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Human Resource Advocacy

COMPETENCY

7

Definition: Communicates Human Resources vision and capabilities internally and externally; gains commitment from others for Human Resources goals; ensures trusting relationships with others; uses Human Resources goals to help the organisation achieve organisational goals.

An employee demonstrating this competency:

Communicates HR

- Markets the organisation as a preferred employer to attract the right candidates with the right competencies.
- Represents HR internally so that employees, managers and executives understand roles and value of HR in meeting organisational and departmental objectives.
- Promotes HR objectives and goals to ensure commitment from key stakeholders within the organisation.

Building trusting relationships

- Builds trusting relationships with others to ensure understanding of how HR is a vital asset in all areas.
- Maintains close relationships with academic institutions and schools.

Negotiating

- Uses negotiation skills to ensure that HR has adequate physical and financial resources.
- Creates a voice for HR through mediation and conflict resolution.

Creating a vision for HR

- Defines and communicates HR's vision and roles consistent with helping the organisation to implement strategies which attain overall goals and objectives.
- Enlists commitment by involving others in all stages.

IMPORTANCE OF THIS COMPETENCY

This competency is the third strategic competency of five under the category of Human Resources Leadership, and ensures that Human Resources personnel are advocates for their function.

Advocacy involves presenting Human Resources in the best light and presenting the case for its value in the overall successful operation of the hotel and the company at large.

By judiciously advocating the function and its programmes, we will ensure the best chance of being invited to get involved in the key business and operational issues of our business partners—they will understand the contribution that we can make to their success.

GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS IN DEVELOPING THIS COMPETENCY

You will only be a true advocate for Human Resources if you know for yourself the strengths and outcomes that can be expected from Human Resources programmes and as a result of Human Resources involvement. A thorough knowledge and deep sense of commitment to Human Resources initiatives is therefore essential.

Furthermore, your word as an advocate will only be believed if you (and the rest of the Human Resources team) are trusted. Integrity is therefore critical.

PRACTICING THIS COMPETENCY

As a Team Member

- Look at ways to explain the value of Human Resources programmes and involvement, first to yourself, and then to others.
- Build confidence in explaining the Human Resources strategy, helping the listener to make connections between this and their own strategy.
- Think about ways in which you can enhance the impression others have of Human Resources through your own behaviour and communication style.
- Read about the subject of trust in general and think about all the ways you can help others to trust you.
- Be ready to explain and defend the need for resources to be able to achieve your department's goals.
- Look at ways to involve others in the achievement of Human Resources' goals—building alliances and developing allies is a smart tactic in any business setting.

As a Team Leader

- Evaluate the extent to which your team are really advocates for Human Resources, both internally to business partners, but also externally to potential employees, sources of employees (e.g. schools, universities) and other outside vendors.
- Demonstrate advocacy in your own internal meetings and the individual sessions with your team members.
- Continually look for opportunities to involve Human Resources in the activities of your business partners, highlighting the value added.
- Use strategy and business plan documents to make sure that you stay on track and continue to look forward, anticipating future needs and changes.
- Be resolute in negotiating for the resources necessary for you and your team to do what needs to be done.
- In looking after the business needs of the other departments, make sure that you do not overlook the needs of your own department—your department must have certain resources to be able to help others.

OBTAINING FEEDBACK

- Before implementing an influence strategy, discuss it with others and ask for their feedback and suggestions.
- After an interaction in which you tried to enlist the support of an individual or group, ask a colleague who was present for feedback and suggestions on your influence efforts.
- Before delivering a presentation, review the content with someone whose judgment you trust and ask for feedback and suggestions.
- Ask someone to observe you delivering a presentation and to give you feedback and constructive suggestions.

LEARNING FROM EXPERTS

- Look for opportunities to work closely with skilled influencers on tasks requiring the development of influence strategies e.g., planning a presentation or sales call, and leading a group to achieve a particular outcome.
- Observe a skilled influencer using influence skills in situations such as sales calls, speeches, meetings with subordinates, meetings to build relationships. Notice what the person says, how he/she says it, and the verbal and nonverbal reactions of the persons present.
- Interview a skilled influencer about times when this person successfully influenced others. Try to get the sequence of what the person did and thought. Recognise that the person you interview may be reluctant to discuss some influence efforts, particularly those used to influence the person's current supervisor.
- Observe someone skilled in creating and delivering presentations. Note the content and organisation of the presentation. What ideas could you use in your presentations? Study the person's delivery of the presentation. Note the person's verbal and nonverbal behaviour. What does this person do that you could do in your presentations?

COACHING SUGGESTIONS FOR MANAGERS

If you are coaching someone who is trying to develop this competency, you can:

- Involve this person in some of your own influence efforts and share your thinking about your goals, plans, and the reasons underlying them.
- Provide assignments requiring the use of influence skills: e.g., developing a presentation to senior management; planning a meeting with another group whose cooperation is needed. Provide suggestions and feedback on the planning and implementation of influence strategies.
- Provide opportunities for this person to work closely with skilled influencers.
- Provide opportunities for this person to observe skilled presenters. Discuss what the person noticed in the skilled presenter's presentations.
- Help the person plan the organisation and content of a presentation. Share the reasons underlying your thinking.
- Observe the person deliver a presentation and provide specific, constructive feedback, both positive and negative.

- If you are managing several persons who have opportunities to give presentations, debrief each presentation and ensure that each person receives useful, constructive feedback.
- Provide opportunities for presentation skills training.

SAMPLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- By September 10, I will read *Getting to Yes*, by Fisher and Ury and use what I learn to develop a strategy for gaining the cooperation of the Research Division.
- By November 3, I will hold meetings to build relationships with five individuals from other departments, whose support I may need over the coming year.
- Before the October 5 benefits meeting with a new potential benefits provider, I will call the two project managers they are inviting to that meeting to learn what they would like to gain from the meeting. I will then plan and deliver a presentation that addresses these needs and interests.
- By December 15, I will complete a course on *Influencing Others*.
- By June 10, I will read *The Art of Persuasive Communications*, and identify a list of ideas to build into my presentation at the next department head meeting.
- By June 5, I will have Cindy Spier videotape me rehearsing a presentation, and I will ask her to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.
- By July 25, I will complete a course on *Presentation Skills*.

EXTERNAL RESOURCES

Books

The Art and Science of Persuasive Business Presentations, by Nils Randrup, Copenhagen Business School Press, 2002. ISBN: 8763000695

The Art of Persuasive Communication, by Richard Storey, Gower Publishing, 1997. ISBN: 0566078198

Building Trust: A Manager's Guide for Business Success, by Mary Shurtleff, Crisp Publications, 1998. ISBN: 1560525142

Building Trust: In Business, Politics, Relationships, and Life, by Robert Solomon, Fernando Flores, Oxford University Press, 2001. ISBN: 0195126858

Contented Cows Give better Milk: The Plain Truth about Employee Relations and Your Bottom Line, by Bill Catlette, Saltillo Press, 1998. ISBN: 1890651044

Getting It Done: How to Lead When You're Not in Charge, by Roger Fisher, John Richardson, Alan Sharp, HarperBusiness, 1999. ISBN: 0887309585

Getting Things Done When You are Not in Charge, by Geoffrey Bellman, Simon & Schuster, 1993. ISBN: 0671864122

Getting Past No: Negotiating with Difficult People, by William Ury, Random House Business, 1992. ISBN: 0712655239

Getting to Yes, by Roger Fisher, William Ury, Bruce Patton, Arrow, 1997. ISBN: 0099248425

The Human Equation: Building Profits by Putting People First, by Jeffrey Pfeffer, Harvard Business School Press, 1998. ISBN: 0875848419

Human Resource Champions: The Next Agenda for Adding Value and Delivering Results, by David Ulrich, Harvard Business School Press, 1996. ISBN: 0875847196

Influence: Science and Practice, Robert Cialdini, Longman, 2000. ISBN: 03210111473

Influence Without Authority, by Allen Cohen, David Bradford. John Wiley, 1991. ISBN: 0471548944

The Meaning and Role of Organisational Advocacy: Responsibility and Accountability in the Workplace, by Jane Galloway Seiling, Greenwood Press, 2001. ISBN: 156720371X

Success in Sight: Visioning, by Andrew Kakabadse, Frederic Nortier, Nello-Bernard Abramovici, International Thomson Business Press, 1998. ISBN: 186152160X

You Can Negotiate Anything, by Herb Cohen, Bantam, 1993. ISBN: 0553259997

Online and Self-Study Courses

Presentation Success: How to Plan, Prepare, and Deliver Effective Presentations. American Management Association Self Study Course. www.amanet.org/selfstudy/b13821.htm

Successful Negotiating. American Management Association Self Study Course. www.amanet.org/selfstudy/b1416x.htm

Interpersonal Negotiations. American Management Association Self Study Course. Tel.: 800-262-9699. Stock # 95053CYI.

How to Negotiate. American Management Association Self Study Course. Tel.: 800-262-9699. Stock # 801332CYI. Includes 6 audio cassettes.

Consultative Selling. American Management Association Self Study Course. Tel.: 800-262-9699. Stock # 80200CYI. Includes 4 audio cassettes.

Value Selling: How to Sell to Cost-Conscious Customers. American Management Association Self Study Course. Tel.: 800-262-9699. Stock # 80194CYI. Includes 4 audio cassettes.

How to Deal with Differences in People, by Tony Alessandra. Six audio cassettes plus Progress Guide and Behavioral-Style Evaluation. Order through Nightingale Conant, 800-525-9000. Code 1431AS

Negotiating Strategies for the Real World, by William Ury. Six audio cassettes plus workbook. Order through Nightingale Conant, 800-525-9000. Code 691AS

How to Gain Power and Influence with People, by Tony Alessandra. Six audio cassettes. Nightingale Conant, 800-525-9000. Code 370AS.

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People, by Stephen Covey. Six audio cassettes. Nightingale Conant, 800-525-9000. Code 786PAS.

The Art of Influencing People Positively, by Tony Alessandra. 45-minute video. Order through Talico, 904-241-1721. Code TI-201.



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