

PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Customer Description

This work was carried out for a medium sized [approximately 80 staff] professional services organisation, which provides engineering and project management services for capital projects.

Symptoms

The company was concerned that its staff from senior management to customer facing operational staff concentrated on technical aspects of their work. It was felt that this was limiting the company's potential.

The company also wished to identify potential successors for management roles and arrange their development to match the corporate objectives.

Services Provided

The initial phase comprised a review of individual and company performance to confirm that the diagnosis was valid. This phase mainly involved the facilitation of a debate between the senior management team, which focused on behaviours and intended outcomes.

The second phase involved the development of a competence based appraisal process for all technical and management grades including the Directors. The approach was based on identifying the competences that were required for adequate performance in a particular grade and those [generally different] which indicated suitability for promotion.

Competences were developed across technical, managerial, personal and interpersonal skill sets. Each competence was described in terms of required skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviour and expressed in a series of simple statements against each category. A standard framework was used across all technical, specialist and line management roles [six grades], which allowed individuals to identify the attributes required for promotion and allowed comparisons to be drawn across technical specialisms.

A separate set of competences was prepared for the board of directors. This had some similarities with the other grades but took account of the different range of capabilities required in particular roles.

All competence statements were based on the appropriate MCI competences.

Outcomes

The appraisal system proved easy to use and was well received by staff at all levels, however, the biggest benefits came from a clarification of roles and expectations. It became clear that the historic approach to promotion based on technical competence was inadequate and clarified the need for management development.

The approach was subsequently extended to recruitment and selection and used for assessing training requirements.