DYNAMICS OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

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[Since its actual conceptualisation in the earlier 80s, the issue of Performance Management has gradually but surely undergone a revolutionary change. While the earliest forms of staff performance management focused on performance management tools, modern approaches have emphasized the need to combine various tools in order to achieve an integrated and coherent performance management system. It is now being widely suggested that regardless of industry and organizational size, while objectives and methods may vary, common trends have emerged regarding the structure of the process, stakeholders involved, objectives and performance criteria.

Various aspects of performance and different tasks and responsibilities of course, need variety of treatments as do people according to their different levels of experience, knowledge, capability, capacity and confidence. Usually, the aspects of performance that place the biggest demands on managers, and create the biggest challenges and problems, are those areas concerned with a 'failure' to perform to a certain standard or target or other such requirements. It makes sense, therefore, to look at managing performance at the level of basic standards and responsibilities. Organizations frequently identify various challenges while implementing performance management systems. These are not insurmountable obstacles, but elements that require the greatest attention and work. If not addressed, they can cause the performance management system to fail.

In the light of the above discussion, this paper attempts to throw some light on the impending trends and challenges in the field of Performance Management and then explain certain factors that can actually help organizations reap maximum benefits by installing Performance Management systems.

***Keywords :** Performance management, operational issues, legal implications, evaluating standards, key performance indicators, knowledge management.]*

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Introduction:

Performance Management emerged in the late 1980's with the arrival of Strategic Human Resource Management (HRM) as an integrated approach to the management and development of people which saw the decentralization of this critical function to line and supervisory management. HRM recognized that the management of performance was something to be carried out on a continuous basis, not a yearly event controlled centrally by HR, and could only be done by the line manager. It revolutionised the 'new' thinking on corporate culture, driven by core values and the need for processes that would help to change behavior and align employees to corporate values and goals. Recognition of the need for employee participation and engagement in any process regarding their performance, brought about by the expansion on motivational theory beyond Maslow (1943) and Herzberg (1959) to include more integrated accounts based on the work of McGregor (1960), Vroom and Deci (1974), Nadler and Lawler (1983) and Steers and Porter (1987), established a need for a process that would incorporate these ideas and move beyond the now discredited precursors to Performance Management of the 'Merit System', 'Management by Objectives' and 'Performance Appraisal'.

Performance Management began primarily as a source of income justification and was used to determine an employee's wage based on performance. Organizations used Performance Management to derive efficient behavior from the employees to get specific outcomes. In practice this worked well for certain employees who were solely driven by financial rewards. However, where employees were driven by learning and development of their skills, it failed miserably. The gap between justification of pay and the development of skills and knowledge became a huge problem in the use of Performance Management. This became evident in the late 1980s, the realization that a more comprehensive approach to manage and reward performance was needed. This approach of managing performance was developed in the United Kingdom and the United States much earlier than it was developed in Australia.

Performance management becomes more important in a dynamic business environment, and in the face of globalization. This is a tool employed to achieve your organizational objectives. In this way, it is also seen as an employee motivational tool.

Its impact can only be experienced either as a supervisor or as an employee. Performance appraisal is not the management of performance. It is only a small part of the management of workforce performance. The organization may have implemented performance appraisal in the mistaken belief that it is managing performance of employees. But the results may not excite if the impact such a system was minimal or unprecedented.

Performance management is the foundation of any organization that has a vision and knows where they want to be in the near and long term future. As today's rapidly evolving business environment challenges organizations to adapt to constant change, the need for organizations to be sure that their projects and activities are aligned with overall strategic goals and business objectives is critical. Performance management is the measure that lets you know whether or not you are reaching strategic goals and which areas within your organization require improvement. It used to be that performance was isolated to one department. Today, every division within an organization can benefit from it. Performance management spans across various management functions and helps ensure that your people, processes and technology are working together to achieve your organization's missions and goals.

In recent decades, however, the process of managing people has become more formalized and specialized. Many of the old performance appraisal methods have been absorbed into the concept of Performance Management, which aims to be a more extensive and comprehensive process of management. Some of the developments that have shaped Performance Management in recent years are the differentiation of employees or talent management, management by objectives and constant monitoring and review. Its development was accelerated by the following factors:

- The introduction of human resource management as a strategic driver and integrated approach to the management and development of employees; and
- The understanding that the process of Performance Management is something that's completed by line managers throughout the year it is not a one-off annual event coordinated by the personnel department.

The growing awareness of the PMP process among the employees, executives and labour groups is making the appraisal process more difficult and difficult. The workplace competition for better salaries, need for recognition and growing opportunities had made the process significantly different from yesteryears. Therefore, there is a need for managers to understand and carryout the appraisal process more effectively and with the due spirit with which this exercise has to be carried out. To study the dynamics of PM, the following issues need immediate emphasis. A PMS to be effective and durable requires an objective mix of the following issues that make it more purposeful.

Legal Implications :

Drawing on how performance appraisal has fared in the legal system through a significant number of cases, it is possible to make some reasonable conclusions as to the characteristics of legally defensible system. The system is bases on the job with the appraisal criteria arising from an analysis of the legitimate requirements of the positions. This is the embodiment of the oft-repeated admonition to focus on the job itseff and not the person who does the job. No matter what correctional system manager works for, an effective, legally defensible appraisal system would include the following elements:

- Performance is assessed using objective criteria as much as possible, given the unique requirements of the job. The reasons behind the assessments must amount to more than simply the subjective assessment of the appraiser. Those criteria must be known to employee in advance of the rating period.
- The appraisers have been trained in the use of the system and possess written instructions on how the appraisal is to be completed. This establishes that any appraiser is as reasonably capable of evaluating performance as any other appraiser using the same system, and that the system can be expected to be applied as intended.
- The results of each appraisal are reviewed and discussed with the employee. This is a major concern. Documentation of performance problems and efforts to correct them are necessary to prove that the employee fails to improve and must be let go. But it is also necessary to prove that the employee knew about the difficulties. The legally defensible appraisal system can be used to demonstrate that the employee knew of the problems and was given the opportunity to correct them.
- It is not practicable to provide an exhaustive analysis of the legal implications of performance appraisal, as these often vary from one state or national jurisdiction to the next. Nevertheless, there are principles of equity and fairness that should be upheld in any good employee evaluation process.

- Performance appraisals should not be used in a merely punitive or retaliatory fashion. It is grossly unprofessional for a manager or supervisor to use the appraisal process to 'get even' with an employee who has displeased or upset them in some way.
- Appraisals should not be used to discriminate against employees on the basis of race, religion, age, gender, disability, marital status, pregnancy, or sexual preference.
- Performance appraisal results should be fair, accurate and supported by evidence and examples. For instance, if an employee has poor interpersonal skills and is harming morale and group performance, the supervisor might keep a log of incidents. Co-workers may be interviewed and their views and reactions recorded. The nature and effects of the employee's behavior should be documented.
- An employee should have the opportunity to comment on their appraisal result, to express their agreement or otherwise, and to appeal the result or at least request a review by upline supervisors.
- Appraisals should be balanced, recording information on both the good and the bad aspects of an employee's performance, as far as possible.
- Appraisals results should not be used as the sole basis for promotion, remuneration or termination decisions. A broad range of information should be considered, in which the employee's appraisal results may be significant but not necessarily conclusive.
- Employees who receive a poor performance appraisal result should be given a reasonable chance to improve. Generally speaking, it is a bad idea to dismiss, demote of otherwise penalize an employee because of a single adverse appraisal result depending, of course, on the nature and seriousness of the conduct that underlies the poor result.
- Provide timely feedback, especially to marginal or poor performers. It is not fair to offer zero feedback to a poor performer for twelve months and then present them with a bad appraisal. Be willing, especially with employees who are having trouble, to offer more frequent feedback and guidance. Tell them if something is wrong and give them a chance to correct the problem in a timely manner.

- Proper records must be maintained and retained. If an employee believes they have been dealt with unfairly, they may have rights to instigate legal action years later. In the case of poor performers, or persons dismissed or demoted, or those who resign or leave in less than happy circumstances, it is proper that their appraisal records, together with critical incident logs and other relevant documents, be archived indefinitely. Check with the local legal specialists about the required periods of record retention and time limits on the rights of potential litigants, as these vary from one jurisdiction to the next.
- If an appraisal result is poor, controversial or provocative, ask an objective third party for their views on whether the appraisal result seems fair and reasonable. The earlier stated position should be modified if the second opinion is not supportive of the result.
- Appraisals should avoid inflammatory and emotive language. As far as possible, aim for a detached and dispassionate style. Ensure that criticisms relate to actual job requirements and are not based on mere personal or other irrelevant issues that have little or no connection with actual job requirements.
- Managers and supervisors required to conduct staff appraisals should be trained in appraisal principles and techniques. Conducting performance appraisals is one of the most demanding of all supervisory activities. It is a sensitive and sometimes controversial task which, if mishandled, can cause serious damage to employee relations and morale.
- Appraisal results should be treated as private and confidential information. Record storage should be secure and controlled. Only people with an approved need to know should have access to an employee's performance appraisal information.

Operational Issues:

Operational Performance Management can be defined as the alignment of the various business units within a company in order to ensure that those units are helping the organization achieve a desired strategy and a set of centralized goals. This can be done by reviewing and optimizing the operations of such business units, through dedicated solutions.

Based on the application of Business Intelligence techniques and softwares, Operational Management Performances solutions can help establish effective links between operational KPIs and key business metrics, provide a deep insight into key operations, including detailed monitoring capabilities, with a transverse alignment of these to the company's or business units strategic goals. Operational Performance Management solutions give the operational managers access to value-added information enabling identification of best practices, identification of problems, improving the collaboration between the operations stakeholders, and leveraging root cause analysis, in order to boost company performance. Information Systems can help the organisation translate raw data into actionable information, to define key performance indicators, and package them in advanced dashboards, adding exceptional value to operational information.

Operational Performance Management solutions can serve the organization in the following areas of expertise:

- Improve the consistency of key performance indicators with activity, processes, management, and communication requirements.
- Model operations into a pertinent analysis framework.
- Optimize existing solutions by evaluating actual performance against best practices, and by proposing realistic solutions in terms of time / cost / quality.
- Assisting in the choice and implementation of future solutions, in conformity with the user requirements and the IT environment.
- Assist in change management, user and administrator training, go-live assistance, implementation of a sustainable improvement process, etc.

Financial Stability :

This includes every effort to achieve maximum financial soundness especially benefiting the bottom line. In order to fulfill this, the company has to come up with some financial performance measurement techniques. The idea is to ensure that whatever resources are doing and how they function, they must show gains in the income statement. This is done generally in three different steps. They have been mentioned as follows:

1. Selecting the organization's goals;
2. Consolidate information on performance measurement; and
3. Necessary changes to be made by managers so as to show considerable improvements corporate financial charts.

Business Performance Management is generally measured with the financial aspects of performance measurement. Special techniques for the same thing have been mentioned as follows:

Economic Value Added :

In corporate finance, Economic Value Added or EVA, is an estimate of a firm's economic profit being the value created in excess of the required return of the company's investors (being shareholders and debt holders). Quite simply, EVA is the profit earned by the firm less the cost of financing the firm's capital. The idea is that value is created when the return on the firm's economic capital employed is greater than the cost of that capital. Another perspective on EVA can be gained by looking at a firm's return on net assets (RONA). RONA is a ratio that is calculated by dividing a firm's NOPAT by the amount of capital it employs (RONA = NOPAT/ Capital) after making the necessary adjustments of the data reported by a conventional financial accounting system. NOPAT is profits derived from a company's operations after cash taxes but before financing costs and non-cash bookkeeping entries. It is the total pool of profits available to provide a cash return to those who provide capital to the firm.

Activity-Based Costing :

Activity-based costing (ABC) is a special costing model that identifies activities in an organization and assigns the cost of each activity with resources to all products and services according to the actual consumption by each. This model assigns more indirect costs (overhead) into direct costs compared to conventional costing models. With ABC, an organization can soundly estimate the cost elements of entire products and services, that may prepare decisions on:

- either identify and eliminate those products and services that are unprofitable and lower the prices of those that are overpriced (product and service portfolio aim), or
- identify and eliminate production or service processes that are ineffective and allocate processing concepts that lead to the very same product at a better yield (process re-engineering aim).

In a business organization, the ABC methodology assigns an organization's resource costs through activities to the products and services provided to its customers. ABC is generally used as a tool for understanding product and customer cost and profitability based on the production or performing processes. As such, ABC has predominantly been used to support strategic decisions such as pricing, outsourcing, identification and measurement of process improvement initiatives.

Practical aspects :

It is the need for the day to prepare well before the PM process. The preparedness covers the following areas:

- Review the goals set for the employees and their actual performance,
- Quantifying the performance of each of the employee and taking notes,
- Recollecting the critical incidents affected the performance of the employees,
- Notable achievements of the individual employee and groups so that, the same can be shared with subordinates,
- Comparative performance of the individual employee between the past period and the period under review,
- Behavioural and other characteristic attitudes of employees with the peers, bosses and among teams.

The following key factors have to be followed before and after carrying out the performance review.

Advance information: Providing advance information to employees about the date and time of the appraisal process is absolutely necessary. This will facilitate the employees to prepare themselves to face the review process.

Creating a good environment: The manager should create a good environment that is appropriate for sharing information and certain hard facts as well. Unless the manager is able to create such an environment, the process will be one sided and inconclusive.

Careful listening: From the usual command and control structure, the manager should shed his managerial authority and carefully listen to employees concerns and aspirations. In the absence of listening, the employee would not part with important information that is the key for managing employee's aspirations and desires.

Share some good words: This must be cultivated as a habit among managers. From time to time recognition of employees and teams, the managers should also share some good and nice information about the employees and their achievements. The process of sharing good words will lighten the process to a very great extent.

Substantiate with critical incidents: This process is one of the key for every manager. While doing the performance appraisal, the manager should share the critical incidents he has come across in the employee's behaviour, attitudes, team co-operation and Job delivery etc., This would facilitate conveying of the message clearly to employees and make them understand the management perceptions.

The Path ahead: The manager should spell out clearly, the road ahead for employee's growth. Where the employee stand in terms of his aspirations and what he has to do additionally to achieve his desired goals are also to be clearly communicated. This will bring-in desired results out of the process and the subordinates will repose the required confidence in the management.

Avoiding conflicts: A manager should carefully handle the appraisal process. There are every possibilities that, the process can turn into a volatile or conflict situation. Avoiding wordly duel with the employee is necessary. Careful listening of employee's concerns would facilitate and enable an ideal ambiance for the appraisal. Avoiding argumentative discussions and drawing conclusions based on employee's conversation and reactions would set an ideal atmosphere. Providing suitable explanations to the employee with a firm voice would be required at times. If there are unnecessary allegations from the employee it is better avoiding confrontational atmosphere immediately and reconvening a meeting at a later date would set the things right on most of the occasions.

Establishing Performance Evaluating Standards :

Measuring the performance of the employees based only on one or some factors can provide inaccurate results and leave a bad impression on the employees as well as the organisation. For example, by measuring only the activities in employee's performance, an organization might rate most of its employees as outstanding, even when the organisation as a whole might have failed to meet its goals and objectives. Therefore, a balanced set of measures (commonly known as balanced scorecard) should be used for measuring the performance of the employee.

Strategy-Performance Link-up :

Strategic planning is the process of determining a company's long-term goals and then identifying the best approach for achieving them. Strategic planning plays a vital role in the performance of your organization. In order for strategic goals to be achieved, strategic planning must be aligned to performance measurements. These performance measurements allow executive management to gauge the effectiveness of the organizational strategic plan and determine how the budget and projects will be setup in the future.

Extensive Emphasis on Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) :

A few analysts view performance management as a modern version of an executive information system (EIS), while others see it as a natural extension of business intelligence. In fact, the processes most commonly associated with performance management relate to budgeting, planning and forecasting, whereas the best known methodologies include the balanced scorecard and activity-based management. When considering such a broad and complex subject, one can readily assume that the various definitions of performance management will continue to evolve yet remain focused on key performance indicators (KPIs), or summary indicators, which measure the comprehensive services provided by a company's system. Measuring and managing the system namely combining medium-term and long-term strategies and objectives with tactics for aligning the business represent the core functions of corporate performance management systems.

A Holistic Vision of Business Processes :

Performance management interventions were conducted to improve operational efficiency so that the system could evaluate processes with a focus on specific activities or structures. A bottom-up approach meaning a system for identifying, collecting and analyzing performance indicators can be gradually applied to all business areas based on product and service life cycles (in terms of the company and the market), together with a progressive alignment of indicators for profitability, risk, yield and efficiency. While broad performance indicators are universally recognized, they are often difficult to evaluate in a thorough, integrated way. Performance Management systems start with familiar areas of strategic activity, planning, and financing, then extend to all of the company's operations, including the management of clients, suppliers, and operations, providing in-depth, focused, and predictive analyses for each business area. The system's future development will involve implementing the balanced scorecard in the realm of finance and extending the strategic performance management system, currently being used at the central offices, to the commercial network in order to evaluate specific operations. Efficiency problems linked to measurements of central operations and the refinement of budgets for personnel will be addressed in training sessions at these divisions. Yet, as the system takes shape and covers the entire business, the biggest challenge will be to identify and map cause-effect relationships between the KPIs and the holistic vision of the business processes, which is the true essence of a corporate performance management system.

Organizational Growth and Development :

Often used interchangeably with organizational effectiveness, organizational development is the process through which an organization develops the internal capacity to be the most efficient towards its mission work and to sustain itself over the long term. Performance management directly relates to organizational development, since OD is primarily focused on improving the performance of organizations and the people within them. Whatever be the organizational challenges, the starting point is to get a clear, objective view of the organization's performance abilities, such as strengths and limitations. Identifying proper performance attributes is essential, because sound management decisions can only be made when performance attributes are identified and measured accurately.

Change Management :

Change management is a systematic approach to dealing with change within every perspective of an organization, from systems to personnel to projects to functions. Change management is a comprehensive, often difficult management function to properly implement. There is a saying "Organizations don't adapt to change; their people do". With that outlook, it is easy to understand how performance management plays a critical part in managing change. Implementing change within an organization often requires a change in how employees execute things.

Every system, personnel, and procedural change within an organization should be implemented with the goal of achieving an improvement in performance some form. The actual improvement should be compared to the predicted improvement to assess the effectiveness of the change. This guide discusses managing your organization during its many changes throughout the performance lifecycle.

Project Management :

Project management is the discipline of organizing and managing resources in such a way that the project is completed within defined scope, quality, time and cost constraints. Performance measurement is an area within the Project Management body of knowledge. It is an important ingredient of project management, where cost, schedule and scope performance are measured and monitored throughout each phase of the project lifecycle. Project performance reporting is the process of collecting project baseline data and distributing performance information to stakeholders throughout the project.

Customer Satisfaction :

Customer satisfaction is the measurement or determination that a product or service meets a customer's expectations, based on predetermined quality and service requirements. It is said that customer satisfaction equals perception of performance divided by expectation of performance. There is a direct relationship between performance and customer satisfaction, where the better you perform to customer expectations, the more satisfied customers will be. Customer satisfaction is your organization's level of performance through your customers, employees, and/or stakeholder's perspective. In fact, many times customer satisfaction feedback, if requested properly, can provide information and insight for achieving breakthrough increases in organizational performance and effectiveness.

Aligning Human Capital with Business Activities :

Workforce performance management is the strategic alignment of an organizations human capital with its business activities. It is a methodical process of analyzing the current workforce, determining future workforce needs, identifying the gap between the present and future, and implementing solutions so the organization can accomplish its mission, goals, and objectives.

People are the most important aspect to any organization. Therefore, the performance of the people within an organization will greatly impact the overall performance of the organization. While most employees understand what they need to do, workforce performance management tells them how well they must do it. The greatest benefit to workforce performance management is the process of aligning employee performance to organizational objectives and goals.

IT Performance Management :

IT performance management assists organizations with the increasing demands of maximizing value creation from technology investments, reducing risk from IT, decreasing architectural complexity, and optimizing overall technology expenditures. IT performance management includes maximizing technology to improve service delivery in every area of the organization. IT performance management utilizes such technology as unified management reporting and dashboard tools to enhance performance and drives business processes.

Knowledge Management :

Knowledge management refers to the guidelines, policies and practices that an organization uses to create and transfer information to support the performance of the people in the organization. These can include various documents and copyrights, and intangible processes, models and methods that their people use to get work done. The impact of knowledge management on key business results is seen through its potential for improving the performance of business processes. Knowledge management drives performance by linking knowledge to critical functions which impact business and putting the supports in place to ensure knowledge is leveraged across people and circumstances.

Quality Management :

Quality management is a method for ensuring that all the activities necessary to design, develop and implement a product or service are effective and efficient with respect to the system and its performance. Performance measurement is a necessary instrument for quality management because in order to measure quality, you must first apply performance expectations and standards.

Process Improvement :

Process improvement is a series of actions taken to identify, analyze and improve existing processes within an organization to meet new goals and objectives. In fact, by definition performance improvement is the concept of measuring the output of processes or procedures, then modifying the processes or procedures in order to increase the output, increase efficiency, or increase the effectiveness of the processes or procedures. Often, the most critical processes that impact business success are those that require support from multiple functional groups.

Conclusion :

It is a strategic and integrated approach to increasing the effectiveness of organizations by improving the performance of the people who work in them and by developing the capabilities of teams and individual contributors.

First, a commitment analysis must be done where a job mission statement is drawn up for each job. The job mission statement is a job definition in terms of purpose, customers, product and scope. The aim with this analysis is to determine the continuous key objectives and performance standards for each job position. Following the commitment analysis is the work analysis of a particular job in terms of the reporting structure and job description. If a job description is not available, then a systems analysis can be done to draw up a job description. The aim with this analysis is to determine the continuous critical objectives and performance standards for each job. Managing employee or system performance facilitates the effective delivery of strategic and operational goals. There is a clear and immediate correlation between using performance management programs or software and improved business and organizational results. For employee performance management, using integrated software, rather than a spreadsheet based recording system, may deliver a significant return on investment through a range of direct and indirect sales benefits, operational efficiency benefits and by unlocking the latent potential in every employees work day (i.e. the time they spend not actually doing their job).

It may be possible to get all employees to reconcile personal goals with organizational goals and increase productivity and profitability of an organization using this process. It can be applied by organizations or a single department or section inside an organization, as well as an individual person. The performance process is appropriately named the self-propelled performance process (SPPP). A manager, should clearly spell out the goals of individual employees and groups. The organisational objectives and how it is percolating to individual employees should be clearly explained. The manager should also clearly explain as to how the individual employee's contributions are necessary and valued at the organisation.

For effective performance management, the key organs of the management such as the top management, the immediate manager, the review manager, the human resources and the employees have to co-operate. In the absence of support from any one of the quarters, the performance management process would not be effective. Therefore, the manager carrying out the performance management process should effectively utilize the services of both the fellow management team as well as the employees. This will smoothen the process to a very a great extent. The usage of both human and material resources is necessary to handle the growing complexity of the appraisal process.

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