Management by Competencies – Key-competencies mapping

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Taking into account the current level of competitiveness that companies face, management by competencies today is a factor of extreme strategic importance for organizations, since it allows them to adapt to the market, and be more accurate and objective at the time of selection, and training, in order to equip employees with skills that enable them to compete in their market (Velayudhan & Maran, 2009).

A competency management system describes the combination of knowledge, skills and characteristics required for efficient performance and is a tool that human resource managers can use for practices such as Selection, Training and Development, Assessment and Succession Plans (Suhairom, Musta'amal, Amin, & Johari, 2014). It promotes a common language throughout the company, facilitates the prediction of the behavioural expression of employees in similar situations and imposes greater accuracy in the design of development plans (Ceitil, 2016). It also makes it possible to predict performance based on past evidence and facilitates the comparison between the proficiency profile required for a certain position and its' level of proficiency held by the employee (McLagan, 1997).

Competency management benefits organizations, but also employees and managers, as it enables organizations to support their strategy, mission, vision and culture by clarifies responsibilities and enhances effectiveness of training, linking this with success criteria (Tamilarasi, 2015). It is a more strategic people management because of the proximity it imposes between human resources management and the company's overall strategy (Mclagan, 1997).

For competency's definition and their consequent mapping, several data collection techniques are used, which are transversal to the various models, and should be adapted to the specificities and objectives of each one: behavioural interview, the STAR technique, repertoire, critical incident technique, assessment centre and 360° feedback (Tamilarasi, 2015).

Sanghi (2007) presents several models for the competencies mapping, one of which (customized generic model) is the application of the approaches that best suit the reality of the organization, independently of the author. It is essential that the identity of the organization is known. The values must be clear: the way they face market, employees and society. In this way, the model will have an easier and more efficient implementation, as it will adapt to the context. In this model an experimental list of competencies is used that is identified in the organization that helps in the selection of a generic model, validating it based on the bigger differences found between the exceptional and average performances.

Before implementing a competency management system, a reflection should be made on the objectives to be achieved, as well as the population to be involved (Sanghi, 2007). For the development of a competency model, it will be necessary to collect data through interviews, focus groups and through direct observation (Sanghi, 2007). Data should be analysed in order to identify the significant competencies for an effective performance in the organization (Sanghi, 2007). Subsequently, the definition of the individual competency profiles required should be made, based on the identification of the organization's functions and the competencies required for its exercise. The individual competency profile is based on the list presented in the portfolio previously defined. The following step is the definition of the level of proficiency of competencies, considering the level of requirement and the content of the function (Ceitil, 2016).

Finally, the model is validated by the stakeholders (position holders, managers and/or top managers) based on the company's policies and processes (Sanghi, 2007).

Competency mapping is a complex process, but it's potential for managing people in organizations, in a competitive and always changing environment, makes it very important for, not only survival, but also future development.

Keywords: competencies mapping, management by competencies, key-competencies

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