

AGILE BASED COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT

ABC Management

Output 1 / Activity 4

Article: Situational cases as an approach which gives context into assessment

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1. Competence management method as a situational approach

If one took part in the competence study as an observer, one must have interpreted this competence in the context of this person's work. One probably had to remember similar situations in which a particular competence was used. As a result of this one created in one's head a situation in which one answered yes... Therefore, the observed person gets very generalised results which are of little use. Moreover, this person creates their own image of the mentioned professional situation. In effect, the perspectives of the observer and the observed are totally different.

Let's take a look at an example. Adam has to estimate how clearly his boss sets goals for him - he is the observer in this study and his boss is the observed. In the classic approach, to provide an answer he would have to recall certain situations in which the supervisor actually set him goals. Therefore he will make certain interpretations. The assessment is a result of these situations. So feedback is a kind of average and the person reading it must answer the question themselves and ask why he received this result and compare it with his own situations. He very often asks the question: what did they have in mind?

If we compare feedback to a present it would turn out that the giver thinks he is giving an éclair and the person receiving it only sees a hardtack... It is because of the double interpretation! The first interpretation takes place when the giver interprets the questions in the questionnaire and the second occurs when the tested individual receives the result and tries to transfer the results into his work reality. To avoid misinterpretation, we propose a different method based on specific situations. This method allows getting more adequate, clear-cut results which are closer to reality, and therefore easier to interpret.

According to many researchers, even the best tool for diagnosing human personality, intelligence or manual capabilities will be useless, if it wouldn't be related to the context of the Organization and the worksite which we diagnose. In the competence management method called *Agile Based Competency Management* we have got the situational approach method, to draw greater attention to contextual understanding.

2. Study



What's the difference? The study is not based on the behaviour competence definition but on the behaviours that you know from real workplace situations. While carrying out the study, you will be faced with events which will describe your reality. Each of these will have 3 options of actions and reactions. Your task is to indicate 2 of them: firstly, the one which is most familiar to you - the one which is typical and closest to you and the way you react; secondly, the one which is least important to how you function at your work every day. Each competence is assessed using a few situation descriptions (cases). The result you obtain is an average of the results achieved in particular competence cases.

The information collected is presented as a report which is analysed as part of the workshop. On this basis - the IDP is created.

Let's sum up the study step by step:

- You receive a set of situation descriptions (cases) to solve. They relate to everyday situations at work.
- With each case you choose two out of three reactions - the least and the most adequate ones.
- You receive a result as a percentage which is an average of the results received across particular cases.
- You work on a report at a workshop, the result of which helps prepare the Individual Development Plan.

The 100% result in a given competence means that your responses comply with the responses indicated by the group of experts in your company. This group consists of high achievers and the HR department. Let's repeat once again: 100% does not mean the best result in a given competence. What it does mean is that your responses (your competence level) are in line with the company's expectations. A high competence level is not always beneficial from the point of view of performed duties. It is also worth remembering that both the pluses and minuses of the high and low competencies can be indicated. Let's take a look at an example.

Adam has a high result in empathy which means he is a great man. Normally, it's good. But does it relate to his position? As a manager he may have problems with reacting to repeated infringement of standards by his subordinates because he will feel empathy towards them. So we have both the pluses and minuses of a high competence realization. However, the company wants this competence to be scored at 60%. If this study measured the absolute level of empathy Adam's level would be higher than that expected by his company. In our method, however, the 100% result means he is in line with the organization's expectations. Each deviation, both to a higher or a lower empathy level means that as a percentage, a particular person gets a result lower than 100%. Discussion of the result included in the report, gives clear indications which situation a particular person has to face. Therefore, both Adam and Michael should work on their empathy in order to reach the level expected by the company and in turn perform their duties better.



3. What are the benefits?

Finally, let's look at the benefits of the situational study of competence:

- Firstly we base the study on real situations, we don't have to interpret them. There is a greater possibility of receiving clear-cut information. It applies to both the respondent and the observer who assesses the competence level of the respondent.
- Secondly - anonymity. The observer does not have to worry about being identified, and thanks to this, they can express their true opinion.
- Thirdly - planning further activities becomes easier. It is easier to understand feedback and then to build a development plan.
- Fourthly - clarity. The respondent gets clear cut information: "this is how I am seen".