

The Importance of Evidence Based Practice, Critical Thinking and Decision making to ensure integrity and values are upheld

Evidence-based practice (AC1.1)

Evidence based practice is a process where evidence is gathered from reliable sources and used to develop knowledge and understanding to inform practice (Rousseau and Briner, 2014).

According to Rob Briner evidence based has three key components:

- 1) A general approach
- 2) Multiple sources of data and evidence
- 3) Structured and stepped approach.

(FlourishDx, 2022)

When talking about a *general approach*, it is meant that the approach is *conscientious*; that we try gather evidence, *explicit*; whereby we write down and share information and evidence and *judicious*; whereby we judge the quality of what we have written down) (Barens, Rousseau and Briner 2014)

In order to be conscientious, explicit and judicious, we must ensure we are making decisions based on *multiple sources of data and evidence*. There are four sources of data that should be considered:

- 1) Scientific literature
- 2) Organisational data
- 3) Expertise
- 4) Stakeholder

Scientific data involves looking and evaluating the scientific studies that have been published on topics relevant to people professionals, for example, recruitment and the effect of feedback on employee performance. Scientific data that are published in peer-reviewed journals are especially crucial as they have undergone thorough scrutiny from peers and provide the strongest evidence on cause-and-effect relationships (Young, 2024). However, there are areas of Human Resource Management (HRM) that are not researched thoroughly and therefore the data is limited (Taylor & Woodhams, 2022). In addition, the scientific data isn't always practical in applying the real-life settings and situations, therefore this is where the addition of organisational, expertise and stakeholder sources of evidence can provide further insight.

Organisational data refers to financial data or performance indicators, but it can also come from customer or employee feedback. This source of evidence helps leaders identify potential barriers and solutions (Young, 2024). The expertise and professional judgement of colleagues and practitioners is important for determining whether a

management issue does require attention (Young, 2024). Stakeholders are individuals whose interests are affected or are affected by a decision or outcome. These could be internal stakeholders, such as employees or external stakeholders such as suppliers. This evidence provides a guide to what barriers the organisations need to overcome and the consequences of the solutions provided (Young, 2024). Qualitative data, such as percentages and figures possess less risk of bias compared to qualitative feedback, such as customer or employee feedback. However, there is research to challenge this as staff members may still be biased with qualitative data to stick to the status-quo (Young, 2024). With any research, we need to critically appraise the data to be aware of any bias or misinformation (Aveyard, Preston and Farquhar, 2023)

Using just one of these sources of evidence does not constitute as thorough evidence-based practice. We need to use as many pieces of evidence from multiple sources of data to ensure we get a picture that best fits the circumstances of the situations and that best fits the organisational context (Young, 2024).

Robert Briner says that the *structured and stepped approach* ensures that people do not do things their own way, instead they follow overarching steps (FlourishDx, 2022). The six-step process has been developed to help ensure that a structured and stepped approach is taken and is outlined in the image below:



Figure 1: the six step process
(Young, 2024)

Barends, Rousseau, and Briner (2014) explain that when we are trying to be conscientious, explicit and judicious, we need to be using the best available evidence from multiple sources and be *asking, acquiring, appraising, aggregating, applying and assessing*.

By using the key component of evidence-based thinking, this will allow provide us with the opportunities needed to critical think. Throughout the process, it is vital that we question assumptions and consider where there are knowledge gaps (Young, 2024). Despite there being a large focus on ensuring that evidence-based practice is used, experts in the field, such as Briner (2009), still believe that people rely on hunches, or rule of thumb to make decisions. The professional map has been developed to equip professionals to succeed in shaping a changing world of work (Young, 2024). The profession map defines the knowledge, behaviours and values which should underpin the profession. At its core are the values of being principle led, evidence based and outcomes driven. The idea of evidence-based practice and the explanation of the three key components creates a universally-applicable foundation that can be used in each organisation and across any decision making.

Analysis Tool and Method (AC 1.2)

One analysis tool that might be applied by organisations to recognise and diagnose issues, challenges and opportunities is the PESTLE tool. PESTLE stands for Political, Economics, Social, Technology, Legal and Environmental factors.

Political factors will include things such as countries government policies and political stability. *Economic* factors include factors such as exchange rates, labour costs and consumer spending. *Social* factors include looking at trends such as lifestyle factors and cultural norms. Technology refers to how a business is responding to technology innovation and storage. *Legal* factors include looking at current employment labour law and legislations. *Environmental* factors will include looking at whether a business has direct impact on the environment and corporate social responsibility and ethical sourcing of products and services (Battista, 2024)

PESTLE is a simple, easy to use analysis tool, however some PESTLE analysis users oversimplify the amount of data used for decisions thus it is easy to use insufficient data. Alternatively, there is a risk of capturing too much data which may lead to organisations finding it difficult to make decisions (Battista, 2024)

PESTLE analysis examines broad, macro-environments, whereas analysis tools such as Porters Five Forces focuses on the competitive dynamics within an industry, thus examines more of the micro-environment (Hadley, 2023).

PESTLE has also been criticised for its reliability. Whilst completing a PESTLE analysis, it may be accurate, but as things rapidly change, then the duration of time that the analysis is accurate for may be short lived. In addition, applications of the real word often differ from theory and what is predicted, does not always happen, which raises further concerns about its reliability (Marmol, Feys, and Probert, 2015).

Whilst PESTLE is an extensive analysis tool, it does only focus on the external factors that are at play. Therefore, PESTLE is often used in combination with another analysis tool, such as SWOT to investigate internal factors (Kansongue, Njuguna, and Vertigans, 2023). When looking at research, many studies show the use of PESTLE with another analysis tool, such as SWOT. Therefore, using PESTLE alone, is likely to not create a good enough analysis (Battista, 2024).

One method of analysis are surveys, which involve researchers producing documents with specific questions that respondents then answer (Stockemer and Bordeleau, 2023). Surveys are faster to distribute and they are often preferred because they can be answered at any time, unlike interviews (Taylor and Woodhams, 2022). However, overall respondent rates may be lower in surveys because you are relying on people to complete them and at time, questions may be missed, intentionally or unintentionally (Taylor and Woodhams, 2022).

Surveys and interviews alike allow the participants to have their own say, however there is a risk of interviewer bias influencing the response (Galdas, 2017). Surveys have an advantage of getting one persons opinion at a time unlike focus groups which may end up in one or two people dominating the discussion (Taylor and Woodhams, 2022).

Critical thinking (AC 1.3)

Critical thinking is the ability to think well and to be able to evaluate and reflect the validity of the arguments and perspectives of other (CIPD, 2019). Critical thinking requires individuals to critique the ideas and arguments of others by asking good questions. In addition, constructing your own, well phrased arguments and ensuring they are effectively communicated to others is a key principle of critical thinking. Furthermore, being able to identify when others are using critical thinking within the moment is crucial when it comes to critical thinking as this will impact how effectively you will propose a business plan as you need to identify when people may be intentionally or unintentionally using critical thinking to move away from your plan (CIPD, 2019).

Critical thinking is important as it avoids us making decisions based on incorrect assumptions, unreliable sources and unconscious biases. By using critical thinking to help ideas emerge, individuals are less likely to fall into the trap of group-thinking or herd mentality (Bouygues, 2022). By applying these principles within an organisation, it promotes open and effective communication in the work place as you are listening to other people's perspectives. Collective intelligence will outperform individual intelligence (CIPD, 2019).

Critical thinking can be a very effective tool within people management as it enhances people management skills. There are often a variety of personalities, culture backgrounds and opinions within an organisation. Critical thinking enables employees to think and analyse situations and the outcome before reaching a conclusion (Tripathy, 2020). Critical thinking builds perspective taking skills, which in turn will help organisations to choose the right words for a better language

presentation (Tripathy, 2020).

Additionally, within an organisation, there are numerous decisions that need to be made. In order for the organisation to make better decisions, they need to ensure that they are thinking critically about the outcome of each decision and which would be the best outcome for the organisation and the employees (Tripathy, 2020).

Critical thinking within people management allows people to give their perspective, which will naturally foster alternative, creative ideas that others may not have thought of, promoting effective decision making (CIPD, 2019). Critical thinking also allows people to effectively self-reflect, provide compassion to others. Ensuring that you show compassion and perspective taking within a workplace increase staff moral (Tripathy, 2020)

Critical thinking and evidence-based practice go hand in hand with one another. Evidence based practice is about asking good questions which is needed in order to think critically (Tripathy, 2020).

Achieving Effective Outcomes (AC 1.4)

SWOT analysis and De Bono's 6 hats are two decision-making processes for achieving effective outcomes.

SWOT analysis' looks at four different key factors – strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats that may occur in an organisation (Morrison, 2013). To start the SWOT process, the objective must be identified and then the SWOT is used to analyse and make effective outcomes (Haan, 2024). This method can be as basic or thorough as needed and the flexibility of this makes the SWOT analysis effective (Haan, 2024). However, SWOT analysis can lead to making some incorrect assumptions which may result in undesirable delays (Thomas, Chermack and Kasshanna, 2007).

De Bono's 6 hats can be used individually or as a group to help achieve effective outcomes. De Bono's 6 hats are as follows:

Blue Hat: The blue hat sets the agenda, focus and sequence, ensures the guidelines are observed and asks for summaries, conclusions, decisions and plans action.

Green Hat: The green hat is for creative thinking and generating new ideas, alternatives, possibilities and new concepts.

Red Hat: The red hat is about feelings, intuitions and instincts. The red hat invites feelings without justification.

Yellow Hat: The yellow hat is for a positive view of things, so analysing the benefits

Black Hat: The black hat identifies risks and is used for critical judgement.

White Hat: The white hat is all about information relevant to the decision.

(Ferre, 2023)

De Bono's 6 hats ensure that all perspective is taken into consideration. This is especially beneficial when a difficult decision is needed to be made with the added pressure of time restrictions. When this is completed as a group, then it prevents a single person or perspective taking over and allows everyone to have their say (Parsons, 2024).

Ethic Perspectives (AC 1.5)

Deontological ethic perspectives can be understood as duty-based ethical theories, meaning it focuses on the nature of the action itself as well as the motive in order (Benlahcene, Zainuddin and Akmal, 2018). Deontological ethics suggests that some types of actions, such as stealing, are wrong in themselves and not simply wrong because of the bad consequences (Benlahcene, Zainuddin and Akmal, 2018). Deontology advocates say that some actions are intrinsically morally right or wrong (Helms and Hutchings, 1992) A key strength of deontology is that it believes that everyone has a right to be treated in ways that guarantee their dignity, respect and independence which is fundamental within a workplace (Körner and Deutsch, 2022). However, the perspective of focusing on the nature of the action itself could be harmful if it is followed too rigidly as it does not always look at the bigger picture, which could lead to some poor decision-making as you're not looking at the picture from different lenses workplace (Körner and Deutsch, 2022). In addition, if deontological ethics were applied in situations within the work place, then yourself will need to show moral absoluteness with no wrong-doing, which can never be practised by any normal person (Körner and Deutsch, 2022).

In contrast to a deontological ethic perspective, utilitarianism argues that the morality of an action is determined by the consequence (Deckop, 2008). The principle suggests that the action that produces the most beneficial outcome for the most people should be the one chosen.

Utilitarianism has been praised for its ability to enhance overall employee satisfaction and productivity. However, utilitarianism may overlook individuals' rights and justice as the outcomes may harm the minority if they benefit the majority (Olanipeku and Jayeoba, 2022).

Having a balance of both deontological and utilitarianism within the work place will be beneficial to allow effective decision-making. However, these are just two perspectives and there are many more that should be considered. To ensure that many different ethical perspectives are taken into consideration, the 8 ethical lenses was devised. The 8 ethical lenses are; fairness, merit, markets, democracy, wellbeing, right and duties, character and handing down. The wellness lense is based upon utilitarianism philosophy, whilst the character lense is based upon deontological philosophy (Clark, 2015).

Overall, is important to view each ethical problem individually, and whilst there will be some 'hard and fast rules', we need to ensure the consequence of the rules are carefully considered.

Measuring Performance (AC 3.1)

Measuring the performance of a company is key in indicating how well a business is performing and succeeding (Gibson, 2023). A company can look into financial and/or non-financial performance measurements.

An example of a financial method of measurement of performance is whereby a company may analyse the gross profit margins. The gross profit margin is a profitability ratio that shows what percentage of revenue is left after subtracting the cost of the goods sold. However, the gross profit does not include operating expenses, interest or taxes and therefore, the company may not get the full picture when using this method. Instead, to gain a fuller picture, calculating the net profit margins may be more beneficial as it does take into considering the operating expenses (Gibson, 2023).

Jović and Tomašević (2021) claims that modern measurements look beyond just the financial methods alone as they are not strong enough measurements of performance. When looking at a non- financial performance measurement, a company can explore customer satisfaction. Within customer satisfaction, there are a number of subcategories that could be explored. For example, a company could look at the retention rate. The retention rate is calculated by dividing the number of customers lost in a given quarter by the number of customers at the start of the quarter. The lower the retention rates, then the more likely a business is succeeding (Jović and Tomašević, 2021).

However, it is important to not rely on the retention rate at face value, exploring why the reasons why the retention rate is at its current level is advantageous as it can then provide further qualitative feedback into how the business may be able to improve. To see whether retention rates are increasing, decreasing or stabilising, it would be beneficial for the company to complete frequent retention rates, for examples, quarterly (Peters, 2024).

Single measurements are unlikely to capture the whole picture (Peters, 2024). There could be patterns and themes identified by using multiple measurements. However, using too many measurements could cause an overload in data (Peters, 2024). The Balanced Scorecard is a popular method to measure both the financial and non-financial performance of a company (Cote, 2023). The use of the balance-scorecard allows stakeholders to make more evidence decisions as it takes the financial and non-financial data into consideration, providing a more wholistic approach.

The effects of people practice (AC 3.2)

Pressure on organisations and management have increased, which has increased our expectations about the quality of decisions that leaders make (Dwivedi et al, 2021). With the rise in social media and online news, organisations are more

exposed now than ever (Dwivedi et al, 2021). There are various ways in which people practice can add value in an organisation.

Skybound Therapies Limited is a private-sector company with around 50 employees. Skybound staff work with children and adults with disabilities and during recruitment, within interviews, the employees must meet a certain criterion to move onto the next stage. We engage in values-based recruitment that attracts talent on the basis that their individual values and behaviours align with the values of the company (Blakely, 2021). By ensuring that the candidates values align with the companies, they are likely to be a good fit within Skybound and thus, hopefully increasing retention rates (Reinhardt, 2023)

If candidates are successful with the first interview, we then proceed to a second interview, whereby the candidate comes and see's what we do in practice. Often, people who apply for jobs at Skybound don't understand what is required on the job. Therefore, this allows candidates to understand more of what is required of them and to ensure that we are the right fit for them, as much as them being the right fit for Skybound. During these initial stages, we also provide an information pack and a job description which provide more details about the company and the role.

In addition, Skybound also provide a benefit's pack, which outlines all of the different befits there are for working with the company. These competitive incentives have been suggested by current Skybound employees, which means that implementation of them has allowed current employees to be heard in addition to gaining the benefits that have been highlighted. Research has shown that 88% of employees have said workplace benefits improved their overall happiness (Whytock, 2022)

A method that might be used to measure the impact of people practice is cost-benefit analysis. Cost-benefit analysis is a form of data driven decision making that analysis at the risks and benefits to a particular scenario (Stobierski, 2019). The basic principles and framework can be applied to virtually any decision-making process. The cost/benefit analysis allows organisations to look at the long term and short-term risks and benefits to decide upon an organisational matter (Stobierski, 2019). Cost-benefit analysis ensures that organisations are systematically considering the various factors which should in turn, influence strategic choice and better decision-making (Stobierski, 2019). Cost-benefit analysis promotes transparency within people management as it allows organisations to clearly communicate the rationale behind their decisions (ConquerHR, 2022).

Another method that may be used is the Return on Investment (ROI). ROI is an important method to help evaluate the profitability of an investment and to make informed decisions about where to allocate resources (Gammon, 2022). However, ROI does not look at the different factors that are influencing the result and only provides a snapshot of what may be happening in a company. During an analysis of ROI, if you are not meeting the goals, the insights can be used to make improvements. For example, if there is a 'people issue', then within people

management, additional training can be taken to help improve the insights (Gammon, 2022). Previously, people management have been viewed as a soft department that didn't directly contribute to business goals, however over the pandemic, it was shown that people management can be key in business goals and survival, which should be highlighted when measuring ROI (Gammon, 2022).

With any company, it is important to ensure that a range of methods are used to collect the data on the impact of people management, a singular method on its own isn't good enough.

Quantitative Data Analysis

Comparison within departments

The four graphs below show each department's performance review judgments as a percentage. The blue graph shows the first quarter and the orange graph shows the second quarter.

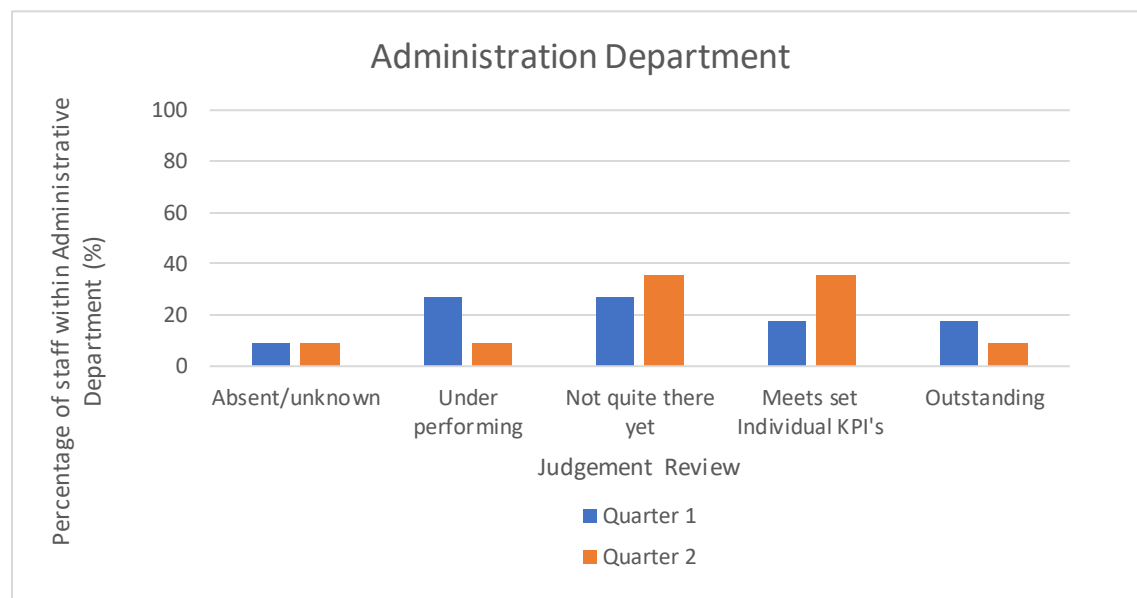


Figure 2: A graph showing the results of the judgement review for quarter 1 and 2 in the administration department.

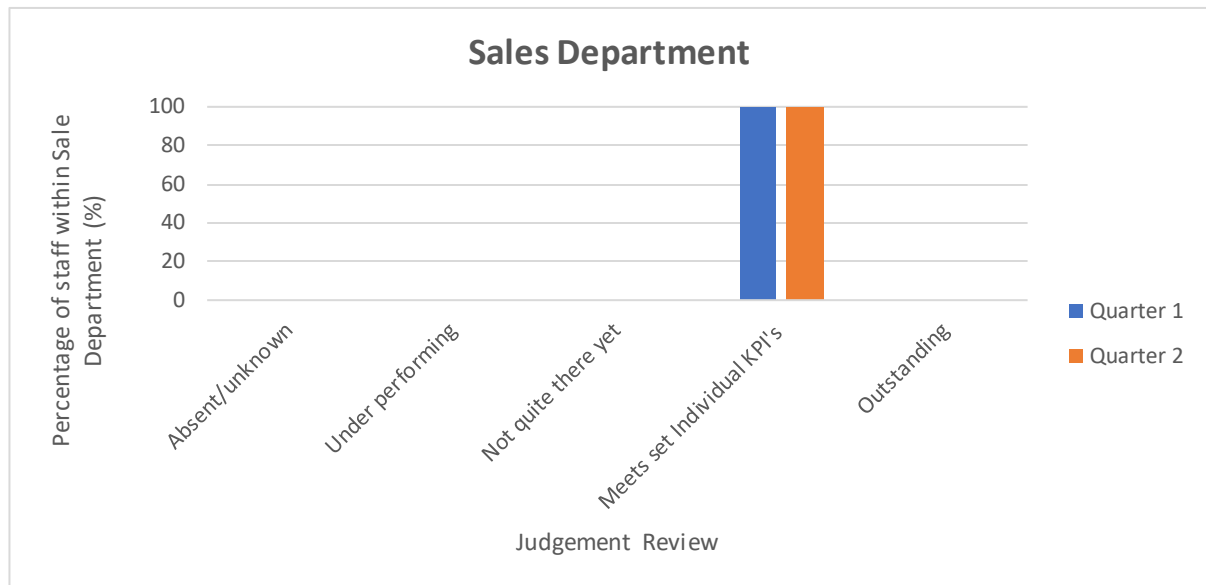


Figure 3: A graph showing the results of the judgement review for quarter 1 and 2 in the sales department.

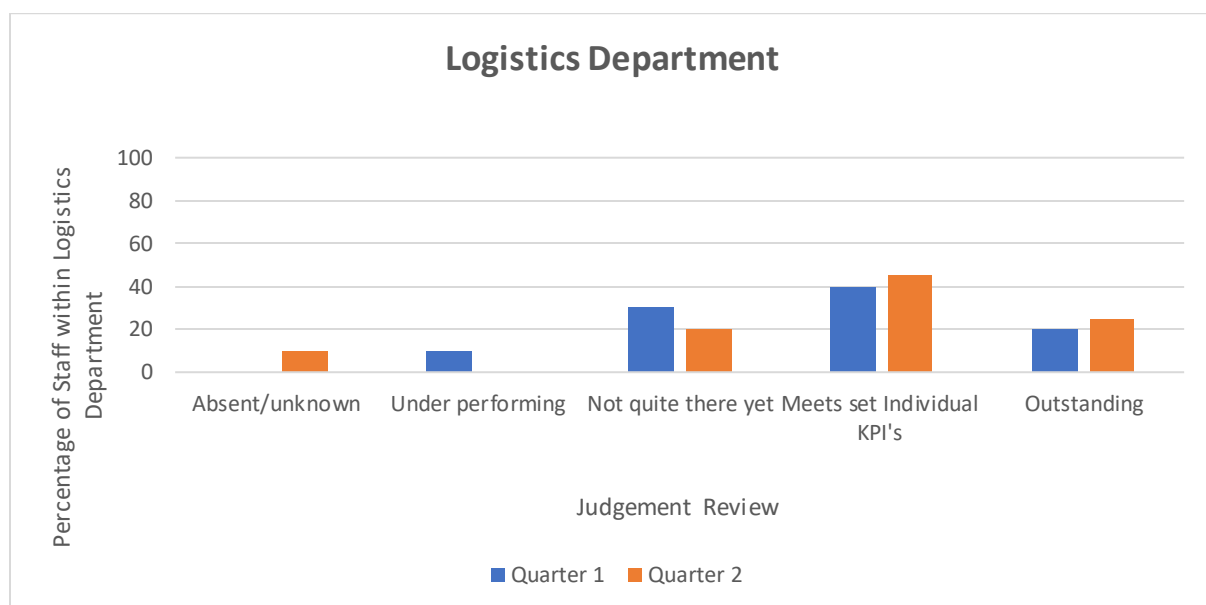


Figure 4: A graph showing the results of the judgement review for quarter 1 and 2 in the logistics department

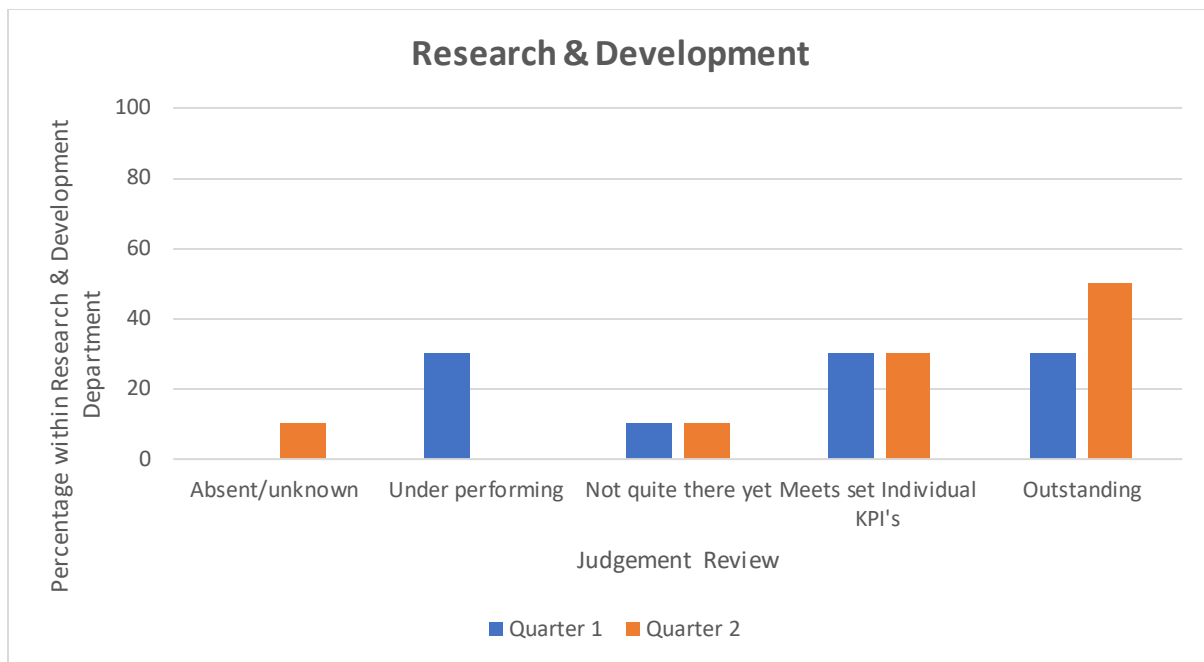


Figure 5: A graph showing the results of the judgement review for quarter 1 and 2 in the Research & Development department

When looking at administrative sales, the number of employees who are 'underperforming' decreased from the first quarter to the second quarter, with the employees who are 'not quite there yet' or 'meet set individual KPI's' increasing. There is a decrease in the percentage of employees which were outstanding.

Within the sales team, all the staff have met the set individual KPI's for both quarters, though there is no progression into 'outstanding'.

Within the logistics department, over half of the employees in the second quarter had met set individual KPI's or were outstanding. The number of employees that were underperforming or not quite there yet decreased from the first quarter and second quarter.

Within the research and development team, from first quarter to second quarter, the number of underperforming staff members decreased, with there being an increase in the number of employees who were 'outstanding'.

Based upon these graphs, it is recommended that there are more regular meetings that are set within the quarters to ensure that the individuals are on track to meet the expected KPI's for that quarter. For example, within the first quarter, the employees may have one or two additional meetings to discuss the KPI's. This allows the employees to have more regular check ins to gain support and voice any concerns about the KPI's that they were set. According to Tuhey (2024), it is recommended that 1:1 meeting should be completed monthly.

It also allows the line managers to analyse what parts of the KPI's the employees may be struggling with and identify common themes that may need addressing before the end of the quarter and therefore increase the percentage of staff who are 'meeting the

set KPI's' or that are 'outstanding' in the judgement review.

However, this may be time consuming as the line managers will need to try and meet with each staff member more frequently than currently. In addition, by imbedding check ins between the quarters, this would be at a cost to the organisation as they will need to pay the employees for their time to attend the meeting (Romney, Allen and Heydarifard, 2023).

Comparison across departments for quarter 1 and 2

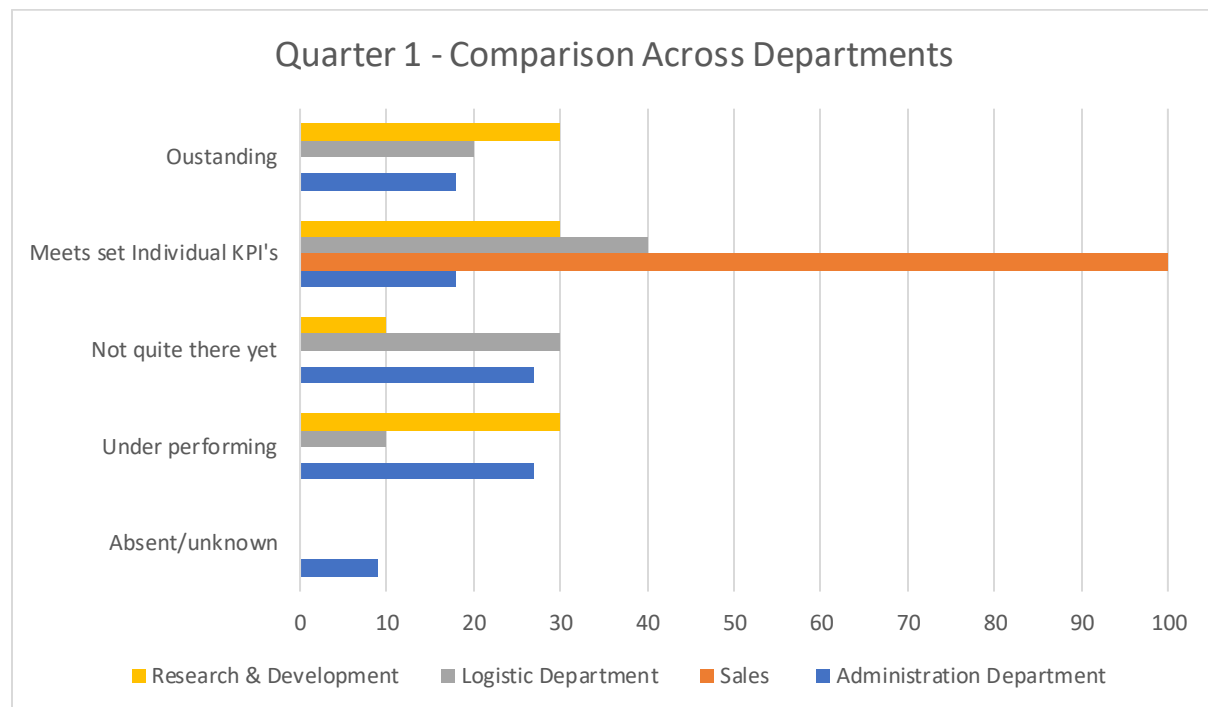


Figure 6: A graph showing the results of the judgement review for quarter 1 across all departments

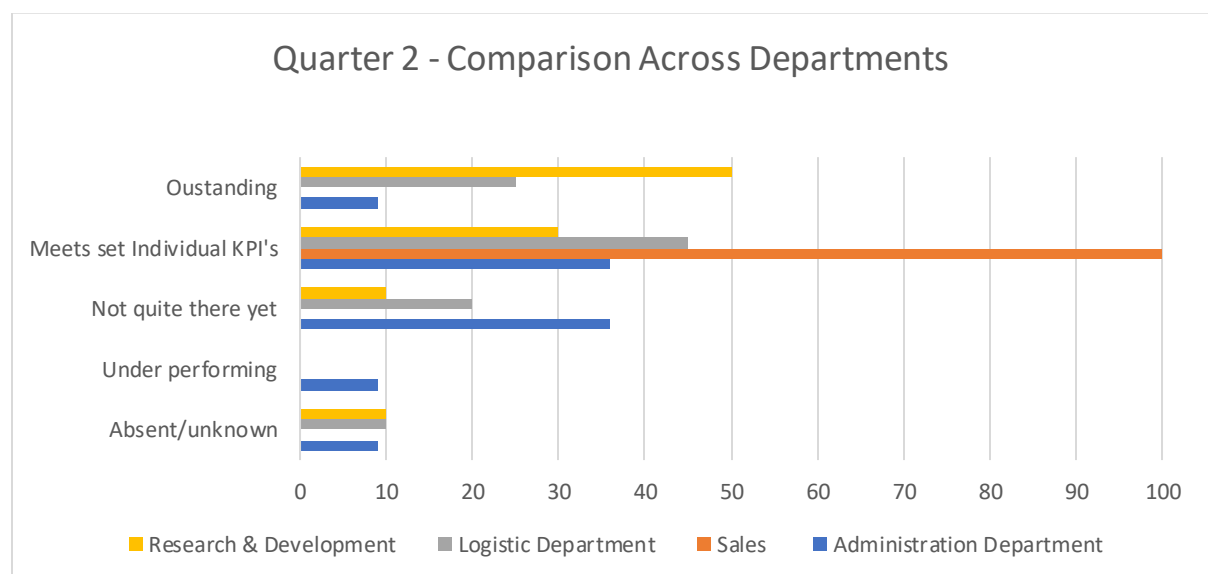


Figure 7: A graph showing the results of the judgement review for quarter 2 across all

departments

The graphs above show the comparison of judgement reviews across departments in the 1st and 2nd quarter. Graph 6 and 7 shows that the research and development team were the team that had the highest percentage of staff with 'outstanding' judgement reviews across both quarters. The administration team had the highest percentage of underperforming employees in the first quarter, but this decreased in the second quarter. The sales team were the most consistent department with 100% employees within that department meeting set individual KPI's across both quarters.

Based on the data above, it is recommended that there is time taken on identifying the root cause, not just the symptoms. Whilst some of the employees did improve from the first to second quarter, there are some departments (such as the sales department) which showed no improvement throughout. It is important to identify why there may not be any improvement, (even if they did meet their KPI's). Once these issues have been identified, then it would be beneficial to then create SMART targets to work on over the quarter to help employees improve their performance.

SMART stands for *Specific, Measurement, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound*. Specific means that the goal has to be detailed, including what will be accomplished and the specific actions that will be taken. Measurable looks at what data will measure the goal to determine its success. Achievable means ensuring that the goal is doable for the employee and ensuring they have the right skills and resources. Relevant goals ensures that the goal aligns with the company's objectives and it is important to look at why the results are important. Time-bound looks at the time frame for accomplishing the goal (Bjerke and Renger, 2017).

There are many benefits of implementing SMART targets within an organisation. SMART targets provide a clear focus which in turn will help collect data and track progress (Bjerke and Renger, 2017). Within the SMART target meeting, it is recommended that the employees help set the target as it has been shown that when employees feel they have a voice, this increases the effectiveness of the meeting (CIPD, 2023).

However, in order for there to be SMART targets created, the organisation must be able to analyse the data effectively to identify the root cause. If they are not equipped to do this, then they may need to have an external trainer to provide training on this. This will cost the company to pay for someone to deliver the training as well as pay for the time of the employees. There will also be an extra cost to the organisation as there will need to be meetings held with the employees to set the SMART targets. Once the SMART targets are set, then they will need reviewing, therefore these extra meetings will cost the company in employee time. However, the benefits of setting the SMART targets and the potential success of the SMART target itself would outweigh these costs.

Bonus Costs Per Eligible Employee

The table below shows the employees that were eligible for the bonus payment from the data provided. The table shows that the overall bonus payment will cost the company £20,770 in total.

Employee Name	Salary	Bonus payment
Robin Bird	£31,500.00	£1,260.00
Saffron Finch	£24,000.00	£1,920.00
Ruth Sixsmith	£23,750.00	£950.00
Wendy Boot	£23,750.00	£950.00
Sally Rigbye	£23,750.00	£950.00
Jean Livesey	£26,000.00	£1,040.00
Julie Chisnall	£19,500.00	£1,560.00
Rick Lovall	£19,500.00	£780.00
Gill Jamieson	£19,500.00	£1,560.00
Ethan Brar	£32,500.00	£2,600.00
Harrison Briggs	£32,500.00	£1,300.00
Steve Owens	£29,500.00	£1,180.00
Tasha Graham	£29,500.00	£2,360.00
Jennifer Frost	£29,500.00	£2,360.00
Bonus Total		£20,770.00

Figure 8: A table showing the bonus cost for each employee and the company

Employee Bonus' Across Departments

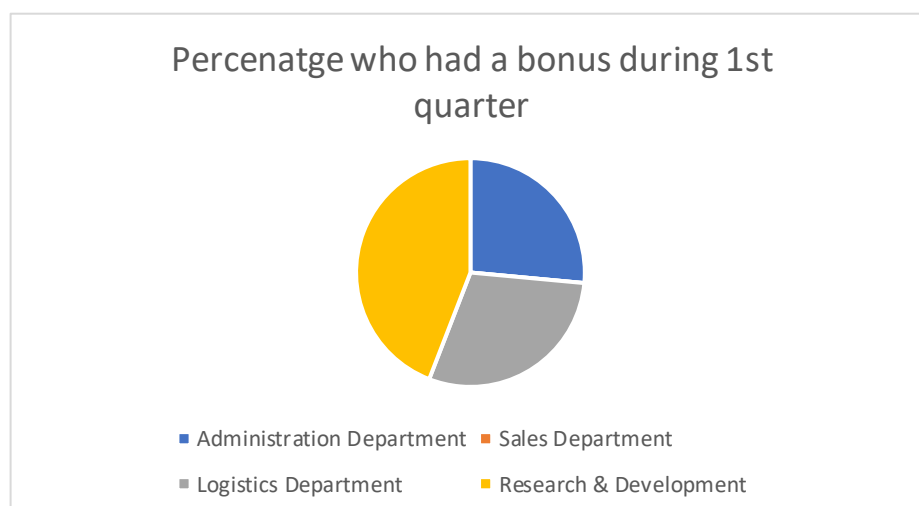


Figure 9: A graph showing the percentage of employees who had a bonus during the 1st quarter.

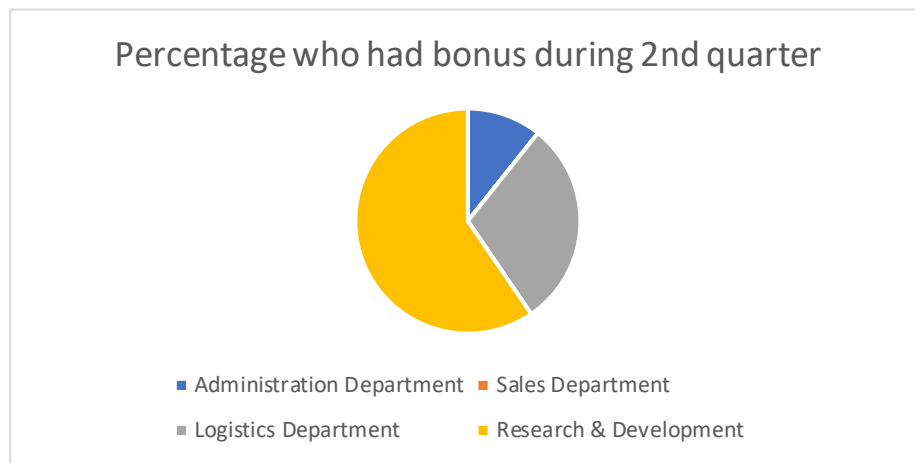


Figure 10: A graph showing the percentage of employees who had a bonus during the 2nd quarter

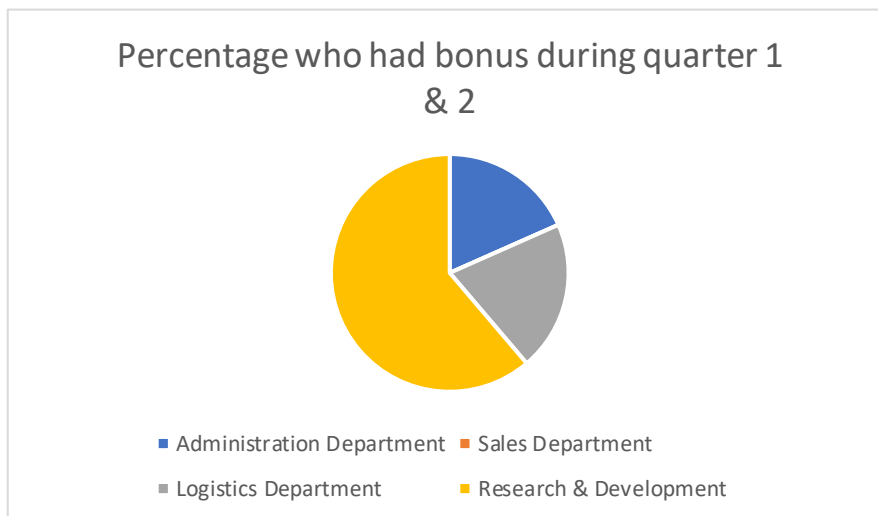


Figure 11: A graph showing the percentage of employees who had a bonus during the 1st and 2nd quarter.

The graphs above show the percentage of employees who earned a bonus in the first quarter, second quarter and those who maintained the bonus across both quarters. As you can see from the graphs, the Research and Development team had the highest percentages of bonus' in the company across all three graphs. The sales team did not earn any bonus' across either quarter. The Administration team had the largest percentage decrease from quarter 1 to quarter 2.

Qualitative Data Analysis

When looking at the line manager survey, the statistics reveal that 64% of staff agree or strongly agree that they are given time to prepare for employee appraisals. However, 52% agree or strongly agree that they are able to confidently carry out a performance appraisal with no staff believing that they have been given training on appraisals. In addition, 82% of staff have issues challenging underperforming employees.

When reviewing the employee feedback, 57% of employees agree or strongly agree that the manager provides them with constructive feedback. Only 18% of staff feel that their ideas are listened to. 52% believe that the line manager provides clear and direct guidance.

Overall, the data suggests that there is a requirement to train staff in appraisal's – specifically goal setting and providing constructive and motivational feedback.

Within the training of goal setting, it would be beneficial for the training to focus upon creating SMART targets using a strength-based approach. The line managers can go on an external course which can provide expert advice on how to best create and implement and oversee SMART targets.

When completing the SMART target training, using a strength-based approach allows the SMART targets to be based on what employees are currently good at and how they can expand and build upon that in other areas of work (CIPD, 2017).

Ensuring that staff use a strength-based approach for SMART goals will allow people within the company to thrive (CIPD, 2017). This will help the line managers provide clear and direct guidance to employees, which will improve standard of appraisals and therefore, employment satisfaction and staff moral should increase. If staff moral and satisfaction increases then there is a likelihood that staff retention will also increase.

All of the line managers will undertake the same training. If all line managers attend the same training, then this provides more consistent and reliable information compared to if a select few line managers go on the course and present the information as they may have misinterpreted the content (Perotti et al., 2023).

However, the cost of all the managers going on the training would be substantial for the company. However, this could be spread out through a certain time frame which may make it more financially viable for the company, rather than it being completed in one go.

Constructive feedback is a vital skill to learn and many line managers go into difficult conversations with good intentions, but often may intensify or prolong the problem (ACAS, 2014). Teaching line managers to be considerate of their wording, whilst also ensuring that they are raising the issue is a great skill to have. It is important within this training, for the staff to understand the importance of communication and ensuring that the employee is feeling heard. Rather than a training course, the line managers could read a book or a guide (e.g. ACAS guide - Challenging conversations and how to manage them) and then brainstorm as a team their thoughts around this. This method has the benefit of giving the team the opportunity to practice some of the

communication skills that they would have read.

The ACAS guide can be accessed online and therefore printouts would not be required. The time taken to read and understand the guide and to then brainstorm and discuss would cost the company as they will need to do it within working time. However, it would be far less costly than sending 50-line managers on an external course. If the employee's do not gain a thorough understanding from the guide, then they may require further readings which will come at a cost, however it is likely that this would still be less than an external course. It has been shown that this form of learning (organisational learning) has contributed to the business success and has shown an improvement in staff well-being as they feel they have a 'voice' (Burke and Hugues, 2018)

In addition, this may be difficult to put into practice as there are 50-line managers, so even when splitting this into smaller teams (e.g. 5 teams of 10), it may be difficult to get everyone in the same room at the same time. However, being able to facilitate this would be a great team-building exercise and will give everyone the opportunity to express their thoughts through different lenses, promoting critical thinking within the team.

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