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Individual Report on “Development of a plan by meeting the identified personal development needs and expectations of individual employees in a chosen organization”

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SECTION 1.- INTRODUCTION

The management of human resources deals with the processes of organization, planning and administration of the tasks and assets related to the employees that are part of the company. Within the activities covered by this management, this report focuses on tasks related to the learning and development of individuals.

This report has as its first objective the exposition and critical evaluation of different valid tools to satisfy the personal development needs of the workers. The approaches that will be assessed in order to favour this personal development will be those related to workplace learning experience and some of the different techniques aimed at improving this development in a more targeted way: self-directed learning, induction, planned experience, coaching, mentoring, e-learning, development plan and training (Armstrong, 2006).

As a second objective, it is intended to point out and explain which are the most suitable tools for the personal development of the worker based on the development needs identified in the case study. The development areas will be identified through a learning needs analysis. As a last objective, a development plan that allows the employee to develop the identified needs will be made.

The chosen company is H10 hotel. This is a small 177 room hotel in central London. In particular, this report focuses on the kitchen department and, more specifically, on its breakfast section. This report focuses on the employees who work in the “show cooking”.

As an outcome, it is expected to develop a framework that allows the worker to respond effectively and efficiently to the goals of the company. At the same time, it is expected that with these strategies the employee will benefit from the development of new skills.

SECTION 2.- LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN HRM

The concept of learning and development is included within the activities of human resource management (HRM). Human resource management is defined as the efficient and effective use of workers to meet the company goals; it is about managing the human side of business administration through employee-influenced strategies, practices and processes (Arulrajah & Opatha, 2016). According to Armstrong (Armstrong, 2006), HRM main tasks are: human capital management, corporate social responsibility, performance and reward management, organization development, Knowledge management, resourcing, employee relations, learning and development, employee well-being and provision of employee services.

Taking into account the previous paragraph, a global picture can be obtained about the place where the area of learning and development (L&D) is located within the context of human resources. The objective of the L&D area is to ensure through different processes the facilitation of learning and the development of knowledge in the company to achieve the company's objectives and increase the individual potential of workers (Harrison, 2009).

SECTION 3.- IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF L&D STRATEGIES IN COMPANIES

Globalisation means that the business environment is in movement, with new factors continually appearing that influence the achievement of the organisation's objectives or even allow it to optimise those objectives. This dynamic environment means that companies need to develop learning and development strategies for their employees, enabling them to evolve and adapt to the characteristics of the environment (although other tools also play a role in coping with the dynamic nature of the environment). These L&D strategies help to gain competitive advantages and improve the company's intranet and extranet (Page-Tickell, 2014).

The learning and development of employees in companies improves their skills and knowledge. This enables them to work more effectively and efficiently and therefore avoid bad working practices (Rees, 2015). An organisation that supports employee development is more attractive from the point of view of attracting high quality employees (Armstrong, 2006). Employees see such company as an opportunity to apply their skills and a way to growth professionally within the organisation. L&D strategies are able to positively influence employee performance in support of business objectives.

SECTION 4.- EVALUATION OF L&D METHODS IN ORGANIZATIONS

4.1.- Workplace experiential learning

These are informal processes in which learning and development comes through experimentation and reflection. In this way the employee understands, applies and improves his or her performance through the acquisition of experience. These are long-term processes that do not respond to specific and urgent needs for improvement in the company.

Due to the continuous flow of information and performance improvement needs in a globalised world, this tool needs to be supported by more specific techniques to increase the speed and effectiveness of learning.

4.2.- Enhancing experimental learning

4.2.1.- Coaching

Among all types of coaching, this report deals with the most common approach to coaching: Skill and Performance Coaching (SPC) (Cox, et al., 2014).

This approach is usually a one to one approach and over a specific period of time, in which the coach helps to develop skills to improve an individual's performance. The scope and success of this method is defined entirely by the coachee. (Cox, et al., 2014). Normally the standards for improvement are given by external elements.

The coach assists and provides tools to the coachee that help him/her to stimulate and recognise defined external dynamics to improve his/her performance. For example, a football player could not improve his performance if he does not know the rules of a football match.

Considering the scenario of the show cooking position, this method does not seem to be very suitable. The worker knows his or her functions as a chef and knows how to perform them. Coaching is a more valid method for the understanding of complex situations not involved in an established physical-manual work. This method could be more focused on the head chef; for example, it would help him to recognise global external factors for the management of his team.

4.2.2.- Mentoring

It is a long-term process in which a person with experience in a certain field guides, offers advice and information to another worker. The mentee will be able to develop professional skills and will have the opportunity to be important in an organization (Kowalski, 2019). During delivering this practice, it is important to create a context in which the mentee feels important, valued and productive. Its purpose is to provide an organization with the possibility of having guarantees before the succession in a certain job position.

For the reason cited above, this practice is aimed at positions in which knowledge workers perform their functions. They are key positions for the transmission of knowledge in organizations and it does not make sense to apply this method in our scenario under study. For example, in the case of the hotel, it would make sense to use this practice for the position of assistant director. The director would be the mentor in charge of guiding this assistant in his learning so the hotel chain could obtain full guarantees for the replacement of this position in the future.

4.2.3.- E-learning

This learning process involves the use of the internet, software and hardware to share learning material with employees. The use of this system makes the factors of place and time

more easily manageable (Kanimozhi, 2018). Using this method, HRM efforts should focus on employee self-motivation and the need of their development (Armstrong, 2006).

This system, according to this report, should be a complement to reinforce face-to-face learning. It is very difficult to develop soft skills such as communication through this system (Armstrong, 2006), on the other hand, it provides some advantages in the way of learning: the worker learns to organize his time, learns at his own pace and can have a large amount of information available (Arkorful & Abaidoo, 2014).

In the work position under study, it can be an interesting element to consider, so its use is not ruled out. Confirmation of their suitability will be made known after carrying out a learning needs analysis of the position in section 5.

4.2.4.- Self-directed learning

This method is based on the principle that individuals acquire and retain more knowledge when they discover new skills and concepts for themselves. Of course, they need organisations to guide them and help them to identify the tools that will help them in their personal development. This type of learning is based on personal development plans and can be linked to other vehicles such as coaching, mentoring, training or e-learning (Armstrong, 2006).

This process emerges in response to the need for companies to respond to complex changes in the work environment. Individuals take responsibility for planning, implementing and evaluating their learning objectives. (Ellinger, 2004). There are authors such as Cho (Cho & Kwon, 2005), who highlight the influence of social, cultural and political factors on the learning process of individuals. For this reason, it is pointed out that this process is not only influenced by the individual, the environment plays an important role in the process.

Some of the key elements on which self-directed learning is based are communication between employees, teamwork, work practices, empowerment of employees, providing continuous learning opportunities and the use of technologies (Sowath, et al., 2016). These processes are long-term processes, economically very costly and innovative; they are usually implemented in companies using the system known as "organisational learning" (Armstrong, 2006).

This method is very interesting and will be used for the development of kitchen employees with the creation of a personal development plan. This plan will contain several vehicles for the improvement of the performance of the employees and their professional growth.

4.2.5.- Training

It is defined as systematic learning processes that help employees gain knowledge and skills previously identified by the organisation in order to improve company performance and to benefit employee development (Armstrong, 2006). Trainings have a significant cost and are intended to accelerate the learning of specific skills and knowledge (Reynolds, 2004)

The use of this method is justified when skills cannot be learned in the normal course of work (they are essential) or when, due to the changing environment, new knowledge must be acquired to adapt workers to the changing environment (Armstrong, 2006). In order to justify the implementation of training it is important to have evidence that indicates the need for its use; we refer for example to occupational risk reports, employee effectiveness reports, customer complaints, service quality reports... Once the reasons for implementation are identified and justified, the objectives are specified, the programme is designed and the type of training is selected. Finally, it is implemented and its effectiveness is evaluated. (Armstrong, 2006).

For the case under study, this method is well suited to meet the needs of the show cooking chef position due to its specialisation in specific skills.

SECTION 5.- DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

The position of show cooking chef in this hotel gives a service that the company provides to its customers in the restaurant, they can live the experience of live cooking. This service is offered by the members of the kitchen team. It is a position that they have not previously held.

The development of this scheme is justified by the mobility of employees in hospitality-related jobs in London. This scheme (and other complementary solutions to help reduce the turnover rate) aims to incentivise and challenge employees to acquire new professional skills, stay with the company and improve the performance of this service. A personal development plan is based on the performance and development needs expressed by employees. These plans are guided by managers and supported by the organisation (Tamkin, et al., 1995).

In the case under study, the actors involved in the implementation of the plan are the kitchen workers, the kitchen manager and a human resources representative. Personal development plans are carried out through a 4-step process: situation analysis, definition of objectives, action plan and implementation (Greenan, 20116).

5.1.- Analysis of the current situation and learning needs

In this first stage, all those involved analyse the challenges they face and the areas in which they would like or need to improve.

From an HRM point of view this phase is very important. It reflects 3 different points of view at different scales of the same situation: that of the employees, that of the kitchen manager and that of the L&D component of human resources. This provides an enrichment in the identification of important aspects to develop, in order to improve the performance of the show cooking service.

From the workers' point of view, and after an interview with them, they would like to improve the following professional skills:

- They want to improve their breakfast cooking techniques
- Want to improve their organisation
- Want to improve their communication skills

From the point of view of the kitchen manager, who has reports about efficiency of the employees and the technical requirements surrounding this activity, it is obtained:

- Order management at busy times needs to be improved.
- Guidelines in case of fire should be known.
- Know the product rotations at breakfast times
- Health and safety guidelines for food handling should be known.

From the point of view of the human resources L&D component, which has information on customer reviews, it is obtained:

- Communication employees-customer is inadequate
- Food service is very slow

5.2.- Set Goals

Based on the needs analysis carried out in the previous stage, the improvement objectives are:

- Improvement of customer service
- Improvement of cooking and organisational skills
- Improvement of stress management
- Improvement of firefighting skills
- Improvement of health and safety skills

5.3.- Preparing action plan

The skills to be developed belong to essential concepts necessary for the performance of the show cooking activity. For this reason, the company is committed to a 3 years personal development plan. The vehicles to be used for its development are the following:

In order to improve customer service, training (given by a person from outside the company) in communication and customer service skills will be carried out for 8 hours every four months. These trainings will be based on the explanation of concepts and role-play activities that help to improve the performance of this critical point of improvement.

In order to improve cooking techniques and organisation, the kitchen manager is proposed to hold workshops to work on these aspects. One will be held every 5 months and the results will be reflected in changes to the breakfast menu. These activities will last one week during working hours and will be complemented with routine kitchen work.

In order to improve stress management, a 2-hour training is proposed every 6 months. This training will be delivered by the human resources department and it will consist of team talks guided by the human resources representative.

Fire response skills will be improved through training and their understanding will be evaluated through a drill. This training will be delivered by the hotel maintenance manager once a year.

In order to improve health and safety skills in the kitchen, e-learning course is proposed. These courses will be held once a year until level 3 in food handling is obtained.

5.4.- Implementation plan

This development plan has a three-year timeframe. This will allow the company to reduce implementation costs through foresight.

The only development activities that will not be carried out during working hours will be those related to communication training and the food handler's course. The number of hours of the communication training, being outside working hours, will be remunerated at the same rate as if they were carried out during working hours.

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OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	ACTION BY	FREQUENCY	DURATION
Improvement of customer service	Role-play training	External trainer	Every 4 months	8 hours
Improvement of cooking and organisational skills	Workshop	Kitchen manager	Every 5 months	5 working days
Improvement of stress management	Internal training	Human Resources	Every 6 months	2 hours
Fire safety	Internal training	Maintenance manager	Every 12 months	3 hours ~~each~~
Health and safety	E-learning Course	External company	Every 12 months	16 hours

The implementation of this plan will take 3 months, which is the time needed to contract the external services and prepare the internal trainings.

SECTION 6.- MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The monitoring and evaluation of this development plan will be carried out through assessments of acquired knowledge. On the other hand, the employees will give feedback to the head chef and the head chef will produce a report which will be given to the HR L&D department. This report together with customer's feedbacks will be studied by the department to check the effectiveness of the PDP.

Section 7.- CONCLUSION

This report has demonstrated the importance of L&D in HRM. The use of L&D strategies contributes to the improvement of the organisation's performance through its employees, by providing them with different vehicles for their personal development, we contribute to their career development and self-motivation.

Coaching and mentoring tools are more focused on knowledge workers positions that play an important role in the organisation.

Training is more focused on developing specific aspects and skills and sometimes depends on the dynamic business environment.

Personal development plans involve the participation of employees in identifying and proposing areas for improvement; the company merely guides the improvement process and provides employees with the tools they need in this process.

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