



Develop your staff - grow your business

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People are our most important asset

Develop your staff – grow your business. While most organisations announce that “People are our most important asset”, it is not always clear how staff are developed and trained so they can best support business goals.

Challenges

Too often, the hopes of the individual and the aims of the company are misaligned. Top talent is placed into narrow rather than broader development roles, training is rarely provided at the right time, and mentoring and broadening opportunities are missed.

Why is this the case? A short-term focus is the likely answer, with staff development seen as lower priority than meeting the more urgent business needs of the moment, combined with a strategy to buy-in skills. But imagine how powerful it would be if the aims of the individual and the business aligned.

An effective and attractive approach to staff development is increasingly important as companies attempt to attract and retain people. Expectations of new staff are high.

Competence Based Development

A proven approach to link the requirements of the business and its people is Competence Based Development (CBD). This is used to develop people with the right skills and competencies for the business – hence ‘develop your staff people – grow your business’.

In summary, CBD:

- Guides staff in their individual development and to future opportunities in the company, leading to improved staff retention and timely availability of successors for key positions.
- Underpins a strong staff development culture, in which organizations find it easier to attract talented staff motivated by opportunities to learn and grow.
- Provides a framework for the pace of development and leads to more realistic expectations.
- Provides assurance to management and stakeholders such as investors that the proposals and plans presented to them are by sufficiently trained people.
- Supports management to meet legal requirements to demonstrate that their staff have the right skills and competencies, especially important for safety critical areas.

Competence Frameworks (or matrices) set out the range of skills and behaviours necessary at defined levels. Examples are available on-line, but most are generic and do not reflect the career paths a company can offer. Some are provided for specific disciplines only or do not address the range of competences required. When properly developed Competence Frameworks should be aligned with company strategy, and business and investment plans.



Figure: Competence planning

Organisations, however, typically struggle to implement CBD in practice. Good intentions fail because of pitfalls such as over complication, lack of mutual commitment between staff and organisation, individuals trying to use frameworks to justify promotions and organisations assessing staff too rigidly against competences attained. Despite the pitfalls, the benefits of developing your staff cannot be overstated, for your people and your business.

A better way

ValVestris has found that a more powerful approach to develop your staff is to treat the issue of competence development holistically. In essence:

- Encourage individuals to own their development, identify gaps and options to act, identify long term career direction – drawing on the support and input of their managers, mentors, and colleagues,
- Make optimal use of company resources to develop its people (mentoring, on-the-job opportunities, training, secondments).
- Personalize learning as much as possible – powerful AI tools may greatly assist.
- Provide a structured framework to tie this together – aligned with growing your business.

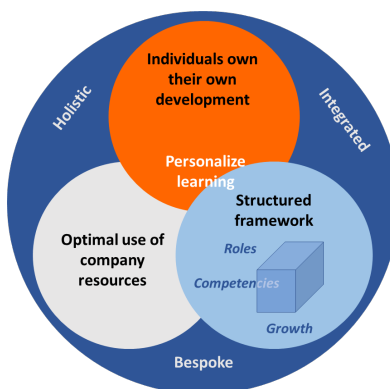


Figure: A better way to develop your staff

The approach needs to be bespoke to address the specific roles – reflecting the breadth and depth of skills required. It should lay out the range of career opportunities, from entrant to senior leader – technical, business, behavioural and corporate competences, and specialist and management career options. Also critical are the integration skills needed across the business encompassing, for example, technical, operational, marketing, commercial, stakeholder engagement and business skills. The balance of these clearly will alter for positions of higher responsibility in the business.

More radical approaches have been used in other sectors, for example, as explained by James Timpson in his book “The Happy Index”. However, a consistent theme is to make development relevant for the individual.

ValVestris

At ValVestris we have decades of experience in defining and implementing people development strategies for the energy industry. We can help organisations to define an approach from scratch and support implementation with tangible results quickly.

We can support implementation of a framework linked to the longer-term strategy. This could include defining the roles and workforce required in 5 to 10 years’ time and which competences need to be grown now. We offer bespoke solutions as every organization is different and has its own challenges and requirements.

If you want to find out more, please send us an e-mail at info@valvestris.com. We are more than happy to have introductory conversations without obligation.

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