

UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID

MODULE: DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS AND WORKPLACE ACHIEVEMENTS

INDIVIDUAL REPORT

Development of a plan by meeting the identified personal development needs and expectations of individual employees in Marks & Spencer

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Introduction

When a business is serious about staying ahead of the competition, it must support its workers' growth as professionals. Everyone wins when a company invests in finding out what its people need to develop professionally and then providing it. The best way to achieve this goal is to determine which training and education options will benefit the workforce at all. The purpose of this report is to determine whether Marks & Spencer's current training initiatives meet the demands of the company's workforce and further identify the development needs that the organization needs to incorporate in their development vehicles. In addition, the study will offer all Marks & Spencer workers a SMART-based, five-goal plan to help them reach their professional goals. Finally, the study will argue for and present evidence for the verdict about the applicability, feasibility, and acceptability of the suggested goals. The study focuses on evaluating the current training and development initiatives of Marks & Spencer and suggests improvements.

a) Critical Evaluation of the development vehicles

Vehicles for growth are the tools and strategies used by companies to educate and develop their employees. If an organization really cares about its employees, it must adopt these practices. Their significance in equipping people with the skills they need to accomplish their jobs well is immeasurable. This study will examine the numerous growth vehicles used by Marks & Spencer to see how effectively they cater to the demands of the organization.

Types of Development Vehicles Available to Marks & Spencer:

Performance Appraisals: Like many other companies, Marks & Spencer utilizes performance appraisals as a tool to encourage and direct staff development. An employee's performance is evaluated, their strengths and faults are pointed out, and they are given helpful feedback in this context (Aguinis, and Burgi-Tian, 2021). Performance evaluations may be used to identify areas of improvement in terms of training, coaching, and promotion opportunities for staff members.

Training and Development Programs: Employees are equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to do their jobs well via training and development programs. Marks & Spencer provides its employees with a variety of training opportunities, including in-class education, classroom instruction, and online learning. Workers may profit from these courses by learning about cutting-edge tools, developing new abilities, and raising their productivity on the work.

Coaching and Mentoring: The purpose of coaching and mentoring is to help an employee develop by giving them feedback and strategic guidance while they work towards a shared goal. Coaching and mentoring may aid employees in taking stock of their job, figuring out where they can make improvements, and developing plans for moving forward. At Marks & Spencer, employees have access to coaching and mentoring courses designed to help them develop into effective leaders and managers.

Job Rotation: By switching positions, employees learn about different aspects of the business. Job rotation may be beneficial to employees' careers since it allows them to acquire new knowledge and develop their existing talents. Marks & Spencer provides its employees with opportunities to gain experience in other areas of the business via rotating programs (M&S, 2023).

Effectiveness of Development Vehicles in Identifying and Satisfying the Development Needs of Individual Employees:

Some concepts and models that may be used to evaluate the effectiveness with which various development vehicles identify and satisfy the development needs of various employees include the learning cycle, the 70:20:10 model, and the SMART framework.

Learning Cycle: The learning cycle model is a framework for comprehending the steps involved in learning, with the four phases being: first-hand experience, reflective observation, theoretical abstraction, and application. The framework allows for performance evaluations, mentoring and coaching programs, and job rotation to be used in identifying an employee's specific training and development needs (Segbenya, and Berisie, 2020). One possible benefit of performance evaluations is that they push employees to analyze their work critically and strengthen any areas in which they are deficient. Job rotation provides workers with an opportunity to get practical expertise in different fields and functions. Employees may gain from coaching and mentoring because they are given guidance and support as they reflect on their experiences and acquire new knowledge and abilities.

70:20:10 Model: The 70:20:10 model suggests that formal training contributes just 10%, that experience on the job contributes 70%, and that coaching and mentoring contributes 20% (Growth, 2022). Workers are more likely to remember what they learn if they are given opportunities to put it into action in authentic contexts, according to this notion. Employees may benefit from coaching and mentoring, and job rotation may provide them with practical experience in other areas. Formal training programs should be used in combination with on-the-job experiences and coaching and mentoring to provide employees with the knowledge and abilities they need to succeed in their careers.

Thus, development tools are essential for motivating staff members to rise through the ranks of a business (Chien, *et al.*, 2020). Marks & Spencer provides its employees with a variety of educational opportunities, such as formal performance reviews, informal coaching and mentoring, and cross-functional rotations. Ideas and concepts like the learning cycle, the 70:20:10 model, and the SMART framework might be used to guide the development of such vehicles. Marks & Spencer must ensure the efficacy of its development vehicles by monitoring their performance on a regular basis.

Examples of situations where each type of development vehicle may be appropriate and situations where they may not be appropriate. (See Appendix 1)

b) Proposing a constructive development plan

Identification of Development Needs

Determining each employee's unique training needs is crucial to a company's development and success. Incorporating workers' specific learning needs into the design of training courses may boost performance, productivity, and job satisfaction. Fostering a culture of continual learning and development via the assessment of individual development needs may pay dividends for businesses in the form of a more engaged and retained staff.

Training in new technologies and systems: Employees at Marks & Spencer have been identified as having a need for growth in a variety of areas, including training in new technology

and systems, developing leadership qualities, and enhancing customer service and communication skills. As the retail industry increasingly relies on e-commerce and digitization, it is essential that staff members be well-versed in the latest innovations and procedures (Cahyani, *et al.*, 2023). The company has recognized the significance of this and is implementing training programs to provide employees with the knowledge and skills they'll need to adapt to the new environment.

The need for leadership development: Marks & Spencer has also seen the value in investing in the leadership development of its employees. Learning to cooperate well with others, resolve conflicts, and think ahead are all part of this. The company offers leadership training and mentoring to help employees grow in these areas and be ready for positions of increasing responsibility.

The need for training in customer service and communication skills: Marks & Spencer recognizes the need to train its staff in interpersonal skills. Client satisfaction is of utmost importance; thus, it is essential that employees have the knowledge to provide services that go above and beyond what is expected (M&S, 2023). Considering the significance of these skills in facilitating communication with customers, the company has implemented training programs and coaching to help employees develop them.

Identifying a worker's unique training needs is crucial to the employee's long-term success and the company's bottom line. Customized training courses are a great way for businesses to invest in their employees' success, motivation, and satisfaction in the workplace (LCT, 2021). Marks & Spencer is investing in its employees in several ways, including providing them with opportunities to learn about cutting-edge technologies, grow as leaders, and better serve and communicate with customers.

Professional Development Plan - Table (See Appendix 2)

Professional Development Plan with SMART Objectives

Employees at Marks & Spencer will improve their digital literacy, leadership, customer service, interdepartmental communication, and time management via these five SMART-aligned objectives for their professional development plan. Marks & Spencer may be successful in its mission by providing its staff with customized training and development programs that increase efficiency, output, and satisfaction with their jobs.

Objective 1: To improve workplace digital literacy.

Specific: Deliver training on the most recent advances in retail IT and digital resources.

Measurable: The goal is to quadruple employees' ease of utilizing digital tools in that time frame.

Achievable: It is feasible to provide individuals with online and in-person access to digital training tools and materials (Zancanella, and Rice, 2021).

Relevant: This objective is especially important given the company's focus on e-commerce and digitalization within the retail industry.

Time bound: The training will be completed in six months if progress is constantly monitored and evaluated.

Objective 2: To foster the development of employees' leadership skills.

Specific: Training and guidance geared towards developing leadership potential should be made available to employees.

Measurable: Increase confidence in leadership and individual performance by 25% within a year.

Achievable: Facilitate Leadership Growth via Mentoring and Coaching.

Relevant: This objective is especially important given the company's focus on developing future executives from within.

Time bound: The leadership training will endure for 12 months, and participants will be evaluated and tracked four times during the year.

Objective 3: Enhance of Customer service skills among employees.

Specific: To train our employees to better interact with customers.

Measurable: Increase customer satisfaction by 10% in only six months via better communication and service (BTT, 2019).

Achievable: Facilitate access to tools for training, guidance, and client assessment.

Relevant: This objective is consistent with the company's focus on happy consumers.

Time bound: The training will be completed in six months if progress is constantly monitored and evaluated.

Objective 4: Foster more diversity and inclusion.

Specific: Instruct workers on how to collaborate and communicate across departments and divisions.

Measurable: Reduce inter-departmental misunderstandings by 30% in a year.

Achievable: Clear some time for interdepartmental training and some fun team-building games.

Relevant: This objective is timely since the organization is now working on ways to improve internal communication and teamwork (Michael Page, 2021).

Time bound: All training sessions will be completed within one year, with progress and outcomes constantly monitored and evaluated.

Objective 5: Teach employees how to schedule their time more effectively.

Specific: A 15% increase in productivity after six months of time management and productivity coaching.

Measurable: Make tools for education, direction, and productivity accessible.

Achievable: Appropriately achieve time management.

Relevant: This objective is critical because it helps the company achieve its long-term objective of increasing productivity and efficiency in the workplace.

Time bound: The training will be completed in six months if progress is constantly monitored and evaluated.

The suitability, feasibility, and acceptability of the proposed professional development plan objectives

Marks & Spencer thinks the proposed plans for career development are doable and sensible. The company place a high value on its employees and has developed a variety of initiatives to help them advance in their careers. There is a decent possibility that the proposed objectives may aid the company in reaching its ultimate aims.

Objective 1: To improve workplace digital literacy.

Suitability: Marks & Spencer is well positioned to accomplish this aim since the company values and rewards employee participation. When employees are invested in their job, the company sees an increase in productivity, revenues, and employee happiness (Shan, and Tang, 2020).

Feasibility: There are several tools available to help achieve this objective, including surveys, focus groups, and recognition schemes.

Acceptability: It's an understandable aim, given that most employees would welcome more participation if it meant feeling more fulfilled in their work.

Objective 2: To foster the development of employees' leadership skills.

Suitability: As a result of its emphasis on leadership development and its Leadership Academy, Marks & Spencer is well positioned to do this. Both financial results and employee engagement, which are critical to any company's success, have been found to increase under strong leadership.

Feasibility: This is attainable since there are many programs and tools available to assist individuals develop their leadership skills, such as mentoring schemes, seminars, and online courses (HBR, 2019).

Acceptability: Employees may benefit professionally and emotionally by being encouraged to improve their leadership skills.

Objective 3: Enhance Customer service skills among employees.

Suitability: This is a reasonable objective for Marks & Spencer given the increasing digitization of the retail industry at all and the company's own investments in digital transformation programs like e-commerce and data analytics.

Feasibility: The objective is doable given the availability of resources including online courses, seminars, and peer learning to boost digital literacy.

Acceptability: It is reasonable and desirable to strive to improve digital literacy since doing so has been proved to increase productivity and competitiveness in the job market.

Objective 4: Foster more diversity and inclusion.

Suitability: As a result of Marks & Spencer's dedication to diversity and inclusion and its many initiatives in this area (such as unconscious bias training and diversity networks), this objective is well suited to the company.

Feasibility: There are several tools available to help achieve this aim, such as employee resource groups, mentoring programs, and cultural competency education (Sims, et al., 2021).

Acceptability: If the result is a more welcoming and respectful workplace for everyone, then employees will likely support measures to increase diversity and inclusion.

Objective 5: Teach employees how to schedule their time more effectively.

Suitability: Marks & Spencer's commitment to sustainability and its several sustainability-focused activities, such as Plan A and Farming for the Future, make it an ideal candidate for achieving this objective.

Feasibility: The target is attainable due to the abundance of resources available to learn about and put into exercise sustainable practices, such as certifications, seminars, and online courses (Ferri, et al., 2020).

Acceptability: Employees are more likely to be inspired to work towards this goal if they believe it has the potential to improve their own lives as well as the organization's.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the growth and success of a business are contingent on management's capacity to identify and address their employees' unique learning needs. It encourages a growth mentality, enhances morale and productivity, and encourages employees to continue learning throughout their careers. Coaching, mentorship, job rotation, and formal training and development programs are all ways in which businesses may assess and address their employees' individual needs for professional growth. Marks & Spencer has implemented several initiatives meant to assist employees in identifying their own individual paths to professional development. Marks & Spencer has implemented a learning culture to improve employee satisfaction and retention by providing them with opportunities to learn new technologies, management techniques, and approaches to customer care and communication. Marks & Spencer's proposed PD plan goals are reasonable, achievable, and commendable, and will enable the company to meet the professional development expectations of its employees.

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Appendix 1

Examples of situations where each type of development vehicle may be appropriate and situations where they may not be appropriate.

Performance appraisals: A performance review may be useful for employees who are interested in receiving constructive feedback on their work and expanding their skill set. Staff members that have a low tolerance for feedback and criticism may not benefit from these techniques. Sometimes, helping employees improve their skills via coaching or mentoring is the best option.

Coaching and mentoring: Coaching and mentorship programs may be helpful tools for employees who require assistance acquiring new skills. These tools might be especially helpful for employees who are new to their jobs or going through a tough patch. But if your employees are defensive about receiving feedback or shy away from sharing their own experiences with others, coaching and mentoring may not be the greatest strategy (Chien, et al., 2020). Employees in this role may benefit from performance evaluations and job rotation to better understand their own development needs.

Job rotation: Changing jobs may be a good way for employees to get exposure to new areas and develop their skill sets. Employees interested in exploring other career paths or learning more about the organization might benefit from this approach. However, job rotation may not be the greatest choice if employees are not willing to acquire new abilities or are not used to working in a variety of environments (Sippli, et al., 2021). In such situations, coaching or mentoring might be more beneficial in helping employees develop their skills and confidence.

Training and Development Programs: It may be appropriate to invest in training and development programs when employees need to enhance their talents to do their tasks. These courses might be quite helpful for employees who are new to their jobs or who are going through significant changes in their responsibilities (Growth, 2022). On the other hand, training and development courses may not be necessary if employees already have the necessary knowledge and skills to conduct their tasks well. In these situations, it may be beneficial to use coaching, mentoring, or job rotation to expose individuals to new environments and challenges.

Appendix 2
Professional Development Plan - Table

Development Objectives	Priority	Activities to be undertaken	Resources	Target Start Date	Target End Date	Evaluation
Objective 1: To improve workplace digital literacy	Deliver training on the most recent advances in retail IT and digital resources.	Training campaign	There are several tools available to help achieve this objective, including surveys, focus groups, and recognition schemes.	1st June	5th June	The employees will be capable of performing digital modes in better ways.
Objective 2: To foster the development of employees' leadership skills.	Training and guidance geared towards developing leadership potential should be made available to employees.	Training programs, interactive sessions.	This is attainable since there are many programs and tools available to assist individuals develop their leadership skills, such as mentoring schemes, seminars, and online courses	6th June	10th June	Employees will be able to lead teams.
Objective 3: Enhance of Customer service skills among employees	To train our employees to better interact with	Mock sessions on customer handling.	The objective is doable given the availability of resources	11th June	15th June	Employees will be able to cooperate and handle customers.

	customers.		including online courses, seminars, and peer learning to boost digital literacy.			
Objective 4: Foster more diversity and inclusion	Instruct workers on how to collaborate and communicate across departments and divisions.	Setting up Ethical principles and regulations	There are several tools available to help achieve this aim, such as employee resource groups, mentoring programs, and a cultural competency education	16th June	20th June	An inclusive and employee friendly work atmosphere will be developed in the workplace.
Objective 5: Teach employees how to schedule their time more effectively	A 15% increase in productivity after six months of time management and productivity coaching.	Teaching appropriate Time management strategies.	The target is attainable due to the abundance of resources available to learn about and put into exercise sustainable practices, such as certifications, seminars, and online courses.	21st June	25th June	Employees will be capable of meeting deadlines, managing times and handle complex works in short durations.