

Student name:	Tahmina Akter Mili	Student ID number:	2525073
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Lecturer:	Gladius Kulothungan Ejike Udeogu		
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Contents

Introduction	5
PART 1: Performance and Job Design Re-Engineering.....	5
Current Practices in the Technology Industry	5
Performance Management Practices in Technology Firms.....	5
Job Design Practices in Technology Organisations	6
Critical Evaluation in the Context of Aether Innovations.....	6
Proposed Performance Management System for Aether Innovations	7
Objectives and Key Results (OKR) System	7
Continuous Performance Feedback (360-Degree Feedback).....	7
Continuous Performance Management.....	8
Job Analysis and Job Design for Key Leadership Positions at Aether Innovations	8
Chief Executive Officer (CEO).....	8
Chief Financial Officer (CFO).....	9
Chief Technology Officer (CTO).....	9
Chief Innovative Officer (CIO)	10
HR Director	10
Head of Research and Development (R&D)	11
Integration of Performance Management and Job Design at Aether Innovations.....	11
Ability: Skill-Based Job Design.....	12

Motivation: OKR System and Continuous Feedback	12
Opportunity: Autonomy and Cross-Functional Collaboration	13
PART 2: Reflection.....	14
Reflection Using Gibbs Reflective Cycle.....	14
Description	14
Feelings	15
Evaluation	15
Analysis.....	15
Conclusion	16
Action Plan	16
AI and Future Career Relevance	17
Impact of AI on HR and Management Roles	17
Using AI as a Support Tool	17
Importance of Human Skills	18
References	19

List of Figures

Figure 1: Company Logo (AiG, 2025).....	5
Figure 2: AMO Framework (Author).....	12
Figure 3: Gibbs Reflective Cycle (Amir et al., 2023).....	14

Introduction

Aether Innovations is a fast-grown technology company with 300 employees who is currently facing flat business growth, high employee turnover, and declining customer satisfaction (AiG, 2025). These in turn indicate weaknesses in the company's human capital practises, especially in the areas of performance management and job design. Poor motivations and innovations due to a lack of clear performance goals, feedback, and job roles may be causing a lack of growth and poor customer outcomes.



Figure 1: Company Logo (AiG, 2025)

Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) plays an important role in aligning the performance of employees with organisational goals and outcomes of innovation (Eshete and Birbirssa, 2024). To deal with these challenges, this report adopts the concept of SHRM in making suggestions to address this. Specifically, it focuses on rethinking the performance management system and modifying the job roles based on job design theories, to enhance the engagement, reduce turnover, and improve organisational performance at Aether Innovations.

PART 1: Performance and Job Design Re-Engineering

Current Practices in the Technology Industry

Performance Management Practices in Technology Firms

In the technology sector, the performance management practise has evolved from the traditional annual appraisals to more ongoing and data-driven systems. Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) focuses more on matching the performance of employees to the goals of the organisation, particularly in innovation-driven

organisations (Faouri et al., 2024). Many companies utilise the Objectives and Key Results (OKR) framework to outline clear and measurable goals along with ongoing feedback and 360-D evaluation systems (Herkenrath et al., 2023). These practises are advantageous for improving transparency, agility, and innovation by ensuring that employees have an understanding of how their work contributes to organisational outcomes (Sorgens, 2024).

However, at Aether Innovations, if the persistence of weak performance structures is apparent, there may be a lack of clarity in aligning goals and feeding back on them. This gap could be restricting the direction of the employees and causing them to lose motivation, which is a direct reason why growth stays flat and customer satisfaction declines.

Job Design Practices in Technology Organisations

Technology firms are increasingly using flexible job positions, autonomous teams, and cross-function teamwork to enable innovation. These practises are consistent with High-Performance Work Systems (HPWS), where work (i.e., job design) enhances employee capabilities and involvement. The Job Characteristics Model is often applied to enhance motivation in the form of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback (Roper et al., 2022).

At Aether Innovations, ambiguous job responsibilities and lack of free rein might be limiting employee creativity and collaboration. This can result in a reduction in innovation output and driver dissatisfaction, which can contribute to high employee turnover. Therefore, role redesign is crucial to enhance the individual performance as well as organisational performance.

Critical Evaluation in the Context of Aether Innovations

Although modern HR practises are widely used, however, many organisations still have to rely on outdated systems of appraisal and poorly defined roles. At Aether Innovations, these issues seem to be some of the key drivers to organisational problems. Lack of consistent feedback may lead to lower levels of engagement and lack

of clear responsibilities may limit responsibility and innovation. As a result, employees may feel undervalued, thereby result in increased turnover and reduced performance, which will ultimately impact customer satisfaction.

Proposed Performance Management System for Aether Innovations

To directly overcome these challenges of flat growth, high turnover rate, and falling customer satisfaction, a redesigned performance management system, consisting of OKRs, 360-degree feedback, and continuous performance management, is proposed in this report.

Objectives and Key Results (OKR) System

The OKR framework will align employee activities to Aether Innovations strategic priorities.

Objective: Enhance product innovation and customer satisfaction

Key Results:

- Introduce three new features of a product per quarter, to drive growth.
- Increase customer satisfaction scored by 20% due to better product performance.

This system gives clear direction and measurable outcomes which helps employees to understand their contribution to organisational success (Rompho, 2023). It directly serves to growth to the target of innovative advancements and customer satisfaction has been improved through performance-based result (A-Maawali and Al-Saadi, 2025).

Continuous Performance Feedback (360-Degree Feedback)

Aether Innovations should implement 360 degrees feedback to provide employees with feedback from managers and others, and also with feedback from subordinates and self-feedback from the employees (Souki et al., 2025). For example, software engineers will gain feedback on technical skills, teamwork, and problem-solving.

This helps to better communicate and develop as a leader and even boost engagement with employees. As employees are receiving regular recognition and constructive feedback, the job satisfaction is improved which helps in reduction of employee turnover and enhance the performance of the team.

Continuous Performance Management

The current annual appraisal system needs to be replaced with a continuous system which is based on Armstrong's performance cycle (Armstrong, 2024).

Key practices include:

- **Monthly check-ins:** monitor progress on OKRs and address challenges early on.
- **Quarterly reviews:** assess results and revise goals.
- **HR analytics tools:** monitor performance and innovation results.

For Aether Innovations this system enables performance problems to be identified at an early stage and ensures support for all. It drives employees to become more motivated and productive and thus, the outcomes of innovation and customer satisfaction are enhanced.

Job Analysis and Job Design for Key Leadership Positions at Aether Innovations

To directly address the concerns of flat growth, high turnover rate among employees, and customer satisfaction at Aether Innovations among its customers is a great deal, wherein key leadership positions must be restyled based on the job characteristics and skills-based job design principles. The desire is to enhance autonomy, accountability, and collaboration, currently missing and leading to poor innovation and low organisational performance (Verma and Singh, 2022).

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

Job Description

- Overall, lead business strategy and growth direction.
- Focus on an organisational vision that is innovation-driven.
- Build a culture of employment engagement and experimentation.

Job Specification

- Good strategic thinking and leadership skills.
- Ability to handle change and organisational performance.

Job Design Application and Impact

- High autonomy and task significance allows for more rapid strategic decisions (Facilitating a solution to flat growth)
- Continuous feedback ensures that it is directed to performance goals and organisational outcomes are enhanced.

Chief Financial Officer (CFO)

Job Description

- Create financial strategies to support innovation projects.
- Manage budgets and investments decisions.

Job Specification

- Financial analytics and strategic decision-making capabilities.

Job Design Application and Impact

- Greater autonomy in the funding of innovation contributes to the development of the product, which leads to better growth and customer satisfaction.
- Cross-functional collaboration helps utilise resources efficiently and avoids inefficient operations.

Chief Technology Officer (CTO)

Job Description

- Leading technology and engineering strategy.
- Make sure technology helps to drive product innovation.

Job Specification

- Advanced technical expertise and leadership capability.

Job Design Application and Impact

- High skill variety and autonomy lead to better innovation speed.
- Feedback loops aid in improving the quality of products, which directly leads to an improved customer satisfaction.

Chief Innovative Officer (CIO)

Job Description

- Lead innovation programmes as well as new product development
- Manage innovation labs and experimentation.

Job Specification

- Creativity and technological leadership skills.

Job Design Application and Impact

- Freedom to experiment promotes new ideas, addresses flat growth.
- Collaboration with R&D helps in better product innovation results.

HR Director

Job Description

- Develop HR strategy that is tied into business goals.
- Increase engagement and retention of employees.

Job Specification

- HR analytics and leadership growth knowledge.

Job Design Application and Impact

- Focus on engagement is decreasing employee turnover.
- Continuous feedback ensures better satisfaction and performance of employees.

Head of Research and Development (R&D)

Job Description

- Supervision of lead research and product development projects.
- Coordinate with engineering teams.

Job Specification

- Good technical and project management skills.

Job Design Application and Impact

- High autonomy and skill variation enhances innovation output.
- Collaboration ensures more rapid product development and that enhances customer satisfaction.

Overall, this new job structure ensures that leadership roles are clearly defined, performance focused, and aligned with organisational goals. This directly contributes to innovation, reducing turnover, and better customer satisfaction at Aether Innovations.

Integration of Performance Management and Job Design at Aether Innovations

In an effort to tackle these problems of flat growth, high employee turnover, and low customer satisfaction at Aether Innovations, the redesigned performance management system and job roles must go to work as a comprehensive part of the company's HR strategy. This integration is done on the basis of High-Performance Work System

(HPWS) in which HR practises are integrated with each other with the objective to enhance employee performance along the dimension of ability, motivation, and opportunity (AMO) (Kaushik and Mukherjee, 2022).

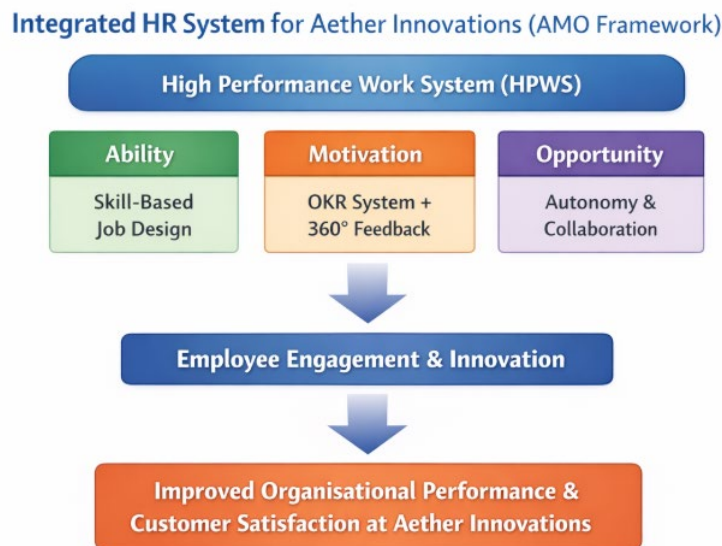


Figure 2: AMO Framework (Author)

Ability: Skill-Based Job Design

The redesigned leadership roles enhance improvement to employee ability by ensuring clarity of use of specialised skills. For example, the roles of CTO and Head of R&D are designed to improve technological knowledge and innovation output, whereas the position of the HR Director deals with employee engagement and analytics. This boosts the problem-solving and innovativeness in the process so that the Aether Innovations create by overcoming the flat growth by growing the product development capability (Fragoso et al., 2022).

Motivation: OKR System and Continuous Feedback

Employee motivation is reinforced by the use of OKRs as well as continuous feedback systems. Clear objectives like product innovation improvement and customer satisfaction create measurable objectives for employees. Regular feedback through monthly check-ins, quarterly reviews, and 360-degree evaluation helps keep the

employees engaged and clear about the performance expectations (Arubayi, 2023). This has a direct effect on decreasing employees turnovers at Aether Innovations because of a better job satisfaction and clarity.

Opportunity: Autonomy and Cross-Functional Collaboration

The redesigned roles offer more opportunity to make things by increasing autonomy and collaboration. For example, the CIO and R&D departments are empowered to experiment and work with the engineering department. This helps to improve the speed of innovation and the quality of the products, which results in customer satisfaction (Al-Ajlouni, 2021).

Overall, a performance-driven culture at Aether Innovations was created by the integration of performance management and job design, which led to enhancements in performance employee engagement, turnover reduction, increased innovation, and improved customer satisfaction.

PART 2: Reflection

Reflection Using Gibbs Reflective Cycle

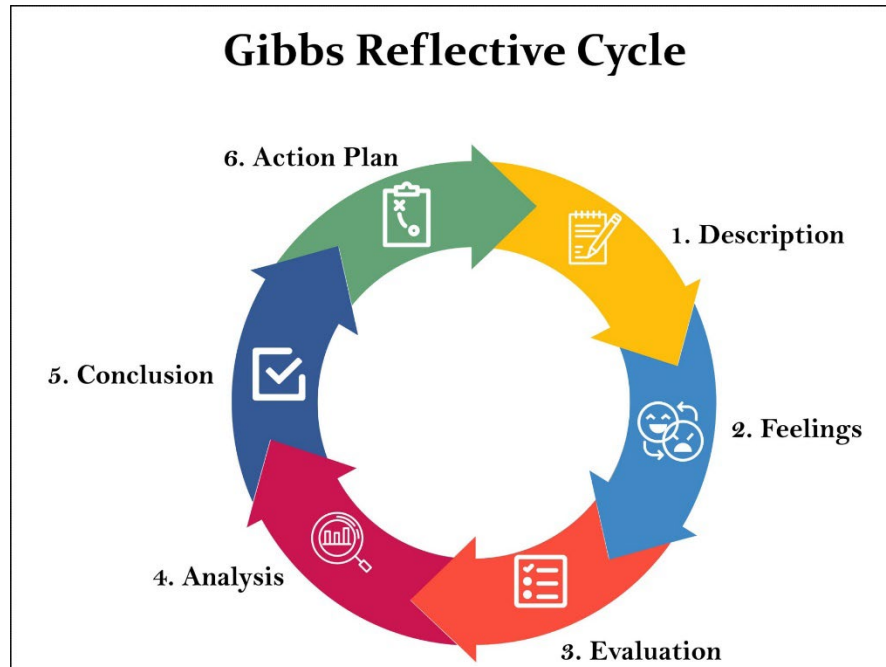


Figure 3: Gibbs Reflective Cycle (Amir et al., 2023)

Description

During this module, I gained a better understanding that HRM is not confined to administration activities such as recruitment and payroll and is strategic in enhancing organisational performance. The assignment required designing an integrated HR strategy for Aether Innovations, a technology company that is struggling with flat growth, high employee turnover and declining customer satisfaction.

In the course of completing this report, I applied specific HR practises, such as OKR based performance management, continuous feedback systems, and Job Redesign using Job Characteristics Model. This helped me to learn the direct impact of HR decisions on the business outcomes. For example, redesigning leadership roles and introducing structured performance systems can help to enhance employee engagement and innovation, which are major problems in Aether Innovations.

Feelings

At the start of the module, I considered HR primarily as an operational function primarily concerned with hiring and management of employees. I did not so much recognise HRM strategic importance. However, through this report, my attitude on this changed very much.

While working on the Aether Innovations scenario, I realised that the HR can be a strategic partner in the solving of organisational problems. For instance, the introduction of OKRs and continuous feedback can give the employees a clear direction and enhance their motivation level. Similarly, a redesign of job roles can lead to greater control and collaboration, which are significant to innovation within a technology company. This made me more confident in understanding the value of HR strategies in real organisational context.

Evaluation

A key strength of this module was learning how different HR practises can be integrated as means to improve organisational performance. The report helped me to understand how there is a performance management system and how that job design work together to influence the employee's behaviour and their outcomes.

For example, using the Job Characteristics Model to illustrate how employee's motivation is increased by increasing autonomy, feedback, and skill variety. Similarly, the use of OKR showed how having goals makes it possible to link employee performance with organisational goals such as increasing innovation and customer satisfaction.

However, a challenge I encountered was to apply the theoretical knowledge to a particular scenario of the organisation. While notion building was not difficult, creating the practical, realistic HR solutions for Aether Innovations necessitated critical thinking and better application abilities.

Analysis

This report helped me analyse how HR strategies may be used to tackle actual organisational problems. At Aether Innovations, high rates of employee turnover and low customer satisfaction are signs of weaknesses in performance management and job design.

According to the Job Characteristics Model, leaders who can increase autonomy and provide feedback in the workplace can enhance employee motivation and engagement (Meynhardt et al., 2024). This is very important to reduce turnover.

In addition, implementing OKRs helps employees and their objectives become aligned with organisational objectives such as product innovation. This ensures that the employees have a clear understanding of what their contribution is in making customer satisfaction better (Rai and Maheshwari, 2020).

Overall, this indicates that integrating HR practises can lead to better individual performance and organisational results, and this is critical in solving the problems Aether Innovations face.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this module has helped me understand better the strategic importance of HRM. I learnt that the effective HR practises are critical for the change of organisational performance, employee engagement and innovation.

Through the Aether Innovations scenario, I had an understanding of how HR strategies like performance management system and job design can be a solution of business problems. I also realised that some skills were crucial for HR professionals, such as leadership, communication, and strategic thinking.

Action Plan

To further develop my skills, I am going to concentrate on three main areas. First, I will enhance my skills in leadership and people management to help me manage teams more effectively and support organisational change. Second, I will develop knowledge in

HR analytics and data driven decision making important for evaluation of performance systems.

Finally, I shall improve my strategic thinking ability by analysing the real business cases and applying the HR theories in practical situations. All these steps will assist me in designing effective HR strategies in organisations similar to Aether Innovations and contribute to the improvement in performance and innovation.

AI and Future Career Relevance

Impact of AI on HR and Management Roles

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is making significant inroads in the mode of HR and management practises especially in technology driven organisations such as Aether Innovations. AI can aid recruitment by automating the screening of CVs, enhance performance monitoring by making dashboards, and improve performance by enabling predictive HR analytics to find the patterns of employee turnover and performances (Saranya, 2022). In the context of the proposed HR strategy, AI can be used to analyse the OKR system by continuously monitoring the progress of employees and identifying gaps in their performance. This is a direct support of Aether Innovations in overcoming the problems like loss of customer satisfaction and lack of growth by enabling faster and data-driven decision-making. However, this also means that HR professionals need to build capabilities to interpret and manage AI-insights effectively.

Using AI as a Support Tool

In my future career I intend to use AI as a replacement for managerial decision-making, but as a support tool. For instance, HR analytics powered by AI can assist to identify the trends of employee's engagement and performance in Aether Innovations, which allows HR managers to assess whether the redesigned job roles and performance systems are effective (Agarwal 2023). However, the decisions related to the development of the employees, leadership, and the organisational culture should be kept human-led to ensure that fairness and understanding of the context.

Importance of Human Skills

Despite the advancements in technology in AI, the use of human skills is still critical. Skills like leadership, emotional intelligence, creativity, and ethical judgement cannot be entirely substituted using AI (Dwivedi, 2025). In companies such as Aether Innovations, these skills are fundamental to lead and manage teams, deal with change, and innovate. Therefore, professionals that combine the capabilities of AI with the good judgement of people are still likely to be very valuable.

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