

A Study on Behavioral Competencies For Effective Job Performance

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Abstract:

Employee's job performance is associated with the competencies an individual employee possesses in an organizational setup. An employee exhibits certain behaviors' which has a direct bearing in his work performance and in turn affects the organizational viability. The behavioral competencies are considered as the collective knowledge, attitude and action an individual possess and which are influential in higher order performance in different levels of organization. This paper is based on extensive literature review, to understand and identifying the Behavioral competencies and its impact on individual job performance in present organizational setup.

Keywords: Behavioral competencies, job performance, organization.

Introduction

Organizational actions starting from converting raw materials into finished goods till progressing towards industry 4.0, organizations success is entirely dependent on competent workforce. The foundational activity of any organization is to build a competent workforce in a way that enables an organization to remain viable. Traditionally strategists suggested the technique to gain competitive advantage & to explore the forces driving market dynamics. Competent workforce is one such force which helps organizations to attain that competitive edge. The strategic management field is focusing on the role of competencies and resources that accumulate within a firm (Dierickx, Cool, 1989; Barney, 1991; Quelin, Arregle, 2000; Quelin, 2000: 477) because the core competency of a company not only becomes the distinct corporate signature but also provides the company with its competitive advantage (Harvey, Buckley, 1997: 37). Many research findings have proved the importance of competencies in workplace which are instrumental in growth and sustainability of the organizations. The set of competencies observed help employees to excel in their roles in organization.

Competency is a measure of an individual's ability in terms of their knowledge, skills and behavior to perform a given role (Holt & Perry, 2011). The definition focuses on the concept of competency as knowledge, skills and behavior to perform a given role which emphasizes the importance of combination of skill and behavior to perform a specific role, which further can be explored to state that behavior part of competency is effective than the application of the skills acquired to reach highest level of performance in job roles played. Competency is also called as the combination of tacit and explicit knowledge and behavior of employees

which align with the vision and mission of organization. McClelland, 1973. Competency is defined as a personal trait or set of habits that leads to more effective or superior job performance. McClelland explains competencies as traits which lead to superior performance. These competencies which are influential in superior performance are termed as core competencies, behavioral competencies and also as work place competencies. Behavioral competencies refer to behavior attributes such as knowledge, skill set, teamwork, leadership skills which results in individual development and effective higher level performance. The behavioral competencies can also be referred to as core competencies at work place aim to utilize the resources effectively to gain the competitive edge. Knowledge resources, innovative creativity and expertise are success factors that create the critical potential of an organization which is termed core competencies (Godbout, 2000: 77). Therefore, a firm's core competence(s) is defined as a set of problem-defining and problem-solving insights that fosters the development of strategic growth alternatives (Lei et al., 1996: 549). In addition, core competencies are the integrated bundles of skills and technologies which are competitively unique and re-deployable (Clark, 2000: 117).

Literature survey

The research in field of competency management has proved its relevance and importance in different sectors of economy. Pragya Sharma (2017) discusses about workplace competencies like communication, decision-making, problem solving, creativity and innovation, teamwork, leadership, and interpersonal relations to deal with organizational expectations within challenging framework. Gürhan UYSAL (2007) investigates the impact of core competence of a firm on organizational success. Vathanophas & Thai-ngam (2007) in their work identified the required competencies and developed a competency model for effective job performance at the Chief of the General Administrative Sub-Division position level in the Thai Department of Agriculture using the Behavioral Event Interview (BEI) technique. Khalid Hafeez, YanBing Zhang, and Naila Malak (2002) identify core competencies as the crown jewels of a company and, therefore, should be carefully nurtured and developed. Boyatzis (1982) described competencies as underlying characteristics of an individual, which are, causally (change in one variable cause change in another) related to effective job performance. This research throws light on understanding and identifying the behavioral competencies or core competencies necessary for effective individual performance and its impact on organizational effectiveness.

Need of the Study

With existence of varied hiring processes in practice, organizations still fail to get an ideal match for their requirement. The reason could be anything starting from the unstructured hiring process practiced or it could also be failure in identifying the training needs of the existing employees. A typical hiring process focus on identifying the technical skills through interview

or written test and assessing the personal characteristics of a candidate is often sidelined. The behavioral competencies identification helps organizations to build a competent work pool. The behavioral competency framework facilitates organizations to identify candidates who culturally fit the organization. This paper focuses on building a competency matrix which consists of behavioral competencies which are necessary for effective job performance in work place.

Behavioral competency model for effective performance at work:

Behavioral competencies are workplace competencies which result in high level performance and making organizations more viable. The scope of these competencies are not just restricted to specific roles or designation but can be applied to individuals at all levels. According to research from the CIPD, most employers' use behavioral competency frameworks to achieve the following goals:

- Consistency across company recruitment processes
- Balanced performance reviews and reward schemes
- Enhanced employee effectiveness
- Greater organizational growth and profit
- Better analysis of training needs
- Enhanced career development and management

Building a competitive work force or focusing on core competencies enhances effective utilization of internal resources and helps organizations explore new sustainable markets. The research study focuses on identifying the core competencies necessary for higher performance. The performance is measured using four prominent dimensions namely) task performance, 2) contextual performance, 3) adaptive performance, 4) counterproductive work behavior which are cited in several studies in literature survey. Griffin et al. (2000a) and Kahya (2009) claim that task performance and contextual performance are the dimensions of behavior that independently contributes to effectiveness in the organization. Based from the literature search, various study has proposed task performance and contextual performance as the main dimension in work performance model and model Díaz-Vilela et al. (2015); Hernaus and Mikulićs (2014); Koopmans et al. (2014a); e.g Koopmans et al. (2014a); Li and Voola (2005a). Not only that, the dimension has been used in various fields such as job satisfaction (Perera et al., 2014), overall performance (Borman and Motowidlo, 1997; Motowidlo, 2013; Roe, 1999), industrial and organizational psychology (Kahya, 2009), and air traffic control (Griffin et al 2000b).

Task performance

As per survey of literature task performance is considered as one of the dimension to measure job performance. Task performance can be understood as competency or skill necessary to

perform the central job task; these are job specific proficiency which includes job knowledge, work quality and quantity.

Contextual work performance

Task performance traditionally is considered as the main focus for evaluating job performance; contextual performance goes beyond the basic job knowledge. Contextual work performance refers to behaviours that go beyond the specific job goals such as taking initiative, extra tasks or training new comers etc. Several authors have given new labels for this dimensions such non-job-specific task proficiency, extra-role performance, organizational citizenship behavior etc.

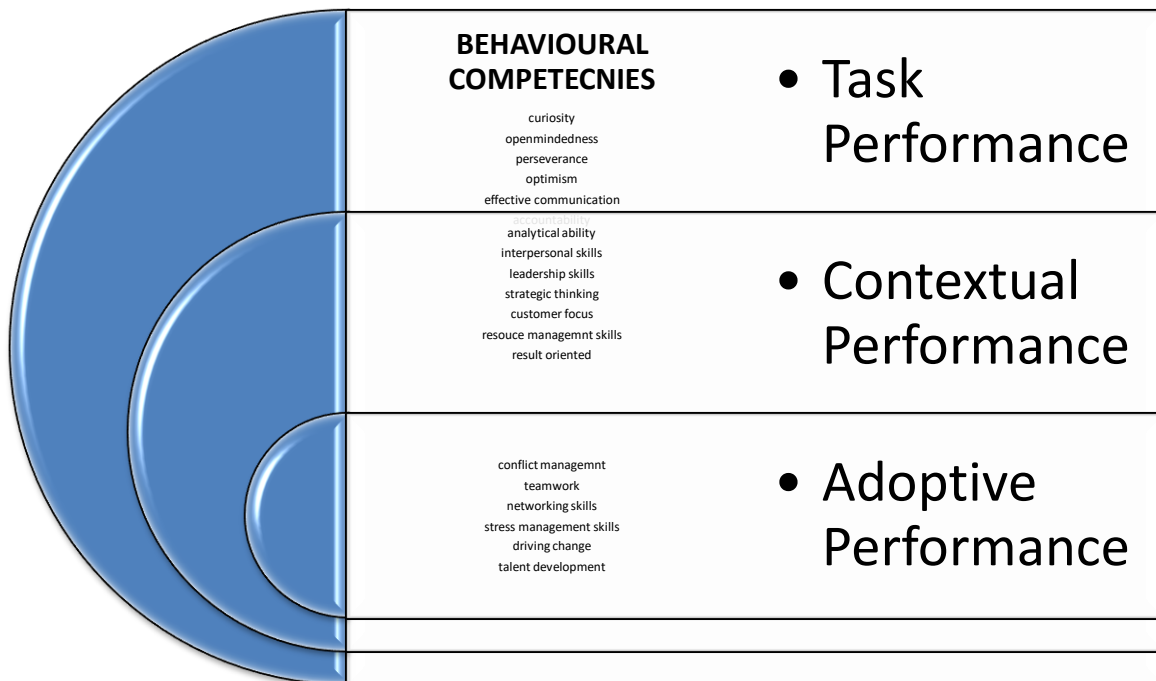
Adaptive work performance

Heuristic Conceptual framework of Individual Work Performance includes the third dimension which is the adaptive work performance, which can be considered as very important dimension considering its relevance to the ever changing technological working environment in organizations, it considers behaviors in reaction to these volatile working environment. Allworth and Hesketh found that adaptive performance had differential predictors than task or contextual performance.

Counter productive work behavior

This dimension of work performance is considered as the behaviours are usually negative in nature and causing harm to organizational climate and culture. Researchers have opine that measuring the job performance only based on task performance will give scope for counter productive work behavior in the process.

The study in this paper highlights the role played by behavioral competencies necessary in enhancing the task performance, contextual performance and adaptive performance and also focuses on identifying the competencies necessary to combat counter productive work behavior in organizations.



Behavioral competencies resulting in superior job performance

The Behavioral competencies describe the necessary elements required to be successful in an organization other than job specific skills. As such, behavioral competencies are specific to a person rather than to a job. These are collective abilities individual posses across all the job levels. While some of them are innately present in individuals and some acquire these skills over the period of time. The above pictorial representation shows the relationship between the different behavioral competencies and the dimensions of job performance. Competencies which are necessary for task performance are curiosity,openmindedness, perseverance, optimism, effective communication and accountability. Task performance talks about job specific proficiency which can be gained only when a new entrant is curious and open to learn the job skills. The curiosity is tendency to posses' strong intellectual curiosity, an eager wish to learn something. Behavioralcompetencies necessary for contextual performance are analytical ability, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, strategic thinking, customer focus, resource management skills, result oriented. These competencies indicate the additional progressive skills an individual possesses to outperform in his role in organization. The competencies required for adoptive performanceare conflict management, teamwork, networkingskills, stress management skills, drivingchange, talent development skills. The competencies for adoptive skills represent the flexibility of an individual to fit in an organization and ability to face the ever changing circumstances. The competencies can be

assessed by observing the behavioral indicators representing the competencies in an individual.

Behavioral competencies, behavioral indicators and its impact on job performance dimensions.

COMPETENCIES	BEHAVIOURAL INDICATORS	JOB PERFORMANCE DIMENSIONS
Curiosity Open Mindedness Perseverance Optimism Effective Communication Accountability	• Always listens attentively and absorbs novel information, Updates with current trends, asks questions and looks for opportunities to help, regularly attends conferences and meetings and meets new people. • Completes tasks that have been assigned on time. • Does not lose control when confronted with criticism	Task performance • Job-specific task proficiency • Non-job-specific task proficiency • Productivity • Job knowledge • Work quantity • In-role performance
Analytical Ability Interpersonal Skills Leadership Skills Strategic Thinking Customer Focus Resource Management Skills Result Oriented Problem	• Smart employee who is always finds out way to get work. • Commits and delivers high-quality output by closely monitoring every process. • Takes initiative to resolve issues and intimate others regarding the quality check. • Focus on quality	Contextual performance • Demonstrating effort • Maintaining personal discipline • Facilitating peer and team performance • Supervision and leadership Management and administration • Organizational citizenship behavior • Extra-role performance

Solving and Proactive	with minimum error • Has entrepreneurial mindset • Influences others • Knows the impact of one's work on organization as a whole • Understands the vision and mission of the organization. • Being proactive to customer needs.	
Conflict Management Teamwork Networking Skills Stress Management Skills Driving Change Talent Development	• takes appropriate and immediate action to resolve misunderstandings • Makes sure that conflicts within the teams are resolved. • Understands common goals towards which oneself and others are working. • Willingness to help • Does the right thing regardless of the consequences. • Always upgrades oneself • Acts as change agent	Adoptive Performance • Innovative ideas • Adjusting goals and plans to situation • Flexible to changes • Understanding groups and culture • Showing resilience.

	• Being flexible	
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Counter productive work behaviour is the consequence of incompetence in an individual which usually crop up when performance evaluation is restricted to the dimension of task performance.

Further research

The study is based only on in depth literature survey and is based on secondary data. Further the behavioral competency model can be tested by implementing primary data using statistical tools. The industry or job specific behavioral competency model can also be constructed.

Conclusion

Several studies have established a negative relationship between contextual work performance, adaptive work performance and counterproductive behavior which has a negative impact on the social and cultural environment of the organization. The behavioral competencies are certain skills mandatory for individual to reach higher standards of performance. The study recommends adoption of competency based strategic approaches right from hiring and is focused on identifying and suggesting the training methodologies, to help employees upgrade themselves in areas of competency dearth. The customized competency matrix in consultation with the subject experts can be developed in order to achieve the organizational goal without any hindrances.

A firm obtains organizational success with the help of behavioral competencies which focuses on the core competencies which have direct impact on the organizational success. Behavioral competencies at work is all about hiring through competency framework, behavioral types and testing the competencies in entry level, middle level and the senior level. The behavioral competencies also support the effective and result oriented training and development process in organizations leading to a successful organizations.

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