Competency Mapping: Need for the Hour

Monika Gulia

Assistant Professor
Delhi School of Professional Studies and Research
Rohini, Delhi

ABSTRACT

Organizations are made by people not by buildings. Employees are important for every organization that why they are considered as resources. They help an organization in achieving competitive advantage. Thus employees should be managed effectively and efficiently. Human resource management is done to manage the employees within organization which means binding the employees with the organization in such a way that objectives of both can be achieved. No organization can achieve success only on the basis of financial and operating reports. These are employees who make it successful. The present globalization of economy necessitates innovative approaches in managing the working force. Now a days highly skilled and knowledge based jobs have increased whereas low skilled jobs have decreased. Many changes have been witnessed by Indian organizations such as cultural diversity, workforce diversity etc. due to globalization. Hence in a knowledge based economy skill mapping is necessary. Skill Mapping or Competency Mapping is a process of identifying key competencies for an organization. Competency mapping is an evolving HR practice focusing on factors required for success at any job and matching it with skills of workforce available. Every well-managed firm should have well defined roles and list of competencies required to perform each role effectively. It helps in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an individual. This understanding of his strengths and weaknesses will help him in deciding his career path. So in a knowledge-based economy, it is important for organizations to evaluate workforce competency and develop them on an ongoing basis to meet the global competition.

Hence this paper focuses on understanding the concept and importance of competency mapping in today's era.

Key Words: Competencies, competitive advantage, globalization, cultural diversity, competency mapping

Introduction

Organizations are made by people not by buildings. Employees are important for every organization that why they are considered as resources. They help an organization in achieving competitive advantage. Thus employees should be managed effectively and efficiently. Human resource management is done to manage the employees within organization which means binding the employees with the organization in such a way that objectives of both can be achieved. No organization can achieve success only on the basis of financial and operating reports. These are employees who make it successful. The present globalization of economy necessitates innovative approaches in managing the working force. Now a days highly skilled and knowledge based jobs have increased whereas low skilled jobs have decreased. Many

changes have been witnessed by Indian organizations such as cultural diversity, workforce diversity etc. due to globalization. Hence in a knowledge based economy skill mapping is necessary. Skill Mapping or Competency Mapping is a process of identifying key competencies for an organization. Competency mapping is an evolving HR practice focusing on factors required for success at any job and matching it with skills of workforce available. Every well-managed firm should have well defined roles and list of competencies required to perform each role effectively. It helps in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of an individual. This understanding of his strengths and weaknesses will help him in deciding his career path. So in a knowledge-based economy, it is important for organizations to evaluate workforce competency and develop them on an ongoing basis to meet the global competition.

Every industry in the present scenario is trying to achieve high efficiency and effectiveness in order to survive in this cut throat competition. Industry is basically classified into production and service sector. They try desperately to improve the efficiency of their system. All the methods and approaches for improving the performance and efficiency of their operations points to a basis key factor–"Skill and Competency. Skills and competency, therefore, becomes a focal point of companies which aims at improving their performance. Every industry, especially production industries, emphasizes on skill and competency. It becomes mandatory for any production company, aiming at improving their performance, to map the skill level of their workers.

Skills mapping is a technique of studying and analyzing the skills possessed by the persons concerned. It is a comprehensive way of knowing the skill levels of the persons. Skill mapping evolves a result; which not only specifies the skill level of the persons but also identifies the areas where improvement can be made by training or by other means.

Competency mapping involves the determination of the extent to which the person possesses the various competencies related to a job. The extent to which a person is adjustable, resourceful, capable of working efficiently under stress, capable of anticipating threats, finding solutions and contributing in innovations; which is then compared with the extent to which the various competencies are required for a job, the comparison enables us to know the suitability of a person for a job.

The best workplaces continue to find innovative ways to create personal and meaningful connections with their employees. A growing trend among the best places to work is building a more personal connection with employees. The typical relationship between boss and worker is giving way to a never more intimate and sensitive connection with employees. Many of the best workplaces take steps to show an individual how his work directly ties with the company's strategy and purpose. The best workplaces actively cultivate a sense of meaningful connection to jobs.

Now a days it is not possible to show a good financial or operating report unless your personnel relations are in order. Over the years, highly skilled and knowledge based jobs are increasing while low skilled jobs are decreasing. This calls for future skill mapping through proper HRM initiatives. Indian organizations are also witnessing a change in systems, management cultures and philosophy due to the global alignment of Indian organizations. There is a need for multi skill development.

Competency Mapping is a process of identifying key competencies for an organization, the jobs and functions within it. Competency mapping is important and is an essential activity. Every well-managed firm should have well defined roles and list of competencies required to perform each role effectively. Competency mapping identifies an individual's strengths and weaknesses in order to help them better understand themselves and to show them where career development efforts need to be directed. Competency mapping is not only done for Confirmed employees of an organization and it can also be done for contract workers or for those seeking employment to emphasize the specific skills which would make them valuable to a potential employer.

Meaning of Competency

A cluster of related abilities, commitments, knowledge, and skills that enables a person (or an organization) to act effectively in a job or situation. Competence indicates sufficiency of knowledge and skills that enable someone to act in a wide variety of situations. Because each level of responsibility has its own requirements, competence can occur in any period of a person's life or at any stage of his or her career.

Competence is the ability of an individual to do a job properly. A competency is a set of defined behaviors that provide a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of the behaviors in individual employees.

Competency is sometimes thought of as being shown in action in a situation and context that might be different the next time a person has to act. In emergencies, competent people may react to a situation following behaviors they have previously found to succeed. To be competent a person would need to be able to interpret the situation in the context and to have a repertoire of possible actions to take and have trained in the possible actions in the repertoire, if this is relevant. Regardless of training, competency would grow through experience and the extent of an individual to learn and adapt.

Competency has different meanings, and remains one of the most diffuse terms in the management development sector, and the organizational and occupational literature

Competencies are also what people need to be successful in their jobs. Job competencies are not the same as job task. Competencies include all the related knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes that form a person's job. This set of context-specific qualities is correlated with superior job performance and can be used as a standard against which to measure job performance as well as to develop, recruit, and hire employees.

Competencies and competency models may be applicable to all employees in an organization or they may be position specific. Identifying employee competencies can contribute to improved organizational performance. They are most effective if they meet several critical standards, including linkage to, and leverage within an organization's human resource system

Core competencies differentiate an organization from its competition and create a company's competitive advantage in the marketplace. An organizational core competency is its strategic strength.

Competencies provide organizations with a way to define in behavioral terms what it is that people need to do to produce the results that the organization desires, in a way that is in keep with its culture. By having competencies defined in the organization, it allows employees to know what they need to be productive. When properly defined, competencies, allows

organizations to evaluate the extent to which behaviors employees are demonstrating and where they may be lacking. For competencies where employees are lacking, they can learn. This will allow organizations to know potentially what resources they may need to help the employee develop and learn those competencies. Competencies can distinguish and differentiate your organization from your competitors. While two organizations may be alike in financial results, the way in which the results were achieve could be different based on the competencies that fit their particular strategy and organizational culture. Lastly, competencies can provide a structured model that can be used to integrate management practices throughout the organization. Competencies that align their recruiting, performance management, training and development and reward practices to reinforce key behaviors that the organization values.

Definition of Competence

According to **McClelland**(1973) stated that a "competence" in tradition, is "*a personal trait or set of habits that leads to more effective or superior job performance*", in other words, an "ability that adds clear economic value to the efforts of a person on the job".

According to **WOODRUFEE(1991):**

- **Competency:** A person – related concept that refers to the dimension of behavior lying behind competent performer.
- **Competence:** A Work–related concept that refers to area of work at which a person is competent
- **Competencies:** Often referred as the combination of the above two.

Benefits of Competencies

Competency models can help organizations align their initiatives to their overall business strategy. By aligning competencies to business strategies, organizations can better recruit and select employees for their organizations. Competencies have been become a precise way for employers to distinguish superior from average or below average performance. The reason for this is because competencies extend beyond measuring baseline characteristics and or skills used to define and assess job performance. In addition to recruitment and selection, a well sound Competency Model will help with performance management, succession planning and career development.

Selection: The use of behavioral interviewing and testing where appropriate, to screen job candidates based on whether they possess the key necessary job competency profile:

- Provides a complete picture of the job requirements
- Increases the likelihood of selecting and interviewing only individuals who are likely to succeed on the job
- Minimizes the investment (both time and money) in people who may not meet the company's expectations
- Enables a more systematic and valid interview and selection process
- Helps distinguish between competencies that are trainable after hiring and those are more difficult to develop

Training & Development: Development of individual learning plans for individual or groups of employees based on the measurable "gaps" between job competencies or competency proficiency levels required for their jobs and the competency portfolio processed by the incumbent.

- Focuses training and development plans to address missing competencies or raise level of proficiency
- Enables people to focus on the skills, knowledge and characteristics that have the most impact on job effectiveness
- Ensures that training and development opportunities are aligned with organizational needs
- Makes the most effective use of training and development time and dollars
- Provides a competency framework for ongoing coaching and feedback, both development and remedial

Performance Management: Provides regular measurement of targeted behaviors and performance outcomes linked to job competency profile critical factors.

- Provides a shared understanding of what will be monitored, measured, and rewarded
- Focuses and facilitates the performance appraisal discussion appropriately on performance and development
- Provides focus for gaining information about a person's behavior on the job
- Facilitates effectiveness goal-setting around required development efforts and performance outcomes

Career Paths: Development of stepping stones necessary for promotion and long term career-growth

- Clarifies the skills, knowledge, and characteristics required for the job or role in question and for the follow-on jobs
- Identifies necessary levels of proficiency for follow-on jobs
- Allows for the identification of clear, valid, legally defensible and achievable benchmarks for employees to progress upward
- Takes the guesswork out of career progression discussions

Succession Planning: Careful, methodical preparation focused on retaining and growing the competency portfolios critical for the organization to survive and prosper

- Provides a method to assess candidates' readiness for the role
- Focuses training and development plans to address missing competencies or gaps in competency proficiency levels
- Allows an organization to measures its "bench strength"—the number of high-potential performers and what they need to acquire to step up to the next level
- Provides a competency framework for the transfer of critical knowledge, skills, and experience prior to succession – and for preparing candidates for this transfer via training, coaching and mentoring
- Informs curriculum development for leadership development programs, a necessary component for management succession planning

Types of Competencies

Organizational competencies: The mission, vision, values, culture and core competencies of the organization that sets the tone and/or context in which the work of the organization is carried out (e.g. customer-driven, risk taking and cutting edge). How we treat the patient is part of the patient's treatment.

Core competencies: Capabilities and/or technical expertise unique to an organization, i.e. core competencies differentiate an organization from its competition (e.g. the technologies, methodologies, strategies or processes of the organization that create competitive advantage in the marketplace). An organizational core competency is an organization's strategic strength.

Technical competencies: Depending on the position, both technical and performance capabilities should be weighed carefully as employment decisions are made. For example, organizations that tend to hire or promote solely on the basis of technical skills, i.e. to the exclusion of other competencies, may experience an increase in performance-related issues (e.g. systems software designs versus relationship management skills)

Behavioral competencies: Individual performance competencies are more specific than organizational competencies and capabilities. As such, it is important that they be defined in a measurable behavioral context in order to validate applicability and the degree of expertise (e.g. development of talent)

Functional competencies: Functional competencies are job-specific competencies that drive proven high-performance, quality results for a given position. They are often technical or operational in nature (e.g., "backing up a database" is a functional competency).[6]

Management competencies: Management competencies identify the specific attributes and capabilities that illustrate an individual's management potential. Unlike leadership characteristics, management characteristics can be learned and developed with the proper training and resources. Competencies in this category should demonstrate pertinent behaviors for effective management to be effective.

Competency Mapping

Competency Mapping is a process to identify key competencies for an organization and/or a job and incorporating those competencies throughout the various processes (i.e. job evaluation, training, recruitment) of the organization. A competency is defined as a behavior (i.e. communication, leadership) rather than a skill or ability.

Competency mapping identifies the competency of an individual or group of individuals in relation to job requirements. Competency mapping envisages development and sustainability of competency, based on the changing organizational requirements.
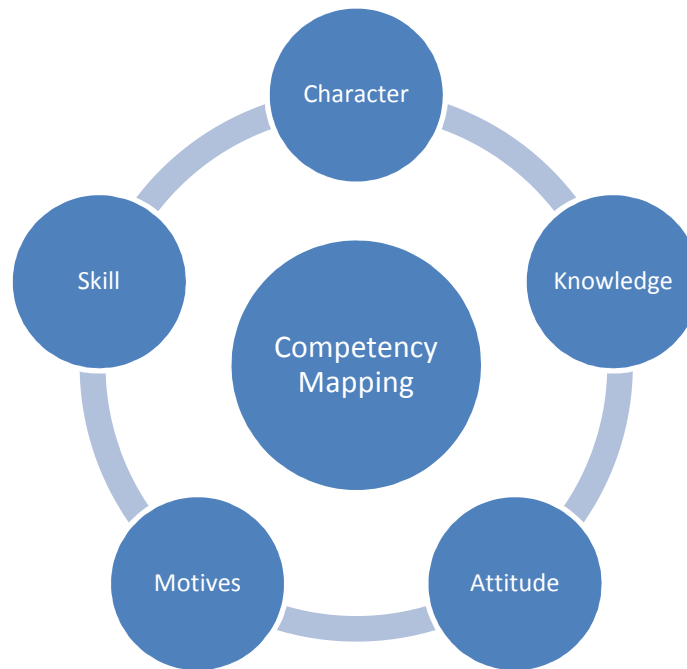
Process of Competency Mapping

1. Identify the department for which competency mapping is required.
2. After identifying the department we need to conduct job description.
3. Then conduct a job analysis by asking incumbents to complete a position information questionnaire (PIQ).
4. Collect PIQ data.

5. Using the results of the job analysis, a competency based job description is developed. It is developed after carefully analyzing the input from the represented group of incumbents and converting it to standard competencies.

6. Now the competencies of the respective job description become factors for assessment on the performance evaluation. Using competencies will help to perform more objective evaluations based on displayed or not displayed behaviors.

7. Taking the competency mapping one step further, one can use the results of one's evaluation to identify in what competencies individuals need additional development or training. This will help in focusing on training needs required to achieve the goals of the position and company and help the employees develop toward the ultimate success of the organization.

Major Competencies evaluated under Competency Mapping

There are various areas of someone's personality which need to be evaluated such as Knowledge, character, motives, attitude and skills. These competencies are measured to match the job requirements.

Methods used for Competency Mapping

It is not easy to identify all the competencies required to fulfill the job requirements. However, a number of methods and approaches have been developed and successfully tried out. These methods have helped managers to a large extent, to identify and reinforce and/or develop these competencies both for the growth of the individual and the growth of the organization. In the following section, some major approaches of competency mapping have been presented.

1) Assessment Centre

"Assessment Centre" is a mechanism to identify the potential for growth. It is a procedure that uses a variety of techniques to evaluate employees for manpower purpose and decisions.

Assessment Centre comprises a number of exercises or simulations which have been designed to replicate the tasks and demands of the job. These exercises or simulations will have been designed in such a way that candidates can undertake them both singly and together and they will be observed by assessors while they are doing the exercises. These exercise can be group discussion, role play, case study, interview etc.

2) Critical Incidents Technique

First of all, a list of good and bad on the job behaviour is prepared for each job. A few judges are asked to rate how good and how bad is good and bad behaviour, respectively. Based on these ratings a check-list of good and bad behavior is prepared. The next task is to train supervisors in taking notes on critical incidents or outstanding examples of success or failure of the subordinates in meeting the job requirements. The incidents are immediately noted down by the supervisor as he observes them.

3) Interview Techniques Competency Mapping

Almost every organisation uses an interview in some shape or form, as part of competency mapping. Enormous amounts of research have been conducted into interviews and numerous books have been written on the subject. There are, however, a few general guidelines, the observation of which should aid the use of an interview for competency mapping.

4) Questionnaires

Questionnaires are written lists of questions that users fill out questionnaire and return. You begin by formulating questions about your product based on the type of information you want to know. The questionnaire sources below provide more information on designing effective questions. This technique can be used at any stage of development, depending on the questions that are asked in the questionnaire. Often, questionnaires are used after products are shipped to assess customer satisfaction with the product.

5) Psychometric Tests

Many organizations use some form of psychometric assessment as a part of their selection process. For some people this is a prospect about which there is a natural and understandable wariness of the unknown.

A psychometric test is a standardized objective measure of a sample of behavior. It is standardized because the procedure of administering the test, the environment in which the test is taken, and the method of calculating individual scores are uniformly applied. It is objective because a good test measures the individual differences in an unbiased scientific method without the interference of human factors. Most of these tests are time bound and have a correct answer. A person's score is calculated on the basis of correct answers. Most tests could be classified in two broad categories:

a) Aptitude Tests: They refer to the potentiality that a person has to profit from training. It predicts how well a person would be able to perform after training and not what he has done in the past. They are developed to identify individuals with special inclinations in given abilities.

Hence they cover more concrete, clearly defined or practical abilities like mechanical aptitude, clinical aptitude and artistic aptitude etc.

b) Achievement Tests: These tests measure the level of proficiency that a person has been able to achieve. They measure what a person has done. Most of these tests measure such things as language usage, arithmetic computation and reasoning etc.

Advantages of Competency Mapping

For the company

The advantages of competency mapping for the companies or organizations are as follows:

• It helps in establishing standards for performance of the employees.

• It helps in improving job satisfaction which in turn will in employee retention.

• It increases the effectiveness of training & development.

• Helps in identifying efficient and inefficient employees.

• Help teams and individuals align their behaviors with key organizational strategies

For Managers

The competency mapping provides following advantages to the managers:

• It helps in identifying the effectiveness of recruitment and selection.

• Easier communication of performance expectations

• It help in deciding the career path for their employees on the basis of their competencies.

For employees

The employees in an organization get the following advantages by competency mapping:

• Competency Mapping help in identifying the behavioral standards of performance excellence

•Provides a more specific and objective assessment of their strengths and the tools required to enhance their skills

• Enhances clarity on career related issues

• Helps each understand how to achieve expectations

Conclusion

Hence competencies are the important trait of individual personality which should be measured to analyze their potential. For that we need to do competency mapping which is an appropriate tool to identify job and behavioural competencies of an employee. There can be various methods for competency mapping and their suitability varies according to the situation. Competency Mapping helps in identifying various necessary traits of an individual which contribute in organizational growth and development. So competency mapping is indeed the need of hour as it finds the fit between the job requirements and individual's competencies.

References:

http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/definition/competency-mapping

http://www.whatishumanresource.com/competency-mapping

http://strategichrinc.com/competency_mapping/

http://hrlink.in/topics/the-need-for-competency-mappinghttp://hrlink.in/topics/the-need-for-competency-mapping

http://hrmba.blogspot.in/2010/01/advantages-of-competency-mapping.html

http://www.mbaskool.com/business-articles/human-resource/16278-competency-mapping-and-its-importance-in-business.html

http://www.worldwidejournals.com/paripex/articles.php?val=MjI2NA==

https://www.google.co.in/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwitn5WQpazPAhUHpI8KHavXBPEQFgggMAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fabhinavjournal.com%2Fjournal%2Findex.php%2FISSN-2320-0073%2Farticle%2Fdownload%2F520%2Fpdf_141&usg=AFQjCNFf-vbFUqOo6IxUiDjZEeWlNeCDgA&bvm=bv.133700528,d.c2I

http://www.ijirset.com/upload/2013/november/6_COMPETENCY%20MAPPING_.pdf

file:///C:/Documents%20and%20Settings/USERSTaff/My%20Documents/Downloads/520-1276-1-PB.pdf

https://www.kesdee.com/casestudy/Competency_Mapping_&_Case_Studies.pdf

http://www.free-management-ebooks.com/faqap/devcomp-04.htm