable for every employee. Companies should therefore consider the advantages and limitations of different approaches before deciding which methods to use.

4.1 On-the-Job Training

On-the-job training is a common method of employee development because it allows employees to learn while carrying out practical tasks. Instead of focusing only on theoretical knowledge, employees can develop skills through observation, experience and regular practice.

During my employment at Amazon Logistics, I completed practical training alongside an experienced delivery driver. This allowed me to observe daily delivery procedures, learn how to use the delivery application and understand how to organize my work effectively.

After completing the initial training, I started working independently on nursery routes. These routes involved a smaller workload, allowing me to gain experience before moving to standard delivery routes.

This approach is connected to Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, which suggests that people develop knowledge through experience, reflection and applying what they have learned.

One advantage of on-the-job training is that employees gain experience in real working conditions. It can also help organizations reduce training costs because employees learn within their normal working environment.

Still, this method has limitations. The quality of training may depend on the experience and communication skills of the person providing it. Additionally, employees may develop incorrect working habits if they receive insufficient guidance.

Organizations should regularly review training quality and ensure that new employees receive consistent information.

4.2 Coaching and Mentoring

Coaching and mentoring are two development methods that can support employees in improving their skills and confidence. Although they are sometimes used together, they have different purposes.

Coaching usually focuses on improving specific skills or performance, while mentoring involves a more experienced person supporting another employee's wider professional development.

Whitmore (2017) suggests that effective coaching can help individuals improve performance by increasing awareness, responsibility and confidence.

In Amazon Logistics, coaching could be particularly useful for drivers who experience difficulties with time management, route organization or customer communication.

For example, a manager could arrange a short coaching session with a driver whose performance has recently decreased. Instead of focusing only on delivery statistics, the manager could discuss the challenges experienced by the driver and agree on practical improvements.

Mentoring could also benefit new employees. An experienced driver could support a new colleague during their first weeks of employment, helping them understand workplace expectations and develop confidence.

Coaching and mentoring requires time and commitment. In a busy logistics environment, experienced employees and managers may have limited opportunities to provide individual support.

Another limitation is that not every experienced employee has the communication skills needed to become an effective mentor.

For this reason, organizations should select suitable mentors and provide them with basic guidance on how to support others.

4.3 Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Continuous Professional Development, commonly known as CPD, refers to the ongoing process of improving professional knowledge, skills and abilities throughout an individual's working life.

Unlike initial training, CPD focuses on continuous improvement and adapting to changing workplace requirements.

In logistics, CPD may include health and safety training, customer service development, communication skills and learning new technologies.

For example, delivery drivers may need additional training when organizations introduce new delivery applications, equipment or operational procedures.

CPD could also support employees who want to progress into supervisory or management positions.

According to Senge (1990), continuous learning is an important characteristic of a learning organization. This suggests that organizations should encourage employees to develop their knowledge rather than focusing only on their immediate responsibilities.

CPD can be difficult to implement when employees have challenging workloads or limited time for additional training.

Employees may also be less interested in development activities if they cannot see how these opportunities will benefit their future careers.

Managers should explain the purpose of CPD and ensure that development activities are relevant to individual needs.

4.4 Evaluation of Development Methods

Each development method offers different benefits, but its effectiveness depends on the employees' circumstances and the support provided by the organization.

On-the-job training is particularly suitable for new delivery drivers because it allows them to gain practical experience. Still, it may be less effective when employees need to develop more advanced communication or leadership skills.

Coaching can help employees address specific performance problems, while mentoring may provide longer-term support and improve workplace relationships. CPD offers opportunities for continuous improvement and career development, but employees need sufficient time and motivation to participate.

Noe (2020) highlights the importance of aligning employee training and development with organizational objectives. This means that training should not be provided simply because it is available, but because it addresses an identified development need.

For Amazon Logistics, a combination of practical training, coaching and ongoing development may be more effective than relying on a single approach.

For example, a new driver could begin with practical training, receive mentoring during their first weeks and participate in coaching sessions when specific performance issues are identified.

Overall, organizations should regularly evaluate development methods to ensure that they improve employee performance and contribute to positive working relationships.

5.0 Personal Development Plan

A Personal Development Plan (PDP) is a useful tool for identifying employee development needs and planning activities that can improve individual performance. It allows employees and managers to agree on realistic objectives, identify areas for improvement and monitor progress over a specific period.

In a logistics organization, a PDP can be particularly valuable because delivery drivers need a combination of practical skills, time management, communication and the ability to work independently.

Development plans should not focus only on organizational targets. It should also consider the employee's experience, confidence and professional goals.

5.1 Identifying Development Needs

The first stage of creating a PDP is identifying the employees' strengths and areas requiring improvement.

This can be achieved through performance reviews, individual discussions, observation and feedback from experienced colleagues.

During my employment at Amazon Logistics, driver performance was mainly monitored through delivery statistics. These statistics could provide useful information about productivity, but they did not always explain why an employee was experiencing difficulties.

For example, a driver can complete fewer deliveries because of traffic conditions, difficult access to properties or problems with the delivery application.

Managers should not rely entirely on performance data when identifying development needs.

A more effective approach would combine statistical information with regular discussions between the employee and their manager.

Anguini's (2019) explains that performance management involves identifying, measuring and developing employee performance in line with organizational objectives.

This suggests that identifying development needs should be a continuous process rather than an activity completed only when performance problems occur.

For a delivery driver, the main development needs may include improving time management, developing communication skills, increasing knowledge of safety procedures and building confidence when dealing with unexpected situations.

5.2 Setting SMART Objectives

After identifying development needs, managers and employees should agree on clear and achievable objectives.

The SMART approach can help ensure that development objectives are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound.

Doran (1981) introduced the SMART approach as a method of creating effective management objectives.

For example, instead of setting a general objective such as improving delivery performance, a manager could agree on a specific goal to improve route organization over an eight-week period.

SMART objectives also have limitations. If managers focus too heavily on measurable targets, they may overlook important factors such as employee wellbeing, confidence and teamwork.

For this reason, development objectives should include both performance measures and qualitative feedback.

The objectives should also be reviewed regularly to ensure that they remain realistic.

5.3 Individual Development Plan

The following PDP is a proposed example for a delivery driver who has completed initial training and is beginning to work independently.

It is designed to improve performance while supporting employee confidence and workplace relationships.

Development area	SMART objective	Development activity	Timescale	Measurement of achievement
Time management	Improve route organization and meet agreed, realistic delivery targets	Coaching with an experienced driver and reviewing route planning	8 weeks	Improved performance data and manager feedback
Health and safety	Demonstrate correct safety procedures during daily deliveries	Refresher training and practical observation	4 weeks	Successful safety assessment
Communication	Improve communication with managers and customers	Communication training and regular feedback for	6 weeks	Fewer communication-related issues and positive feedback
Professional confidence	Increase confidence when managing a full delivery route	Gradual workload development and weekly discussions	8 weeks	Employee self-assessment and manager observations

Source: Author's proposed development plan.

The plan includes both practical and personal development objectives because successful performance depends on more than completing deliveries quickly.

For example, improving time management may increase productivity, but employees must still follow safety procedures and provide good customer service.

The plan also encourages communication between employees and managers, which can help build trust and identify problems before they become more serious.

5.4 Monitoring and Evaluating Performance

Monitoring progress is an important part of the development process because it allows managers to assess whether the agreed activities produce positive results. For the proposed PDP, progress could be reviewed every two weeks through short discussions between the driver and their manager.

These meetings could focus on completed objectives, difficulties experienced and any additional support required.

Locke and Latham (2002) suggest that specific and challenging goals can improve performance when employees are committed to achieving them and receive appropriate feedback.

This supports the use of clear development objectives and regular progress reviews.

Performance should not be measured only through delivery statistics. Managers should also consider safety, communication, confidence and individual circumstances.

For example, a driver may improve delivery speed but begin taking unnecessary risks to complete routes more quickly. This would not represent successful overall development.

Companies should use a balanced approach to performance evaluation.

At the end of the eight-week period, the manager and employee could complete a final review to assess progress against the original objectives.

If the employee has achieved the objectives, the PDP could be updated to include new development opportunities. If progress has been limited, the manager should investigate possible reasons and consider alternative support.

Overall, a PDP can help organizations manage performance more effectively by providing clear objectives, structured development activities and regular feedback. Its success depends on realistic expectations, employee involvement and consistent management support.

6.0 Conclusion

Employee development plays an important role in improving organizational performance, building positive workplace relationships and supporting individual achievement. This report has examined the benefits of employee development, the importance of managing employee expectations and the effectiveness of different development methods, using Amazon Logistics as a practical workplace example. The analysis suggests that employee development can provide benefits for both organizations and individuals. For organizations, effective training can improve productivity, reduce mistakes and support better customer service. For employees, development opportunities can increase confidence, improve practical skills and create opportunities for career progression.

The report has also identified several limitations. Training does not automatically lead to improved performance, and employees may require different levels of support depending on their experience and individual needs.

My experience as a delivery driver demonstrated the importance of practical workplace training. Learning alongside an experienced driver and completing nursery routes helped me gradually develop the skills required to work independently.

This approach reflects Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, which highlights the importance of learning through experience. However, practical experience should be supported by regular feedback and opportunities for reflection.

The report has also highlighted the importance of managing employee expectations. The theories developed by Maslow, Herzberg and Vroom suggest that employee motivation is inspired by different influences, including working conditions, perception and individual expectations.

While performance monitoring is necessary in a busy logistics environment, depend mainly on delivery statistics may not provide a complete understanding of employee performance.

Managers should therefore consider individual circumstances and encourage regular communication with employees.

The proposed Personal Development Plan demonstrates how organizations can identify development needs, establish SMART objectives and monitor employee progress.

Overall, the findings suggest that employee development is most effective when organizations combine practical training, individual support, realistic performance expectations and continuous learning opportunities.

7.0 Recommendations

Based on the analysis presented in this report, several recommendations can be made to improve employee development and workplace relationships within Amazon Logistics.

Firstly, the organization should provide more regular individual feedback. Managers should discuss performance with employees rather than depend only on delivery statistics. This would help identify difficulties, recognize achievements and agree on suitable improvements.

Secondly, practical training should be modified to individual learning needs. While nursery routes provide a useful introduction to delivery work, employees may require different amounts of time before they feel confident managing a full workload. Managers should consider individual progress when deciding whether additional training is necessary.

Thirdly, coaching and mentoring should be encouraged. Experienced drivers could provide practical support to newer employees, while managers could use coaching sessions to address specific performance issues. Suitable guidance should be provided to employees responsible for supporting others.

Fourthly, Personal Development Plans should be used to support continuous improvement. These plans should include realistic SMART objectives, regular progress reviews and opportunities for employees to discuss their development needs.

Finally, employee development should be linked to wider organizational objectives without ignoring employee wellbeing. Productivity and customer satisfaction are important, but they should not be achieved at the expense of safety, motivation or positive working relationships.

Implementing these recommendations could help create a more supportive working environment where employees feel valued and have opportunities to improve their performance.

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