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Critical Evaluate of Strategic Employee Development and the Role of Technology and Leaders

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Introduction

With the rapid development of technology and business, enterprises are facing unprecedented competitive challenges and technological innovations. Employees are the core element in enhancing corporate competitiveness. Thus, strategic training and development of employees are particularly crucial. To maintain a competitive advantage, companies must continuously optimise human resource management (Zhu, Shi & Ouyang, 2023).

This essay aims to critically evaluate strategic employee development and clarify its significance and challenges. Firstly, the essay explores the importance of strategic employee development in enhancing the efficiency of employees and leaders. Secondly, it analyses its role in meeting organisational needs and providing competitive advantages, thereby clarifying the benefits of implementing strategic employee development. Next, it discusses the challenges faced in implementing strategic employee development. Additionally, this essay discusses the role of technology in promoting employee development. Finally, it analyses the complexity of leaders and the practical application of leadership theories and principles.Thus, the importance

of strategic employee development to organisations is clarified.

Main Body

Strategic employee development refers to the process of closely aligning the skills of employees with the strategic objectives of the organisation through systematic training methods. Employees can enhance their capabilities through continuous and efficient learning, thereby increasing their adaptability to work (Senge,1990). Therefore, strategic employee development is of crucial importance.

Strategic employee development plays a key role in enhancing employee work efficiency. Becker (1964) also emphasised the importance of employee skills in the theory of human capital. Organisations can invest in employees based on training that aligns with strategic goals, such as implementing systematic training and development plans. This not only helps employees complete their work more efficiently but also brings long-term returns to the organisation.

Dachner et al (2021) found that it is very important to training employees who

can meet the needs of human capital through formal training and development programs. Organisations can provide professional training to employees by onboarding training, mentoring, job rotation and individual skill training (Elsafty & Oraby, 2022). It is also essential to evaluate employee training in a timely manner to ensure that employees can improve their work capabilities. This not only helps employees meet job requirements and catch opportunities but also enhances their work efficiency (Urbancová et al, 2021).

Reported by Dong, Yan and Hu (2023), Huawei Talent Training System trains employees through targeted leadership and development plans. For instance, Huawei ICT Academy provides a digital learning platform for global employees. Moreover, to enable new employees to start working quickly, Huawei also assigns professional mentors to its staff. This not only accelerates the expansion of overseas operations but also enhances the efficiency of product research and development (Huawei, 2023). This clearly shows the direct impact of strategic employee development on improving employee efficiency.

Strategic employee development can not only enhance employee work

efficiency but also strengthen leadership effectiveness. The leadership of leaders is crucial for the development of organisations, their decisions and actions will directly affect the future direction of the organisation. Jacobsen et al (2022) also mentioned that the development of leadership is beneficial for promoting organisational efficiency. Through systematic leadership development programs, it not only can leaders enhance their leadership skills but also improve their decision-making levels and ability to deal with complex issues (McCauley & Palus, 2021).

For instance, Tencent has a leadership development program known as the Feilong Plan. An (2022) states that the Feilong Plan systematically cultivates participators through leadership training, managerial simulation training and various skill-building methods, enabling them to learn and master leadership skills in practice. It has successfully nurtured over 300 core managements for Tencent, achieveing more efficient team management and promoting the development of the organisation.

Furthermore, strategic employee development plays a crucial role in meeting

organisational needs and providing competitive advantages. The resource-based view found that an organisation's unique, inimitable and valuable internal resources are the core of competitive advantages. Employees and leaders are representatives through systematically trained (Lubis, 2022).

In terms of meeting organisational needs, strategic employee development can drive the realisation of organisational strategic goals. Taking Huawei's global development as an example, Zhao and SOMJAI (2024) found that Huawei offers professional skill training and cross-cultural management courses, thereby communicating better with customers from different countries. This not only promotes the implementation of Huawei's international development strategy but also assists employees in quickly adapting to new market environments.

Obviously, strategic employee development can cultivate talents with high skills and efficiency in terms of establishing competitive advantages. These individuals possess exceptional innovative capabilities, solid professional

expertise and good communication skills, bringing significant competitive advantages to the organisation. Ouanhlee (2023) states that Apple has always focused on employee training, especially in terms of innovation and professional skills. Through investment in its employees, Apple has maintained competitive advantages in the electronic market. Moreover, Apple provides a relaxed environment for innovation, which encourages employees to continuously propose new ideas and technologies. This has driven the development of the iPhone and iPad, keeping the company at the forefront of the technology industry and creating substantial commercial value for the company.

Based on the analysis , strategic employee development is not only significant for enhancing the effectiveness of employees and leaders but also can powerfully drive the realisation of organisational strategic goals by meeting organisational needs and providing competitive advantages. Furthermore, implement strategic employee development also have many advantages, such as lower unemployment, higher job satisfaction and greater organisational agility. Renowned for employee-centric in Walmart, it invests in employee

development, Walmart provides diverse training for its employees, promotes a culture of walking management, encourages employees to actively communicate and provides feedback to solve problems (Walmart, 2025). These approaches improve employee enthusiasm and service attitude, thereby establishing Walmart's strong brand reputation and loyal customer base.

However, Alexandre (2024) found that implementing strategic employee development also faces numerous challenges, including limitations in funding, time and human resources, employee engagement and the lack of assessment and feedback mechanisms. For instance, Boeing's Pilot Transition Program (related to the 737 MAX incident), Boeing has compressed training into tow hours iPad theoretical session and omitted practical operation drills in order to reduce training costs for all aircraft types. Due to financial issues that have led to the neglect of employee training, resulting in pilots lacking practical operational experience with the Maneuvering Characteristics Augmentation System(MCAS) system. Thus being unable to handle emergency situations. As a new technology, training content has not been updated, leading to a

disconnect between technological advancement and employee development plans, which in turn has caused aviation disasters (Chandra 2023; Wu et al, 2023). Gröndahl, Collins and Glanz (2019) have both shown that the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) authorization system allows Boeing to set its own training programs, which enabled Boeing to conceal the critical risks of the MCAS system.

Boeing implemented comprehensive systemic reforms to address these issues. It took remedial actions for the risks associated with the MCAS system.It also conducted open training for employees and encouraging feedback to ensure that every pilot fully grasps the training content. Additionally, Boeing actively improved regulatory mechanisms and established a third-party assessment and feedback team to ensure that employee skills align with corporate strategic goals (Imad, Elbuzidi & Chan, 2021; Boeing, 2024). Through these measures, Boeing not only fixed the risks present in the MCAS system but also enhanced the overall quality of pilots and their ability to respond to emergencies. These incidents demonstrate that strategic employee development challenges cannot be overlooked.

The organisation has encountered many challenges during the implementation process of strategic employee development. Technology plays a crucial role in addressing these difficulties. For instance, pilots can simulate experiencing malfunctions and severe weather conditions through VR technology without bearing real-world risks in the case of the 737MAX incident. This not only enhances training effectiveness but also reduces training costs, thereby decreasing the occurrence of aircraft accidents. Batool et al (2021) indicate that the advancement of technology not only promotes the improvement of employee skills, knowledge and learning abilities but also introduces new learning methods and tools for employee training, such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Virtual Reality (VR).

Among these, LMS provides employees with a convenient online learning platform, allowing them to study at their own pace and at convenient times (Cabrera, Leal & Martínez, 2025). AI can offer personalised learning recommendations based on the employee's learning level and provide regular assessment feedback, helping employees promptly identify weaknesses and

strengths for more efficient learning (Madhumithaa et al, 2025). Moreover, the emergence of VR technology brings an immersive experience to employee training. Employees can engage in leadership simulation training or work scenario simulation training through VR technology, enhancing their ability to address real-world problems in practice (Wilkinson,Brantley & Feng,2021).

Reported by Bogue (2022) and Bhowmik (2024), Amazon employs over 750,000 Kiva robots in logistics and warehousing to assist employees in sorting goods. It also uses AI to plan the robots' routes, avoiding congestion. This reduces the time employees spend walking and increases work efficiency. Additionally, Amazon has developed a personalised learning platform through Amazon Web Services (AWS), which provides personalised assessment feedback on employees' learning duration, test scores and issues, ensuring that employees can learn effectively (Tan, 2024; Riaz, 2024). The use of Amazon's AI technology not only provides work efficiency for employees but also enhances their skills, thereby driving the development of the enterprise.

However, technology alone cannot achieve organisational goals,leaders also

play a key role in this process,which is an extremely complex process. Different leadership theories and principles have varying impacts on employee development, such as transformational leadership, emotional intelligence and learning agility,

Among these, the transformational leadership theory plays a particularly significant role in employee development. Transformational leaders provide guidance and motivation to employees through individualised care , helping them to uncover their potential (Manu, 2022; Cuevas-Vargas et al, 2023) . Gad David et al (2023) found that it can also motivate employees to closely link their personal development with organisational goals by clarifying the organisational mission. Thereby, enhancing employees' sense of belonging to the organisation.

Emotional intelligence also has a critical position in employee development, including encompassing self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. Basim and Amina (2023) have both shown that leaders with high emotional intelligence are better at understanding and

managing their own and employees' emotions and needs, which helps to improve the ability to cope with stress and create conditions for employee development.

Additionally, learning agility is a key capability for employees to continuously learn, adapt and grow in complex and ever-changing environments. Employees and leaders with learning agility are able to quickly adapt to changes in work and drive the development of themselves and the organisation (Wei & Zainal, 2023).

To enhance leadership,organisations should value regular assessments and 360-degree feedback. Reported by Guy (2022), through these methods, leaders can gather opinions from superiors, subordinates and colleagues. Developing targeted plans to improve leadership through the integration of opinions and feedback. Furthermore, leaders can also analyse employee satisfaction and team performance to identify their own deficiencies and improve their leadership skills. Mentoring is also an effective way to develop leadership, mentors can share their experiences and knowledge and provide

guidance to less experienced leaders, thus helping them to identify their shortcomings and promote their development into excellent leaders. (Susanto & Sawitri, 2022; Grocutt et al, 2022).

Rometty (2023) found that IBM's managers adopted transformational leadership and implemented a feedback system to break through difficulties. David and Barbara (2019) state that leaders changed the slogan to Cognitive Business+ and developed a Checkpoint to encourage employees to rate their leaders. At the same time, IBM implemented a 360-degree feedback, allowing leaders to receive feedback from superiors, subordinates and colleagues. This not only increased employee engagement and dedication but also helped leaders improve their leadership skills. In addition, IBM established a personalised learning platform, customising job opportunities and learning content for employees or leaders , enabling them to quickly adapt to different work environments (House, 2021;Chakraborty, 2024). Through these changes, IBM successfully improved its business situation, enhanced team efficiency and gradually reshaped its corporate competitiveness.

Conclusion

In summary, strategic employee development is the core of organisational success. It is significant for enhancing the efficiency of employees and leaders, meeting organisational needs and strengthening competitive advantages. Although there are challenges in implementing development plans, it also brings benefits. In the implementation of strategic employee development, technology and leadership are also very important. Leaders must understand and apply leadership theories and principles to promote the growth and development of employees. Organisations should use technology to improve employee training and leverage leadership strengths to achieve the common development of employees and the organisation. Thereby, ensure maintaining competitive advantages in a complex business environment.

(2105 words)

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