

Literature Review

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Chapter 2: Literature Review

Performance and Leadership Development

Currently, in order to stay competitive, organizations are seeking to maintain a high performing workforce (Ketter, 2006). Ketter noted that executives recognize the importance of the learning function and its essential effect on performance in an organization. Allen & Hartman (2008) state that leadership development takes place when feedback and an understanding of leadership are provided to individuals. Therefore enabling the leader to process and assess the information given to them and utilize this knowledge for development. Smith (2010) reports that the faster the organization assesses their leadership situation the quicker they can commence improvement in their leadership development process.

Gannan (2008) found that the younger generation of leaders requires new learning methods. In order to implement new learning modalities, Gannan notes the importance of workforce demographics. Quinney (2010) provided information that showed how younger generations use technology to collaborate and quickly gather information. Quinney also found that the long term effectiveness of employee development demonstrated employees being more productive and efficient. It is implied by both Gannan and Quinney that traditional learning methods are not enough. They both demonstrate the need for organizations to think outside the box when it comes to leadership development and training.

Allen & Hartman (2008) further explained that provided a learning opportunity, leaders would strive to gain knowledge that would improve their ability to lead and grow in various situations. Their research showed that there are four themes when it comes to leadership development: (a) personal growth; (b) conceptual understanding; (c) feedback; and (d) skill building. This demonstrates that a variety of approaches can be used in order to achieve

leadership development. Allen & Hartman found that based of organizational needs and other distinctions in organizations, different tools, interventions, and experiences could be conducive for effective learning. These sources of learning can help performance and leadership development techniques improve and become more efficient.

Educational Value

Hildebrand (2006) reported that there was a high demand in companies for project managers to attain more knowledge skills in their field through education. He wrote on how companies worked with a variety of academic establishments to create tailor-made trainings for their staff. Therefore, demonstrating the value these organizations have in their employees' education. These educational implementations are done in order to improve employee's performance and the organization's overall success. As organizations rely on their staff and leaders to be the driver for success, they will continue to place value in their education.

Frahm & Brown (2006) used empirical data to show the significance in skills development when implementing change in the organization. Their study focuses on the need for managers to develop communicative competencies in an environment that is consistently changing. They note that a boost in manager's competencies occurs when learning is adapted by organizations. The study shows that organizations need to commit to aiding employees in learning and building their skills in order to reach success. Unfortunately, Frahm & Brown point out in their study that a high percent of change management programs fail. Demonstrating how important it is to plan before implementing any learning structure to an organization.

On the other hand Naquin & Holton (2006) focus on management development programs that are successful. They report on how competency based programs are the solution for companies wanting to achieve their strategic goals through their managers. They find that this

training strategy has become sustainable in today's society where knowledge is a tool. Naquin & Holton point that in order for organizations to have high performing individuals, they need to observe their processes in leadership development. Their conclusion was that business results directly correlate with employee's performance and that in order for a business to succeed; their managers need to have the skills to be a high performing individual.

Technology's Impact

With today's result driven economy, organizations are striving to maximize time and money while still equipping their employees with the tools to make them successful. Quinney, Smith, & Galbraith (2010) wrote that in order to remain relevant employees need to be proficient with technology. In their research, it was a skill gap in technology between employees and student patrons that lead them to see a need in training employees on current technologies. This enabled the implantation of a self-directed training program that promoted learning by teaching technology applicable to the employee's job. They found that making employees comfortable with the technology and focusing on their personal needs increased their motivation to learn and better service their customers.

There are several technologies out there waiting to service a number of learning organizations. Pace (2011), reviews five prominent technology suppliers in the learning and development field. Noting an increase in the training and development industry, Pace points out the augmented demand for learning technologies. With mobile phones and other technologies evolving so quickly it is vital to this industry that suppliers and services are ready keep up with the rate of change. Pace reports on how these companies understand the needs of businesses and the need of learning being available continuously. She also states on how social media is being used to enhance training. Technology trends in learning programs and being on top of emerging

learning technologies is essential for companies like: Blackboard, Element K and NexLearn. From a business perspective, Pace discusses the opportunities organizations have with suppliers in future market trends and innovation.

McGee (2006) reported on how Gap allowed educational technology to help improve their management team's leadership skills. She noted how blended approaches to learning lead to a positive result in performance and productivity. Web-based programs are implemented into the company's leadership training. The impact of these interactive e-learning trainings has maximized success for Gap. According to McGee, a return on investment has been shown with improvement in manager's aptitude and skills.

Hartley (2006) emphasizes the importance of collaboration when it comes to learning. He describes how this is now done in the world of technology and how collaboration is facilitated with technology. A variety of communication tools can be used for collaboration and it can include social software to aid in organizational collaboration. Hartley also explains the importance of implantation when it comes to a new application or technology in an organization. He found that appropriate training and support needs to be implemented when there is a lack of technology skills is observed in the organization. This will provide employees with support and confidence they need to be able to utilize the technology and be able to share information with one another and maximize knowledge transfer. Hartley's key point is that in collaboration technology is just a medium used to reach the company's goal and it is vital for the company to understand their employees' needs.

Summary & Conclusion

According to Ketter (2006) "In today's ever-changing business climate, organizations constantly seek ways to remain competitive". Performance and leadership development are vital

to an organization's success. With the increasing demand for companies to have high performing individuals, companies need to implement new strategies for learning that will meet the needs of employees. As building employees' competencies and skills continue to be an essential part of business, organizations will continue to value their educational and training needs. The strategies companies implement for learning should encompass technologies that are currently being used to meet demands of a high paced economy. As technology continues to evolve its impact in organizational learning will continue to increase.

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