

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 undervaluing 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-ratee 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. Assign employees 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 in the two-to-three-week period before

the evaluation, but is based on the employee's work during the appraisal period, whether it is three, six, or 12 months.

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

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

Management feedback: Management's feedback is required for a common sense reason. When the employees do good jobs, they expect a pat on their backs (positive feedback); on the other hand, if the poor performers do not receive any constructive feedback which tell them to improve, they will think that the present level of performance is accepted in the organisation and they may not put extra efforts to improve.

To have an effective performance appraisal system, there must be formal and informal performance feedback. Focus also should be paid on employ-

ee's strength.

Develop user-friendly procedure: Performance criteria should encompass the key aspects of an employee's job. If any key aspect is ignored, then it sends the message that that is unimportant and can be ignored.

Design specific and relevant appraisals: Appraisal system will be successful only when the items appraised address the requirements and essential functions on the job. The criteria used should be specific and directly related to the job.

Evaluator training: The person who conducts the appraisal should receive extensive training in goal setting, setting performance standards, conducting interviews, providing feedback, avoiding rating biases, etc.

Revise performance appraisal process: Feedback on the appraisal process should be regularly solicited from both supervisors and employees. The appraisal criteria and evaluation process should be under routine scrutiny.

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Bringing out leadership quality

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want your organisation 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 enlist for this journey. Next, comes specifying the building blocks that help people see the road ahead.

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

Powerful questions: Can you express your aspiration 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)?

What will be the changes you like to initiate for yourself if you are really passionate about what you want to achieve?

We are an established men's apparel company and we have been in the retail business for many years now. We have embarked on a committed

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