

Why developing your people isn't enough – *Linking development to results through Strategic Human Performance Systems [SHPS]*

By Anthony Martin, Managing Director, Exemplar & Carrie Green, Director, Exemplar – a Strategic Human Performance Systems firm

In today's tumultuous economy companies cannot thrive without aligning their people and their activities with driving results. And while most organizations do invest in development and training, this development is often not directly tied to the fundamental core competencies that would improve the organization's bottom line.

Even in organizations where training and development is a significant priority, many companies fail at making development part of the organization's overarching vision and framework, and more importantly, fail to link development to the behaviors, skills and knowledge that will produce results.

So why do organizations fail to effectively develop their people even when they're spending time and money on development? The answer lies in the fact that most organizations lack a specific model when it comes to managing the development of their people. The truth is that the same organizations that follow very specific effective business models for finance, transportation, research and development, etc. don't have any such model for human capital – their most important asset.

So Why do Companies Fail to Effectively Develop Their People Even When They're Spending Time and Money on Development?

Most organizations are working harder than ever, with less people, and are being asked to achieve even greater results. Therefore, it's more important than ever to maximize each employee's contribution. Focusing on the right development will improve efficiency, empower employees, increase morale and address retention but most importantly, it will improve the bottom line for the organization.

So how does an organization maximize their human capital?

Some companies are already using the same innovation and organizational framework they apply to technology, finance, transportation or R&D to access the untapped potential in their most important (and most costly) asset – their people! These organizations are implementing Strategic Human Performance Systems.

What are Strategic Human Performance Systems?

Strategic Human Performance Systems are systems specifically designed to manage human capital. Historically, these systems were developed as human resource (HR) departments began to improve the efficiency of HR processes and were thus able to manage greater volume. Companies quickly realized the value of organizational effectiveness on bottom line results and began committing more resources to this area.

For example, in the past, assessing whether employees met promotional criteria was done on a case-by-case basis. By designing a human performance system for promotional criteria and incorporating innovative technology, HR departments were able to process a greater number of candidates more efficiently and accurately. The results were more employees were promoted upon eligibility, thus leading to more engagement, improved morale and better results.

When Senior Executive Leadership began to see that the implementation of these processes, when designed and used correctly, could produce more effective results from human capital—The Strategic Human Performance Systems revolution was born.

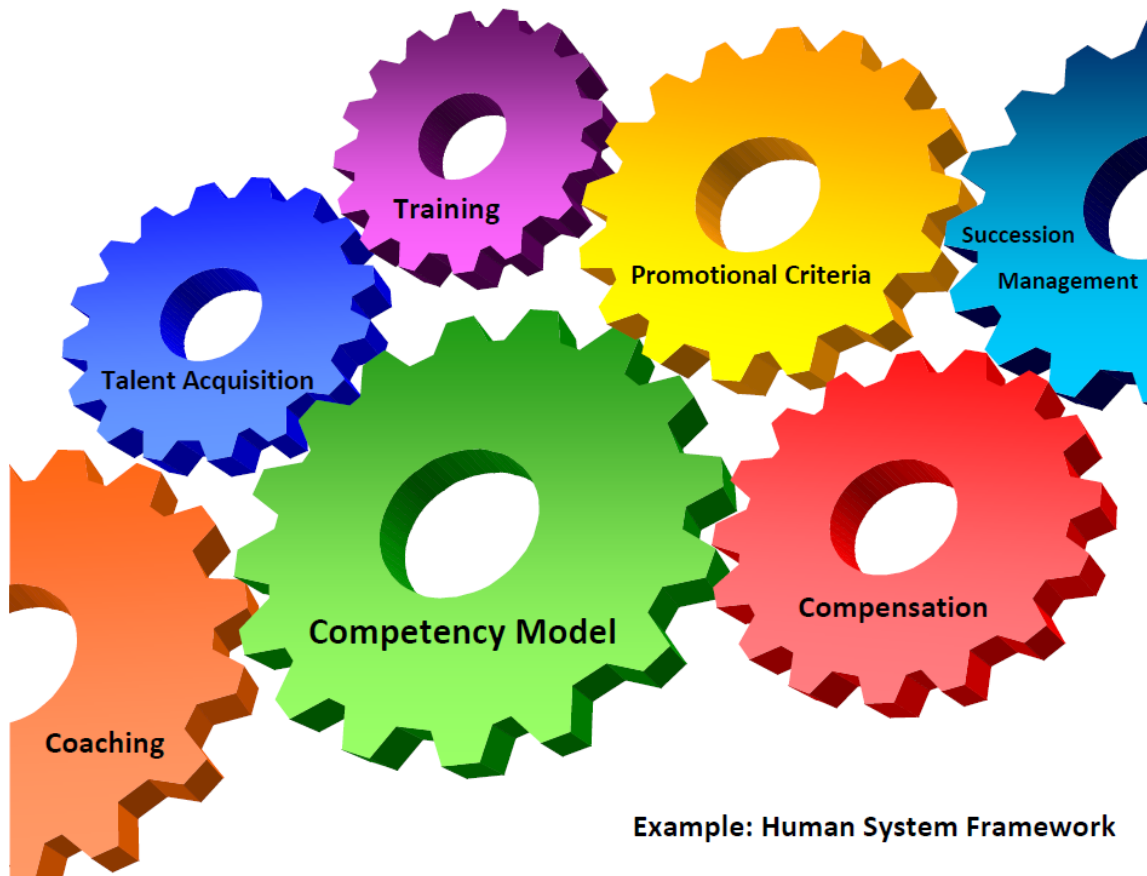
So while organizations have been quick to adopt these types of systems for compensation and talent acquisition, very few companies have maximized the full impact of Strategic Human Performance Systems by creating a framework across all human capital-driven functions.

Developing Strategic Human Performance Systems

A Strategic Human Performance Systems framework begins with an overarching vision and strategy. The organization's mission or vision statement should be the foundation to which the entire human system framework is built upon. From this foundation each role within the organization can be analyzed as to how each job function supports that overall mission.

Once this is determined, identifying and developing the core competencies within each position can be accomplished through a series of sophisticated research interviews, surveys, assessments and various analytical tools. Core competencies are identified skills, knowledge and behaviors that have been validated as critical to high performance. These competencies identify "*what great looks like*" in each role within an organization. In other words, what skills or behaviors will lead to better results for the employee and thus the organization.

A Strategic Human Performance Systems Framework Begins with an Overarching Vision and Strategy



Example: Human System Framework

The Benefits of Strategic Human Performance Systems

When fully implemented, Strategic Human Performance Systems can help companies hire the right person, train that person to perform their role successfully, develop that person to grow within the role and then promote that person, all while emphasizing the skills and behaviors that drive results. What would an implemented Strategic Human Performance System look like?

Through the identification of core competencies, talent acquisition can be better aligned by assessing a candidate's fit and ability to demonstrate the identified skills, knowledge and behaviors. The core competencies can be used to design promotional criteria since an organization will know exactly what skills, knowledge and behaviors are necessary in the next role. The competencies can be used for performance measurement, and because they have been validated as critical to success within the role, an organization would not only be measuring high performance behaviors, but emphasizing those that drive results. The organization, in turn, is taking full

What Would an Implemented Strategic Human Performance System Look Like?

responsibility for the development of the employee right from the beginning of an employee's career all the way up until they are promoted to a Senior Leadership position. Since the employee's development has been built entirely on the organization's mission, they are more likely to have developed into a leader that is greatly aligned with the company's values and principles (Future Topic: Growing Organic Leadership within your Organization) which is a win-win for everyone.

The list of Strategic Human Performance Systems is numerous, but by using the competencies as the building blocks for development, an organization can create a Strategic Human Performance System framework that is fully calibrated to one source – the competencies...and to one mission—success.

In the upcoming months my colleagues and I will explore several specific human performance systems in more detail. Human Performance Systems such as talent acquisition, training and development, and coaching. We will also examine how Strategic Human Performance Systems will foster the growth of organic leadership within your organization. We look forward to providing you and your organization additional resources as you work towards developing your most important asset.

Exemplar is a Strategic Human Performance Systems firm. Exemplar focuses on the development and maximization of a work force, from front-line to senior leadership. Through the creation of a systemic human performance systems framework, Exemplar helps organizations achieve leadership excellence, organizational effectiveness and cultural alignment. Exemplar is based in San Diego, California. To learn more visit www.ExemplarLeadership.com and request information.
