

CONCEPT OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT AND LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT

In this study the concept of Performance management will be define. What is the use of Performance Management in any organization especially in the libraries? The concept focuses on improving the skills that help an employee do their job in a better manner in libraries. It is helpful in improving the professionalism in employees and overall performance of the libraries. The concept approaches all the departments and all employees of the libraries and affected the performance of the library. Human resource is the most important resource of a library if we can improve them other resources and services will be improve with it too.

Keywords: Performance Management, Measure, Assessment, Career Advancement, Library, Monitoring.

Introduction

Performance Management

Performance management is a set of processes and systems aimed at developing an employee so they perform their job to the best of their ability. Performance management is not aimed at improving all skills. In fact, good performance management focuses on improving the skills that help an employee do their job better. Performance management is about measuring and improving the contribution of the employee to the organization.

A famous quote attributed to Peter Drucker is "If you can't measure it, you can't improve it". Or alternatively, "if you can't measure it, you can't manage it". Performance management is about measuring, managing, and improving the contribution of the individual to the organization.

Performance, assessment of weak and strong points and further identification of training needs. These points of feedback enable the employee to develop the specific skills required for the job and career advancement.^[1]

Performance Management Cycle

The performance management cycle is an annually reoccurring phenomenon in which employees are evaluated throughout the year. This cycle, starting with goal-setting at the beginning of the year, followed by the monitoring of their progress, helping them develop to do better, and ending with a formal evaluation afterward.

The goal of this cycle is to develop and execute employee performance plans. These plans help in focusing employee efforts on achieving organizational goals which, in turn, helps to align employee priorities with the goals of the organization.

One of the earliest versions of a performance management model has been published by Peter Drucker. In his 1954 book "The Practice of Management", he proposed "Management by Objectives" (MBO).

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The performance management cycle model that we propose is a four-stage model:

- **Planning:** The model starts with planning, which involves setting goals and defining success metrics, usually at the beginning of the year. Once goals are set.
- **Monitoring:** The second stage involves monitoring the progress of these goals. If there is potential for improvement, or performance is lacking;
- **Employee development:** This can be achieved in the form of training and development but also through challenging assignments and other opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- **Rated and rewarded:** The employee is then rated and rewarded on their performance, and the cycle starts again.

If ratings are low, development takes higher priority, and if halfway through the year a more senior job opens up and the employee is ready to take it on, the reward comes early.^[2]

Performance Management in Libraries

Performance management in libraries takes many forms. To **Chan (2006)** it includes the setting of goals for a single unit in a whole library or yearly performance that library management uses to improve the performance and effectiveness of employees. Chan further indicates that every library that wishes to improve on the organizational effectiveness and enhance the performance of staff is supposed to adopt 'a more structured process' for managing the performance of staff.^[3] **Owusu-Acheaw (2007)** (cited in Babalola, 2014) further reiterated that libraries are to vigilantly study the environment, identify and apply the tools that could be used to motivate staff to perform effectively. All the elements in performance management (performance monitoring, provision of feedback and staff development) are used to communicate the focus of the organization to patrons. Performance management is therefore a continuous process which needs to be regularly assessed and changes made where necessary.^[4] However, in a study conducted by **Tutu (2012)**, it was stated emphatically that literature on Human Resource Management has given more attention to the Western countries. This literature continues to exist even though there have been some progress in areas such as motivation, appraisal and staffing.^[5]

Use of Performance Management Cycle in Libraries

The process is divided into four stages. It can be used in any organization. Libraries are working with different levels of employees. The performance of a library depends on the performance of its employees. If we want to improve the performance of a library we have to improve the performance of its employees. So the performance management cycle model is also applicable in libraries.

- **Planning:** The planning phase revolves around setting performance expectations for the employee. These are included in the job descriptions of the employee. It is the best practice to actively involve the employee in this planning process. All departments of libraries have different job and employees have different job descriptions for them.
- **Monitoring:** In the monitoring phase, the goals set in the planning phase (job descriptions) are actively tracked. Monitoring involves the continuous measuring of performance and providing feedback on progress towards the goals (jobs). By monitoring continuously, the manager or supervisor can correct the employee in case of suboptimal performance, rather than finding this out at the end when it is too late.
- Especially when dealing with highly educated library professionals and other subordinates, it is important to focus on the goal to achieve and how can it be achieved by the team work.
- **Developing:** Development plays a key role in improving performance of any employee. As a result of active monitoring, areas of improvement can be identified. It can be under performance that should be corrected as superior performance in which the employee wants to excel even further.
- This can be achieved in the form of training and development sessions of library employees. It can be also achieved through challenging assignments and other opportunities for personal and professional growth in libraries.
- **Rating & rewarding:** Rating performance is an inevitability to determine the added value of employees to the library or organization. This is usually done during the employee's (bi) annual performance appraisal.

- **Reward for employees:** In case of superior performance in the work, the employee should be recognized for their performance. This can be through giving them praise, a raise, time off, recognition items, a promotion, or all of the above!^[6]

Factors Affecting Performance Management

Maila, (2006) shows that effective performance management can only be achieved when there is regular monitoring and evaluation of performance in organizations. Performance goals should always be measurable, clear, achievable, and associated to individual careers, organizational objectives and legislative requirements.

Management of performance in all organizations is affected by many factors.^[7] **Lockett (1992)** identifies some factors that affect performance management. Firstly, he indicates that performance of employees needs to be managed continually. He explains that individuals need to have regular reviews in order to be able to support those who may have less experience in performing a particular task. This is the fundamental aspect of individual performance and if not sufficiently dealt with, it may cripple the overall performance of an organization because the latter is contingent on collective contributions made by individual employees.^[8] Another challenge to PM, as identified by **Christian (2015)**, is the complex nature of the PM concept itself. He explains that due to the several dimensions that are associated with PM there is no best methodology or approach that all organizations are to strictly follow. Even organizations of the same kind may have multiple alternatives for undertaking similar task.

Again, **Christian (2015)** identified lack of understanding and communication as one of the challenges to PM. It can be observed that oftentimes, managers of organizations are not able to explain the benefits of PM to other members of staff due to the fears associated with being overly transparent. This inadequate understanding and communication can be removed when there is a strong emphasis on design and implementation of PM, as well as support and coaching.^[9]

Challenges in Performance Management in Libraries

- Unclear job description is a major factor in performance management in any Library.
- There is a lack of cordial relationship between management and staff, inadequate logistics/equipment.
- There is a lack of commendation or rewards were some of the challenges to performance management.
- There is also the challenge of inadequate knowledge on performance management system by management of the library as well as the inability to regularly evaluate and monitor the performance of staff by management.
- Tutu (2012) indicates that communication, whether formal or informal, is a very useful tool in managing the performance of staff.^[10]
- The need for employees to know how well a particular task is being performed can only be active with effective communication.^[11]

Conclusion

Performance management concepts are used by organizations for improving the skills of employees and give them better environment for growth. It is important that libraries see the worth of integrating performance management concepts. The resources, feedback, information, work design, motivators, personal capacity and directions etc. are using to increase performance of employees in libraries. It is clear that the importance of these concepts lead to employee satisfaction. And by extension boost the performance of staff of the library can improve regularly. An employee can be changed in skilled professional with the help of performance management.

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