

AGILE BASED COMPETENCY MANAGEMENT

ABC Management

Output 1 / Activity 4

Article: Defining tasks and competencies

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1. Defining competency concept

Despite the fact that all sorts of experts devote a lot of attention to them, the competence concept still have not been clearly defined. So this is the area not fully recognized in the modern economy, and because of it has vary interpretations.

While defining the key competencies for our position and for the organisation we work in, we usually make sure that we match them to the goals that are set for us. The developmental expectations of the described competencies only make sense when we know that they are significant - from the point of view of our own workplace of course. In this article I will show you how to effectively match goal setting to defining competencies.

So let us assume the following definition: *the competences mean skills, knowledge, personal qualities and behaviors needed to effectively play a role/work in an organization and to support the company in achieving its strategic objectives.* They are related to the real action or obtained the results of this action in a particular situation.

Companies initiate processes of goal setting and define competencies but these two processes are not always related. If a company sets goals that take the form of tasks to be accomplished, how can one identify the competencies which help to achieve these goals and accomplish these tasks? We should be able match them in order to achieve the goals and follow the company's strategy.

2. Matching the tasks to competencies



The process of defining goals, their decomposition and the description of them through tasks, should be completed using defined competencies necessary to achieve the goals.

3. How does it look in practice?

The whole process should be coordinated by the HR department. Although in each organisational unit of the company, up to the level at which the company goals have been decomposed, this process should somehow run independently. After transferring specific goals to tasks, a team of experts from a particular department - workers producing the best results connected with set goals, their supervisor and their HR representative - should determine the situations which will be connected to the accomplishment of tasks.

How do we do this? We do this by asking the following questions:

- Which situations do you deal with most often?
- Which situations are the most difficult while trying to achieve your goals?
- In which situations can one build image or effectiveness?
- Which reactions produced a good result?

These questions should help you define the most common situations or those which can arise while accomplishing tasks. Situations collected in this way should be analysed and modified so that one specific competence would play the key role in a given situation.

After the descriptions of the situations are verified, HR consultation together with the group of experts can indicate typical behavioral reaction (expected or unacceptable) to particular situations.

This is how a competence study, adjusted to the goals and tasks in a particular organisational unit of the company, comes into being. It's a study based on the descriptions of situations adjusted to the company and departmental context.

Let's use an example. Adam works in a Sales Department. What is important for us, is the fact that the company has to set goals to increase the number of repeat purchase clients by 10% year on year. How is this connected with Adam's competencies? Let's say that we approach Mr. Adam's friend, the previous year's Sales Master - Michael. We ask him which activities will be key to achieving a set goal. He answers that it would be, among others, more effective client meetings. Why? Because you cannot increase the number of meetings, but you can make them more effective. We pursued the issue further and asked Michael to describe how such meetings are conducted - to describe the situations which he faced before, during and after those meetings. We also asked him to describe which behaviors the salesperson displayed in each situation and to identify their effectiveness. We received the answers which enabled us to work out descriptions of typical situations faced by salespeople from Adam's department. On the basis of the information we received from Michael, we also described how a salesperson reacts in various situations. In that way, a study was developed which allowed us to specify the level of expected competencies

of Adam and others from his department. Conducting this study will tell us what Adam is good at and what needs improvement, in order to achieve the goals set by his company.



4. What are the benefits?

What benefits do the described method bring?

- Firstly - one can choose from a wide range of elements such as knowledge, differing abilities and character features. You can determine which competencies are key to achieving the goals stated by a specific company.
- Secondly - specific, real situations and desired effects are defined - they are not abstract, they come from the working life of the company or department.
- Thirdly - a specific list of competencies appears for individual development of particular individuals working in specific departments.