

## ROLE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AT TELECOMMUNICATIONS INDUSTRY

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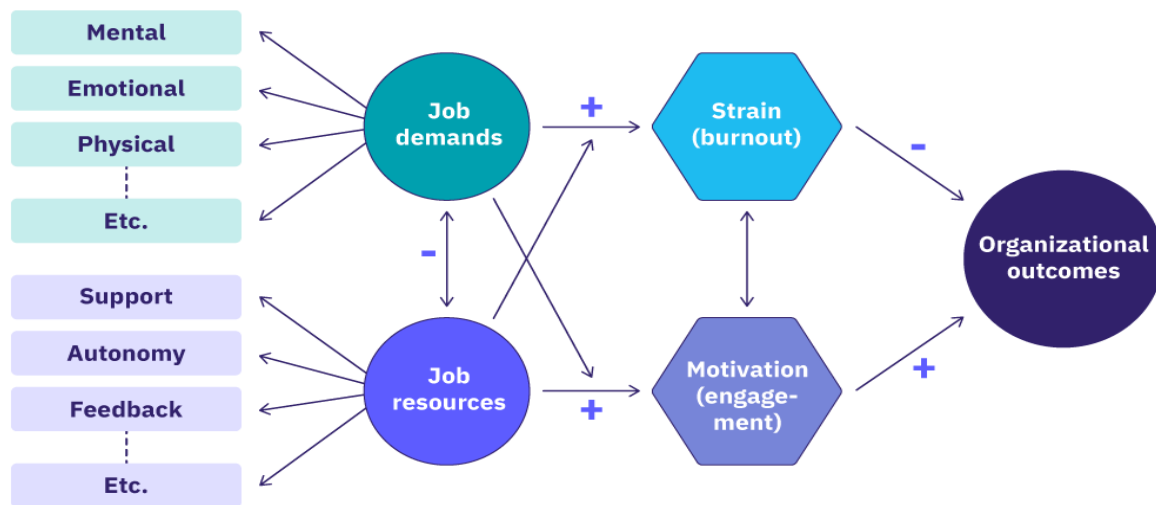
### Abstract

*A talent management strategy aims to boost business performance by utilizing a variety of HR processes to systematically attract, onboard, develop, engage, and retain high-performing employees. In other words, a talent management strategy is a plan of action to optimize employee performance, ultimately driving organizational success. One of the main goals of HR professionals is to equip employees with the necessary resources to perform better. This is also shown in the Job Demands-Resources Model below, which argues that high job demands should be balanced with adequate job resources (like autonomy, performance feedback, social support, and coaching) to achieve optimal engagement and performance. Keeping your workforce's skills up to date and prepared to meet evolving business needs becomes overwhelming very quickly. To stay ahead of change, you need a structured approach to talent management and development — and that's exactly what a talent management framework provides. Talent management is the expression of your talent strategy through processes and outcomes. Your human resources team plays a crucial role in leading that strategy and execution through a thorough talent management framework.*

### Introduction

During the 1970s and 1980s, employees' satisfaction was the key focus area for human resource management (HRM), which had little impact on or no link to organisational productivity. Thereafter, the focus went beyond employee commitment, as commitment is a vital factor predicting engagement. As a result of increasing global competition in businesses, HRM strategy began to change with HRM leaders effectively balancing both individual and organisational needs. At the end of the 1980s, employees were encouraged to be engaged in their job roles and as well as being focused on their talents to achieve organisational goals. These were the main conceptualization aspects of employee engagement (EE). Employment engagement emerged for the first time in management theory in 1990. Various scholars have given a different definition of EE since then; therefore, it is sometimes difficult to comprehend the exact meaning of the term 'engagement'. Engagement is often delineated in the management literature as a 'positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind, which is categorised by vigour, dedication and absorption'. Effective talent management cultivates a skilled, motivated and engaged workforce, ensuring that organizations have the resources they need to achieve their objectives. This is why effective talent management practices so often result in improved productivity, higher customer satisfaction and increased profitability.

## Job Demands-Resources Model



A talent management strategy helps maximize employee potential and aligns their goals and skills with the organization's objectives. This benefits the organization in multiple ways:

- **Improving employee retention:** By focusing on the career and personal development of employees, a talent management strategy helps in retaining top talent and reducing the costs and disruptions of high turnover.
- **Engaging employees:** By actively engaging employees through recognition, development opportunities, and a supportive culture, businesses can achieve higher levels of productivity and motivation, which are instrumental in driving overall business success.
- **Increasing organizational adaptability and efficiency:** A well-crafted talent management strategy equips businesses with a skilled and agile workforce. That way, they can quickly respond to market changes and emerging opportunities and adapt to workforce trends.
- **Boosting company performance and competitiveness:** Effective talent management translates into improved company performance, making it a key factor in gaining a competitive edge.
- **Developing future leaders:** By identifying and nurturing potential leaders, organizations ensure a sustainable leadership pipeline to steer the company forward.
- **Ensuring business continuity:** Through strategic talent management, organizations can better anticipate and plan for potential disruptions and risks, ensuring a robust approach to maintaining operations and adapting quickly to dynamic and changing market conditions.

- **Cultivating a positive company culture:** A strong talent management strategy fosters a supportive workplace environment that helps attract top talent and encourages existing employees to stay and thrive.

### **Effective Talent Management Strategy**

Despite the best of intentions, common barriers can hold back the most thoughtful talent management planning. These challenges include inaccurate data, manual and disparate processes, lack of executive buy-in, and unconscious bias in decision-making. There are five fundamentals of effective talent management strategy that can help companies overcome these and other common challenges.

#### **1. Drive goal alignment and determine metrics**

If people and their skills are critical to a business, shouldn't HR and talent management help build the vision and goals of a company? When HR is an active part of the overall business and not operating in a silo, employee and business goals align more closely, from the top down.

Under a North Star, goal alignment helps employees understand their responsibilities more clearly. This leads to greater accountability as well as stronger job performance and employee ownership of the company's success. All of this requires clearly communicating the business's objectives across the entire company, with managers being able to access and view the goals of other departments to reduce redundancy and build cross-functional support. With everyone working together toward the same objectives, teams can perform with greater confidence and speed.

When auto industry supplier Kongsberg Automotive, which has 25 global production facilities, realized it needed the right skills and competencies to adapt to increasing automation in manufacturing, it linked its business needs and expectations with its approach to learning and reskilling. Its HR learning management system went fully digital and gave employees more control, and therefore responsibility, over their professional development and careers.

To meet the greater prevalence of AI and augmented and virtual reality (AR/VR) in the car industry, Kongsberg Automotive is providing continuous development for employees to work more closely with machines – which is aligned with business goals.

#### **2. Create a strong employer brand**

More and more job candidates are asking questions that require HR to rethink talent planning and recruitment well beyond salary and benefits. *“Is this a company I will be proud to work for? Does this company align with my values?”* Those are just some of the questions talent management best practices should help address.

Sustainability, DEI, and well-being efforts should not be limited to the corporate social responsibility office. Recruiters should be well aware that they are in a weaker position to attract and retain top talent without a strong employer brand. And an effective talent

management strategy ensures there are multiple ways for employees to stay engaged and find support for their values.

### **3. Focus on employee experience**

Employees are expecting the same kind of consumer-grade experience when they access their benefits online as when they shop on e-commerce sites. Modern, cloud-based HR solutions (such as human capital management (HCM) and talent management tools) can now deliver an improved experience with modern user interfaces that support a mobile workforce across a wide range of HR and talent management processes. This facilitates high performance – so people can focus on their jobs and productivity improves. And importantly, businesses can now continually seek feedback from employees, allowing leaders to listen and respond to their people's needs.

Kansas rail company Watco Companies, for example, experienced massive growth followed by a surge in paperwork to handle team member information. This hindered the work experience for the company's 5,000 employees and HR team members. The company rolled out new HCM software that helps focus on the employee experience and now information is instantly available when and where it's needed. Personnel data, for example, is available electronically for all other HR purposes once entered. More self-service, mobile access and an easy interface have contributed to a better experience for employees, which then translates to a better experience for customers. HCM software can also support overall talent management strategies to keep employees engaged, focused, and motivated.

### **4. Encourage a high-performance culture**

The best talent management strategies fine-tune learning and development, compensation and rewards, and internal promotions so employees feel motivated, productive, and able to perform at their peak. And when goals are aligned, talent management can both help employees be their best and improve business outcomes.

In a high-performance culture, continuous performance management will feel more like a list of to-dos than a time-consuming and unfulfilling end-of-year project. When employees receive more frequent, specific pieces of feedback instead of hearing "Good job," they can grow professionally while advancing business outcomes.

### **5. Gain a single-source view of employees**

Managers and employees seek flexibility, consistency, and visibility, especially as the needs of the business change. A flexible system with an end-to-end view of the workforce will allow leaders across functions to target learning gaps and recognize employee potential that opens new career paths. And a single data source will allow employees, managers, HR, and other leaders to regularly and transparently reassess performance and follow any employee's development.

### **Reaping the benefits of a successful talent management strategy**

How do you know if your talent management strategy is working? Measurable employee satisfaction should show that people feel valued and report opportunities to learn and grow. And employee retention rates will show not only whether people want to stay with an organization, but internal mobility and promotion rates could also show that employees are gaining the skills to move into new positions. The outcomes proliferate from there, starting with high-performing employees' increased productivity and engagement.

In addition, a fruitful talent management strategy will show progress toward a business beyond bias. That means using analytics and metrics that can change behavior toward inclusion and reduce unconscious bias from decision-making across the entire employee lifecycle.

With more flexibility, innovation, and personalization for employee preferences and needs, companies will see value in a system that can continually scale and adapt as an organization changes. And with a marketplace that moves faster each day, organizations have little choice but to start thinking about talent management in a holistic manner. Those are the places where people will choose to work and deliver their best.

### **HR's role in talent management and development?**

HR's role in talent management is to identify, attract, develop, and retain top talent. HR must first understand what "talent" means for the organization to do this effectively. HR professionals lead several programs that do just that. Explore some HR programs that fit into and support your larger talent management framework.

### **Workforce planning**

Workforce planning is the strategic process of aligning an organization's people resources with its business goals. The process involves identifying the skills and competencies in the workforce and those you will need in the future.

The first step is identifying the organization's current and future workforce needs. This includes assessing the skills and knowledge required to perform the work and the number of employees needed.

Once you have identified current and future workforce needs, you can develop a plan to address gaps. This may include training and development initiatives and recruiting and hiring new employees. For instance, you may reassess your talent acquisition and recruitment processes to attract more global talent.

The third step is implementing the workforce plan, which includes setting up systems and processes to track progress and ensure that your organization executes the plan effectively.

The fourth and final step is to track and adjust the workforce plan as needed. Workforce planning is an ongoing process that HR should regularly review to ensure that the workforce remains aligned with the changing needs of the business. This step helps ensure that the plan remains responsive to the organization's changing needs.

### **Succession planning**

While workforce planning takes a broad view of talent management, succession planning takes a much narrower, more targeted scope. It starts with specific key roles and makes a proactive plan to fill them.

Take your cue from the workforce plan. Determine the key positions critical to achieving the organization's desired future state.



What those positions are may change, so stay open to adapting your succession plan across the business's life cycle. Right now, for example, you may just have a director of engineering. In the future, however, you may learn that the business needs you to expand that role into a chief information officer.

Once you've identified the most critical roles, plan to match high-potential employees to them and provide them with the necessary development opportunities. This helps ensure that a talent pipeline exists to fill critical positions as they become vacant.

Succession planning is also important from an employee engagement and retention perspective. By identifying high-potential employees and providing them with development opportunities, organizations can help retain these employees and prevent them from leaving for other organizations.

### **Performance management**

Performance management plays a key role in your talent management framework, too. It's your primary system for identifying potential high performers and finding opportunities to give them greater responsibilities. Performance conversations in the flow of work keep business priorities top of mind and help managers identify individuals who may need additional development to reach their full potential.

Performance management provides data you can use at the micro level to assess an employee's abilities and at the macro level to assess workforce skills and capabilities. Fitting this data into your talent management framework lets you keep a close eye on skills gaps and provide direction for individual employee growth.

### **Training and development**

Your training and development plan brings your talent management framework full circle, from the macro level (supporting workforce planning) to the micro level (supporting each team member's career goals).

At the highest level, training and development help ensure that the workforce has the skills and knowledge necessary to perform effectively. It also helps keep employees up to date with changes in technology, methods, and procedures so you can anticipate and proactively close skills gaps as they emerge.

At the individual level, training and development help employees better prepare for promotions or new responsibilities, empowering greater internal mobility. A robust learning program helps people see what other roles are open, and taking a course enables them to "test drive" positions they may not encounter on their own.

### **Conclusion**

Employee engagement has been a challenging issue for an organisation since the 1990s, and many studies have shed light on this issue. Implement performance management or goal alignment software to help capture data points from manager check-ins with their teams. By assessing that data, you can discover important trends in individual employee performance that can drive your talent strategy forward. To identify high-potential, top-performing talent at a high level, consider employees' potential as well as their past performance. By taking both potential and performance into account, you'll be able to more accurately identify which individuals have the most potential to take on key roles in your organization successfully.

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