Developing effective appraisal system

By RAFIKUL ISLAM

EMPLOYEE performance appraisal system is a controversial tool in managing organisations. Critics say the system assumes a false degree of measurement accuracy, engenders dysfunctional employee conflict and competition, assigns an inordinate amount of responsibility for poor performance to individual employees while undervalue the importance of the overall work process, underemphasises the importance of teamwork.

Despite this fact, the system is practiced by numerous global organisations. Here are some guidelines in implementing the system successfully.

- **Employee participation:** In any case, if the employees perceive the appraisal system as biased, unfair and lacks rigour, then it is unlikely that they will accept the outcomes of the system. Participation gives an opportunity to the employees to raise their voices into the appraisal process. Performance standards, criteria for evaluation and the evaluation form itself – all can be developed with the help of employees.

- **Greater employee participation:** Generates an atmosphere of co-operation and support, which facilitates the development of a coaching or counselling relationship, thereby reducing appraisal-related tension and rater-raise conflict.

In developing the system, it is strongly suggested to have a dialogue session between the manager and employees.

- **Developing performance standards:** Standards to be developed that measure the essential job duties and responsibilities. Once again, employee participation facilitates developing Reliable, valid, fair and useful performance standards.

- **Goal setting:** Goal setting has been a powerful motivational tool. Goal setting consists of performance goals that are specific, moderately challenging, and accepted. Employees have a series of goals to be accomplished in the course of a year. When annual reviews are held, rate the employees’ progress in achieving these goals. It must be remembered that the evaluation is not solely based on the employee’s performance between the two-to-three-week period before the evaluation, but is based on the employee’s work during the appraisal period, whatever it is three, six, or twelve months.

- **Sound performance appraisal interview:** If the appraisal interview is conducted poorly, the efficacy of the appraisal system is lost. The interviewee must be aware about sensitivity to employees’ needs for privacy and confidentiality.

- **Self-evaluation:** Self-evaluation provides employees with an opportunity to systemically assess their performance. Employees can evaluate themselves by completing their appraisal forum and presenting the draft for discussion with the evaluator.

- **Management feedback:** Management feedback is required for a common sense reason. When the employees do good jobs, express your appreciation in terms of an inspiring vision that captures people’s hearts and minds? Is there a structure in place where you get everyone committed and involved on a daily basis (and not just during the periodic meetings and performance reviews)?

Finally, you need to be a real leader who can take your people along with you.

Powerful questions: Can you express your aspiration to succeed and be extraordinary in its performance and reputation? Just having a desire is not sufficient. Life is never so simple especially when we have to involve others. There could be three things that may be missing.

To start off, you need to be genuinely and expressively inspired as much as the people you want to enliven for this journey. Next, comes specifying the building blocks that help people see the road ahead.

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