

A Study on the Transforming Traditional Human Resource Practices into Agile Methods

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ABSTRACT

This paper aim to study the evolution of agility from technology orientation and penetrating into human resource practices. Further , how traditional Human resource practices are transformed into agile methods which systematically adopted in many companies around the world .Formerly ,agility was focused on product development to manufacturing and to hard core marketing . But now the concept of agility is transforming the function of Human resources into agile orientation. This paper explores Human Resource function such as Teamwork, Compensation ,Empowerment , Learning and Development , Performance Appraisals . This paper also attempts to address the research gap by extending its exploration into the discipline of Human resource management of top corporate world wide

Keywords: Workforce Agility, Teams, Coaching, Compensation, Learning and Development.

1. Introduction

Agility can be conceptually termed as dealing the unpredictable , dynamic and frequently changing environment in the organisation process(Sherehiy et al 2007) . The concept of agility in the organisation decipher that every leadership of the organisation need to think agile ,therefore adopting Agile concept ensure steady growth during adverse business environments . Recent study predicts that more than 90 percent of Multi-national organisations initiated using Agile practices.

According to the researchers Hopp and Van (2004) agile work force substantially support the strategic objectives of organisation such as cost, time ,quality and differentiation. The Agility was predominantly focused in IT sector , most of the agile principles were practised by IT employees to accomplish product development and customer satisfaction . The organisation in recent past implementing vigorously that performance is measured based on teams rather than individual effort. The agile work force has been considered to yield better productivity, profits ,and market shares to execute business successfully in any unexpected changing environment.

AGILITY

The origin of agility derived from the field of combat air force apparently agility is stated as aircraft's ability to change manoeuvre state (Richards 1996). If we consider in the organisational context it endorse the organisation's state of flexibility and responding positively to rapid market changes.

According sheriye et el (2007) defined ability of the workforce in the sphere of flexibility and adaptability . Agility can be apprehended in the way the business entity able to adjust to unexpected changes and

become more adaptive by accommodating to dynamic environment. Through literature survey (Beu et al) extensively examined to reveal the workforce or employee empowerment and autonomy in decision - making can be attributed to agile work force which essential practices of Human resource Management

Workforce agility

The key attributes of Agile workforce can be summarised as dynamic talent, ability to deliver quickly within short span of time avoiding time waste. The mentioned attributes results to business success. Taking the success frame work of agility many current organisation such as IBM, Dell engage agility practices among their workforce . According to (katayama and Bennett 1999) it involves two main elements that is in built capacity of the workforce respond changes and take advantages over the changes thereby converting into opportunities.

Plonka (1997) observed the agile workforce has the strength of positive attitude towards person : personal enrichment, listening and responding to new ideas, adopting to new technologies ,constantly generating innovative ideas , vigorously prepared to accept new responsibility although it may pose severe challenges .Griffin and Hesketh (2003) drew a framework that appraise agility's behaviours are : Proactive, Reactive and Tolerant. Proactive behaviour constitute to person's quality of initiating a task or project without awaiting for provoking from others. Reactive behaviours constitutes to workforce's quality in reshaping themselves better to fit into new environment that includes new -learning ,interpersonal , cultural and physical adaptability Despite changing environment exhibiting tolerant behaviour matches with Agile quality.

Based on the models developed by Dyer and Shafer(2003)and Griffin and Hesketh (2003)andSherehiy et al (2007) grouped the specific attributes of workforce agility, it is stated 1. Proactivity 2. Adaptability 3. Resilience .These quality exemplified as Agile-driven workforce.

Transformation Human Resource Practices into Agile Methods

Recruiting

Now a days companies are keen in bringing right candidates who posses right skills . The selection of candidates and placing them in a appropriate position has become a piercing challenge of the organisations. Top corporate such as G.E (General electric) adopted agile -practices in the area of human resources that is cross functional team work together in the hiring requisition. The recruiting managers take their turn to be involved in various teams to bring in right candidates for the organisation. The team members will share information about the candidates who may fit better for the organisation and other roles they may fit in the future.

Learning and Development

Like Recruitment , L&D (Learning and Development) had to undergo change process to bring new skills into the organisation . Most top companies have invested great deal in online modules that every employee can access on demand. According to employeesinterest ,the new approaches identifies skills required for particular jobs and also for advancement. . The suggestion are offered accordingly to individual employees what kind of training could be effective for the future jobs. The reputed software giants such as IBM uses Artificial Intelligence to generate employee profiles which include role clarity , expected career growth and training programs

Compensation

In compensation system, it has gone several changes in the recent past. Most research has predicted compensation works as best motivator when it comes to reward the desired behaviour. Compensation can attribute to agile values such as learning and knowledge sharing. The companies which adopt agile practices generate bonus programs for getting honest peer feedback. The employees who were not sharing constructive criticism could lead to negative financial consequences for their colleagues. In matching the agile values, the companies reward to promote equitable treatment of employees and a culture of collaboration. Team performance is encouraged rather than individual contribution, so all employees are eligible for bonus thus support of collaboration is adequately encouraged.

Teamwork

In traditional HR there was more focus on individual goals, performance and their needs. But now a day's companies projects, organising of its management and talent system are more focused on team. The companies are creating, executing, revising, the organisational goals and engage with SCRUM technology (which means pack tightly together -it is term in agile lexicon). The employees are encouraged to take autonomous decision to identify the work-related problems, assess their leadership style and generate insights in improving the performance. In agile environment team members know each other, what each person is contributing and also peer feedback is essential for employee development. The stand up meeting plays a crucial role, where important information are shared among employees.

Performance Appraisal

In traditional HR Practices annual performance review conducted along with the employee goals and connected with the business and unit objectives. In fact many projects are short term below one year, it will be effective only when performance feedback appraised once a year and from one boss. It is understood that people of the organisation got less feedback and support through of annual performance review. By adopting agile methods many organisation have switched to frequent performance assessment and project by project review has been conducted. This change of appraisal method has spread to number of top companies in recent years.

Coaching

The companies that have adopted agile talent practices are sharpening the managers coaching skills. The supervisor are insisted to engage in learning session, allow their group members to reflect and test the new skills on the job. The top software companies engage full-time professional coach onsite to give better feedback to the employees. The basic idea related to coaching experiences makes one a better coach.

Model 1: Transformation of Traditional Human Resource into Agile Work Force

Transformation Method

This study used the grounded theories of workforce agility thereby transforming the traditional HR practices into Agile methods. The basis theory developed by Shereyih et al (2007) that organisation leaders need to think in the agile perspectives to make their organisation more effective and efficient. This paper has taken key HRM practices such as: Performance Appraisal, Coaching, Team Work, Learning and development and Compensation, and reframing into Agile practices whereby performance of the employees are enhanced and organisation goals achieved with better productivity.

Contribution and Future Research

This article contributes to literature such as transformation of traditional HR practices into agile methods . Once agility was conceptually oriented with technological process. In the current scenario the companies have understood the ways of adopting agile methods in the management practices to ensure organisation productivity, although situations and environments which may not be favourable for business. This paper indicates scope for future research in the management areas to determine attributes of agility results in higher productivity in terms of employee performance and Human resource process.

2. Conclusion

The overview of the paper states the traditional Human resource process is transformed into agile methods by several corporates to sustain their productivity. The conceptual clarity of workforce agility has been discussed and key Human resource practices such as Teamwork, Compensation, , Learning and Development , Performance appraisals . The transformation of these areas are highlighted in the study. As current business environment pose a volatile situation , global corporates and domestic companies have taken initiative to implement agile methods in their human resource practices

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