



Improving Effectiveness of Retail Sector through Competency Mapping of Sales Managers

KEYWORDS

Competency mapping, Competencies, Sales Manager, Retail Sector.

Manasi D.Parikh

Designation- Research Scholar at Gujarat technological University

ABSTRACT *In this competitive era it is very essential to hire, train, retain and appraise right kind of sales professional in order to meet organizational strategic goal. Basic characteristics of sales manager in retail sector includes frequent interaction with the customer, man management, inventory management and achieving sales targets, for which more effective and different sets of competencies are needed. Competency mapping helps manage human capital in an efficient manner. The current research paper explains certain managerial, functional and behavioural competencies of sales manager within retail industry. Several HR professional and consulting experts were interviewed and sales competency questionnaire was administered to 50 sales professionals with the help of snowball technique, in order to filter the competencies that are mandatory for effective performance. The paper supports relationship between the competency and the performance for sales professional in retail sector.*

About the Indian retail sector:-

The Indian retail industry has experienced a fast paced growth in last few decades with a paradigm shift towards organized retail formats. Single brand retail trading [SBRT] and multi brand retail trading [MBRT] has made India the fifth largest country for retail sector across the globe. It also forms a backbone of international trade for India. The Indian retail industry is diversifying into varied sub sectors like apparels, FMCG, telecom, pharma etc and is not only prominent in metro and mega cities but also in tier 2 and tier 3 cities. One of the major reasons for the success of growing retail Indian industry is the competent sales force. The sales force should be well versed with frequent customer interaction, man management, inventory and stock control and achieving the sales target, for which a different and distinct set of competencies are required. The sales force not only plays a pivotal role in generating profits for the organizations but also helps in building long term customer relationships. Thus the sales force serves as most valuable human asset for the organization and hence it becomes important to recruit, training, appraise and retain competent sales force.

Competency mapping:-

Competencies are summation of knowledge, skill, attitude and other characteristics of individual like motives, values, traits and self concepts that facilitates an individual to perform effectively in job relevant area. Competencies are characteristics of a person. Competency mapping is a process of identification of competencies required to perform a given set of activity, role or a job at given point of time. Competency mapping has gained currency within many organizations because:-

- It ensures right kind of human capital is recruited through which technology, finances, markets and customers, systems and processes can be managed effectively.
- Competent people can perform various critical roles within the organization that leads to sustainable growth.
- It helps in establishing core values within the organization.
- It develops human resource as a strategic business

partner.

- Ensures efficient competency based training and development, succession planning and performance appraisal.

Review of literature:-

Arya Chanakya, a well known royal advisor and prime minister from Vedic India, penned a famous book known as "Arthashastra", which is the first book on competency mapping. David McClelland the famous Harvard psychologist has pioneered the competency movement across the world. The turning point for competency movement is the article published in American Psychologist in 1973 by McClelland, wherein he presented data that traditional achievement and intelligence scores may not be able to predict job success and what is required is to profile the exact competencies required to perform a given job effectively and measure them using a variety of tests. Douglas Brey and his associates at AT & T in 1990 added value to the article, wherein they presented evidence that competency can be assessed through assessment centres for on the job success. This research work led to popularization of the competency movement.

Latter McBer a consulting firm founded by David McClelland and his associate Berlew have specialized in mapping the competencies of entrepreneurs and managers across the world. They even developed a new methodology called Behaviour Event interview [BEI] to map the competencies. With increased recognition of the limitations performance appraisal in predicting future performance potential appraisal got focused, and assessment centres became popular in seventies. It includes breaking of a given role or job into constituent tasks or activities and identifying the competencies, conceptual knowledge and attitude to perform a particular job.

Rothwell and Williams [2004] established a model which helped the educators and trainers to identify competency and develop a curricula depending upon the gap analysis.

Seema Sanghi in her work "The Hand Book of Competen-

cy Mapping” [2004] has drafted a competency model for sales associate which would describes competencies like:-

- **Personality** – Assertiveness, competitiveness, self sufficiency, high emotional stamina, high energy level.
- **Ability** - Mental ability, Divergent thinking, quantitative reasoning.
- **Knowledge**- financial analysis, computer literacy, product knowledge, competitive environment.
- **Skills** – Basic selling skills, problem solving skills, presentation skills, coaching/training skills.

Preeti Jayachandran Nair [2012] in her article “Is talent management accentuated by competency mapping: with special reference to educational sector” brought about the need for competency mapping in various graduate and post graduate institutes located at Vadodara, Gujarat.

Dr. M. Daniel Solomon in his research article “Competency Mapping-A holistic approach for industries” [2013] conducted job analysis by asking the respondents to fill in the PIC [position information questionnaire]. He designed the interview questions using PIC and interviewed 308 incumbents using stratified proportionate random sampling technique. He derived various management, human and behavioural competencies and suggested the management to emphasize on capacity building programmes.

Dr. R Selvaraju and S.Subramanian in their research article “Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Teaching Competency of B.Ed trainees-Gender wise analysis” [2014] surveyed 100 B.Ed trainees affiliated to Tamilnadu Teachers Education University and conducted a gender wise analysis for deriving significant relationship between emotional intelligence and teaching competency using Anukool Hyde and Upindar Dhar scale of emotional intelligence [2009] and teaching competency scale. He concluded that there exist a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and teaching competency.

Rajlaxmi Pujar and Dr. Arun Handa in their pilot study “Competency Profiling of Medical Representative” [2014] extracted various behavioural and functional competencies that are mandatory for medical representative at every level within the pharmaceutical industry.

Till date no research has been reported for using competency mapping of sales managers that improves the effectiveness of retail sector.

Objective of study:-

To identify managerial, functional and behavioural competencies required by sales manager which facilitates the effective and efficient performance of the retail sector.

Research methodology:-

Research Type: - Descriptive Research

Initially HR professionals and consultant experts within the retail industry where interviewed, through which a set of Managerial, behavioural and functional competencies came into light, which are listed as follows:-

MANGERIAL COMPETENCIES	FUNCTIONAL COMPETENCIES	BEHAVIUORAL COMPETENCIES
Analytical thinking	Communication skills	Interpersonal skills
Decision making	Business acumen	Integrity
Strategic Sales planning and execution	Time Management skills	Result orientation
Leadership	Negotiation skills	Customer focus
Team building	Presentation skills	Initiative
Mentoring and counselling	Product knowledge	Multitasking
	Selling skills	

Table 1:- Managerial, Functional and Behavioural Competency of Sales Managers

A sales competency questionnaire was prepared using likert scale and was administered to 50 sales managers of varied retail industry for indentifying presence of these competencies and for indentifying the relationship of these competencies with the performance.

The sampling technique used was snowball sampling, also known as referral sampling, where the current sales manager would nominate the other sales manager for collection of data through questionnaire.

Hypothesis formulation:-

Null Hypothesis (HoM) – states that managerial competencies have no significant association with the performance of sales managers of the retail industry.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1M) – states that managerial competencies have significant association with the performance of sales managers of the retail industry.

Null Hypothesis (HoF) – states that functional competencies have no significant association with the performance of sales managers of the retail industry.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1F) – states that functional competencies have significant association with the performance of sales managers of the retail industry.

Null Hypothesis (HoB) – states that behavioural competencies have no significant association with the performance of sales managers of the retail industry.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1B) – states that behavioural competencies have significant association with the performance of sales managers of the retail industry.

Pearson chi – square test was applied to check the significance of all the above mentioned hypothesis

Results and interpretation:-

Competencies	Pearson chi square	df [degree of freedom]	Asymp. Sign [2 -side]	Rejection/ acceptance
Managerial	31.410	20	.055	Rejected HoM
Functional	12.592	6	.396	Rejected HoF
Behavioural	12.592	6	.396	Rejected HoB

Table 2:- Pearson Chi Square calculation for managerial,

functional and behavioural competencies of sales managers in the retail sector

[Considering the level of significance = 0.05]

The Pearson chi square value 31.410 at 20 degree of freedom, 12.592 at 6 degree of freedom, rejects all the null hypothesis and accepts the alternate hypothesis respectively. Also it states that managerial, functional and behavioural competencies are significantly associated with the performance of the sales managers of retail sector.

Conclusion:-

In order to have a competent sales force which accelerates growth, a distinct set of competencies must be taken into consideration. For improving the effectiveness of the retail sector it is essential to focus on managerial, functional and behavioural competencies of sales professional within the industry. Also the study establishes a significant relationship between the competencies and the performance of the retail sector.

Future scope of study: -

Recruitment and retention of the right talent can take place within the organization if competency based recruitment and selection of sales force is done using the above mentioned competencies. Such type of defined competency can provide a helping hand in identification of training gap of the sales force and developing appropriate training calendar for them which in turn helps organization achieve its strategic goal. Also performance appraisal systems that are competence based helps the sales force to provide stability within the organization.

As competencies that lead to performance can be identified, the competencies that lead to non performance can be a subject for exploration. The parameters that result into non performance can be intervened and channelized steps can be taken to convert it into performance with the help of competency mapping.

REFERENCE

- Dr. M. Daniel Solomon - "Competency Mapping-A holistic approach for industries", Indian journal of research – PARIPEX, volume 2, issue 3, March 2013. | Dr. R Selvaraju and S.Subramanian "Correlation between Emotional Intelligence and Teaching Competency of B.Ed trainees-Gender wise analysis", Indian journal of research – PARIPEX, volume 3, issue 8, august 2014. | Rajlaxmi Pujar and Dr. Arun Handa - "Competency profiling of medical representative- A pilot study" [2014], Indian journal of research – PARIPEX, volume 3, issue 2, February 2014. | Preeti Jayachandran Nair - "Is talent management accentuated by competency mapping: with special reference to educational sector", International Journal of Social Science & Interdisciplinary Research, Volume 1, Issue 11, November 2012. | Dr. V. K. Jain - "Competency Mapping in Indian Industries -A Case Study", International Journal of Emerging Research in Management & Technology, Volume 2, Issue 10, October 2013. | Seema Sanghi - "The handbook of competency mapping –understanding, designing and implementing competency models in organizations", page 7 – 45, 2004, sage publications. | Boyatzis Richard B- "The competent manager-A model for effective performance", 1982. | R.K Sahu - "Competency Mapping", Page 7 -11, 2009, excel books. | Pulse of Indian retail Market, A survey of CFOs in the Indian retail sector, March 2014 |