

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Gohar, AVETISYAN

Yerevan State Linguistic University "Brysov", Yerevan, Armenia, avetissian_goga@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT: This paper examines education and education management issues and sets out to explore, in this context, performance evaluation processes. We argue that, higher education institutions, as employers, must effectively enhance continuing professional development, based on certain indicators, with a direct effect on the career planning of each individual professional in the academic environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

While writing this article it was important to consider higher education management and HR management, what kind of role they have in our life, whether they are correlated or not, and performance evaluation of the academic staff and its consequence professional development could not be left untouched. The notion of higher education management appears to be hard to understand. It is seen as being complex and abstract. "It shows itself in very concrete forms and modes of cultures and techniques to be found with regard to autonomy and external stewardship, to internal leadership and steering and so on". (Higher education governance between democratic culture, academic aspirations and market forces, (2008)).

HR management is supposed to be more than just having the "right people in the right place, at the right time". It's about instituting the people – related practices and activities that will help the organization to achieve and improve its business results. In this respect Performance Evaluation is of great importance, its methods, principles, and its mechanisms through which Performance evaluation is correlated with Capacity Building. Performance Evaluation has a goal to evaluate the improved results and an increase in efficiency of the work of employees. As a result of Performance Evaluation a range of problems is cleared out, demanding to make decisions. Consequently at this point Continuing Professional Development becomes actual when any institution (HEI) tries to solve the range of problems cleared out as a result of Employee Performance Evaluation.

The idea of Capacity-Building appeals to certain logic: if you believe in and support people to do their best work, and in an ongoing fashion encourage that development, chances are that people will improve. Finding ways to make that happen can feel elusive, but some strategies are as simple as maintaining a closer relationship with the people and the process. If we, as a manager, are available to offer strategic direction if someone reaches an impasse, we can offer support to that individual's development. In the same way, once one of our people has completed a project, we should take the time to debrief with them: what went well, what could be done differently, and help that person to develop a strategy that incorporates our feedback, allows us to make the maximum impact with short, but calculated discussions. This, in turn, allows that person to be more strategic in their next assignment (and maximize their contribution). As an employer a higher education institution should organize the process of Performance Evaluation which is an opinion about the stage of development of any quality (of a group) of an employee, about the results of his working activity. In this sense, it has a great significance, as it is

considered to be the basis for doing analysis (e.g. a qualified staff), as well as the basis for establishing the necessity to make a personnel decision.

From the point of view of ways to carry out the process of performance evaluation it is rather a difficult sphere to make decisions. There are many ways of implementing the evaluation. Employee Evaluation is considered to be a part of the whole Performance evaluation system; it must be carried out in a very tight correlation with its methods. While choosing certain evaluation induces of the staff, it is important to take into consideration the general orientation of the higher education institution on the basis of concrete performance induces.

Management efficiency greatly depends on how deep the subject dominates full, operative information about the object, i.e. peculiarities. The main source of information in the relationship of the staff is considered to be its complex evaluation, which must be carried out continuously and be the ground for further professional development.

2. THE GOOD OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

At the very point the question "Why do we need Employee Performance Evaluation? arises. Here a very important fact must be underlined that Performance Evaluation is a pivot of the whole personnel work. And for clear explanation a table of Performance Evaluation of employees' work results while making personnel decisions should be illustrated:

Sphere of making decisions
Identifying employee's skills
Increasing work efficiency
Defining the possible professional development opportunities
Career planning
Individual planning to improve work results
Identifying the salary and rewards for good performance

Nowadays in Post Soviet countries higher education institutions face the difficulties of the Performance Evaluation of their personnel and Career Planning. In Armenia, there are approximately 18 state universities, only 10-20% of them are aware of the Employee Performance Evaluation system and implement it in the work process. Only very few admit that Performance Evaluation is based on implementation of the method of comparison, with three approaches towards Performance evaluation based on comparison of: 1) achieving goals and tasks placed before employees, 2) assessment by stakeholders, 3) employees with each other. (Armstrong M. And Baron A.(2002)).

A more objective evaluation is reached when several methods are used and are in combination. However, in practice, we have to give our preference to one of the methods while evaluating. One of the famous methods of evaluation and increasing effectiveness of personnel work abroad is Evaluation method and Management by objectives (MBO). (Карташова, Л. В. (2005))

Nowadays more than 50% of foreign big companies use it in practice for Employee Performance Evaluation. A particular place of implementing the very method is given to concrete and clear aims, which the employee is supposed to reach. The above mentioned methods of evaluation provide direct connection of each employee's work to meet final results, providing their maximal participation in making a decision and interest in carrying out tasks, as the employee himself takes part in setting them. As we have touched upon the problem of Employee Performance Evaluation we should also highlight the Continuing Professional Development in HEIs.

Continuing Professional Development can be defined as the conscious updating of professional knowledge and the improvement of professional competence throughout a person's working life. It is a commitment to being professional, keeping up to date and continuously seeking to improve. It is the key to optimizing a person's career opportunities, both today and for the future (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (2000)).

Continuing Professional Development should be engaging, informative and progressive, embracing 'best practice' and

easily digestible knowledge. It should neither be excessively demanding nor uninteresting. It should stimulate a desire to learn more about your profession and participate in it. Simply, it is the lifelong process of active participation in learning activities that assists individuals in developing and maintaining continuing competence, enhancing their professional practice, and supporting achievement of their career goals. HEIs should enhance the career planning of each professional, working there by providing all the possible ways of cooperating with each other, i.e. university/employer ↔ a professional (a lecturer, professor)/employee.

3. CONCLUSIONS

Hence we may conclude that HEIs are employers too, which are concerned with Employee Performance Evaluation system and enhance Continuing Professional Development of teaching staff, affecting the career planning of each individual professional in the academic environment.

REFERENCES

1. "Higher education governance between democratic culture, academic aspirations and market forces", Council of Europe higher education series No. 5, 2008,
2. Armstrong, M and Baron, "A Strategic HRM: The key to improved business performance", CIPD, London, 2002,
3. Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2000
4. Карташова, Л. В., <<Управление Человеческими Ресурсами>>, ИНФРА-М, Москва, 2005.