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CHANGING SKILLS REQUIREMENT FOR EMPLOYEES

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Abstract—*The components of human resource (HR) flexibility and their potential relationship to firm performance have not been empirically examined. The authors hypothesize that flexibility of employee skills, employee behaviors, and HR practices represent critical sub dimensions of HR flexibility and are related to superior firm performance. Results based on perceptual measures of HR flexibility and accounting measures of firm performance support this prediction. Whereas skill, behavior, and HR practice flexibility are significantly associated with an index of firm financial performance, the authors find that only skill flexibility contributes to cost-efficiency.*

Keywords—*Brain Storming, Employability, Flexibility, Negotiation, Role Playing.*

INTRODUCTION

Employability Skills can be defined as the transferable skills needed by an individual to make them 'employable'. Along with good technical understanding and subject knowledge, employers often outline a set of skills that they want from an employee.

OBJECTIVES

- To increase efficiencies in processes resulting in financial gain
- To increase capacity to adopt new technologies and methods
- Increase innovation in strategies and products
- Employee satisfaction and involvement in work

EMPLOYEE SKILLS

- Complex problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Creativity
- People management
- Coordinating with others
- Emotional intelligence
- Judgment and decision making
- Service orientation
- Negotiation
- Cognitive flexibility

COMPLEX PROBLEM SOLVING (CPS)

Beckmann & Guthke. CPS represents a class of task demands the cognitive mastery of which calls for the recognition of causal relations among the variables of a system.

Berry. Deciding whether a task should be considered as being complex or not, seems to be a relative rather than an absolute issue. Some tasks seem to be complex when compared with many traditional experimental problem-solving

tasks. In these cases, the large number of variables and their interconnectivity, the in transparency, the time lags, and the large number of goals to be met all contribute to task complexity.

Brehmer. people's ability to handle tasks that are complex, dynamic (in the sense that their state changes both autonomously and as a consequence of the decision makers actions), and opaque (in the sense that the decision maker may not be able to directly see the task states or task structure)

Complex problem-solving (CPS) is the successful interaction with task environments that are dynamic (i.e., change as a function of the user's intervention and/or as a function of time) and in which some, if not all, of the environment's regularities can only be revealed by successful exploration and integration of the information gained in that process. CPS targets tasks that are characterized as dynamic, non-routine, and interactive and thus require more than domain specific prior knowledge. These characteristics are what makes the barriers complex, or, in other words, that makes a task a complex problem requiring active exploration to find and apply a new solution. To overcome complex barriers requires generic skills for knowledge acquisition and application of this knowledge.

Knowledge acquisition and knowledge application are domain-general processes of CPS that are distinct from domain-specific prior knowledge.

The steps in complex problem solving include:

- Analyzing the factors or causes contributing to the unwanted situation
- Generating a set of alternative interventions to achieve your end goal
- Evaluating the best solutions
- Implementing a plan
- Assessing the effectiveness of your interventions

For example, an engineer with vast experience in the Internet of Things faces a previously unknown problem with the dimming of light-emitting diodes (LEDs) in the home automation system that she manages, she is only then likely to solve this problem on the basis of her prior knowledge, once she has gathered new knowledge in order to model the problem in terms that she is familiar with, such as electric circuits. Solving could even mean for her to be entrepreneurial to the extent that she might identify a business opportunity, if her solution is genuinely new and advantageous. In contrast, solving a problem of a system she knows perfectly well, such as the dimming of traditional light bulbs in home automation systems, the electric engineer would very likely have previously known the procedure needed in order to arrive at the solution she would solve the problem routinely, not entrepreneurially. However, to arrive at a solution for dimming a new technology, such as LEDs, engineers face a complex problem that surpasses their prior knowledge. Her complex problem is to tap into new grounds of successfully manipulating LEDs in ways she has never done before (i.e., dimming) without undesired side effects (e.g., flickering). She must learn how to properly dim LEDs in the first place. That is, arriving at the electric circuit model of her new problem is a complex issue that requires domain general processes of knowledge acquisition and knowledge application about the functioning of LEDs. In general, complex problems share the ambiguity of how to approach the task and a lack of transparency in the task environment; the task structure is complex and the environment is dynamic. Variables in the system are interconnected; they change over time and interaction; whether they are relevant or not is unclear at the beginning Hence, in order to arrive at her circuit model, domain-general processes enable her to explore, recombine, and utilize new knowledge about LEDs in electric circuitries. These processes are especially helpful when prior knowledge is not available or Education Research International 3 insufficient, as is usually the case with new technology, such as, for example, LEDs in home automation systems. In short, domain-general processes lead to knowledge structures about how a previously unknown system works (e.g., LEDs in home automation) and how to seize control (e.g., dimming) within such a system. These processes constitute the core of the domain-general construct of complex problem solving.

CRITICAL THINKING

Critical thinking is that mode of thinking - about any subject, content, or problem - in which the thinker improves the quality of his or her thinking by skillfully taking charge of the structures inherent in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon them.

Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action. In its exemplary form, it is based on universal intellectual values that transcend subject matter divisions: clarity, accuracy, precision, consistency, relevance, sound evidence, good reasons, depth, breadth, and fairness.

Critical thinking can be seen as having two components: 1) a set of information and belief generating and processing skills, and 2) the habit, based on intellectual commitment, of using those skills to guide behavior. It is thus to be contrasted with: 1) the mere acquisition and retention of information alone, because it involves a particular way in which information is sought and treated; 2) the mere possession of a set of skills, because it involves the continual use of them; and 3) the mere use of those skills ("as an exercise") without acceptance of their results.

For example

Certainly, one of the most important distinctions that teachers need to routinely make, and which takes disciplined thinking to make, is that between reasoning and subjective reaction.

If we are trying to foster quality thinking, we don't want students simply to assert things; we want them to try to reason things out on the basis of evidence and good reasons. Often, teachers are unclear about this basic difference. Many teachers are apt to take student writing or speech which is fluent and witty or glib and amusing as good thinking. They are often unclear about the constituents of good reasoning. Hence, even though a student may just be asserting things, not reasoning things out at all, if she is doing so with vivacity and flamboyance, teachers are apt to take this to be equivalent to good reasoning.

This was made clear in a recent California state-wide writing assessment in which teachers and testers applauded a student essay, which they said illustrated "exceptional achievement" in reasoned evaluation, an essay that contained no reasoning at all, that was nothing more than one subjective reaction after another. The assessing teachers and testers did not notice that the student failed to respond to the directions, did not support his judgment with reasons and evidence, did not consider possible criteria on which to base his judgment, did not analyze the subject in the light of the criteria, and did not select evidence that clearly supported his judgment. Instead the student:

CREATIVITY

Creativity is the act of turning new and imaginative ideas into reality. Creativity is characterized by the ability to perceive the world in new ways, to find hidden patterns, to make connections between seemingly unrelated phenomena, and to generate solutions. Creativity involves two processes: thinking, then producing.

Creativity arises through the confluence of the following three components;

Knowledge: All the relevant understanding an individual brings to bear on a creative effort.

Creative thinking: relates to how people approach problem and depends on personality and thinking / working style.

Motivation: motivation generally accepted as key to creative production, and the most important motivators are intrinsic passion and interest in the work itself

CREATIVITY SKILLS IN WORKPLACE

Brainstorming

Brainstorming allows a group of people to contribute ideas on a topic without regard to how practical they may be. The purpose is to come with an "outside the box" solution that might not occur otherwise. While many of the ideas generated may not be feasible, it is possible that by removing practical constraints, an idea will surface that you can mold into a workable solution. Another advantage is that you'll receive input from several people instead of just one or two individuals.

Asking "What-If" Questions

The process of asking "what if" questions can lead to new discoveries that result in improvements or growth. For example, you can consider what would happen if you started to perform a process in the opposite manner of how you currently do it or if you added weekend hours of operation. You can also explore the possibilities of opening a second location or even buying out your top competitor. "What if" questions are often the source of big ideas?

Role-Playing

Role-playing can give you a different perspective that can lead to helpful ideas. For example, if you are a salesperson, a role-playing session where you pretend to be the customer can give you a much better understanding of what your customer is thinking during your presentations. This can help you anticipate common objections your customers may have and develop a plan to overcome them. You'll be much better prepared for making your sales calls.

Provocation Techniques

Provocation is a process where you intentionally reject a truism to help stimulate creative thought. For instance, you may pose the premise that getting rid of all of your business's computers will improve productivity. While you have no intention of getting rid of your computer system, the concept may help stimulate thinking to where you and your colleagues may come up with ideas to improve productivity and re-examine your current processes.

PEOPLE MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Their performance and attitude can result in the success or failure of your business. The most difficult part of any manager's job is people management. Getting the most out of an employee means a business has consistent policies and practices in place to provide its people with appropriate training and development. Managers who work in small corporations and companies must have people management skills to effectively perform their jobs. Most companies use a hierarchical organization structure that requires managers or supervisors to oversee the work of others. Hence, these managers must oversee and coordinate the work of others to complete various projects. People management skills can include communication, leadership, delegation, motivation, training and even performance feedback.

- The ability to relate to others.
- Strong communication skills.
- Patience with others.
- Knowing how and when to show empathy
- Active listening skills.

COORDINATING WITH OTHERS

Skills of coordinating include the capacity to organize one's own work and to link it with the overall workflow. Coordinating includes attending to several activities simultaneously, prioritizing and switching priorities as necessary. It includes interweaving your work programmed with the work streams of others. And it includes dealing with unexpected crises, obstacles or interruptions, then efficiently getting the work back on track, preventing further crises.

Spotlight identified three forms of coordination:

- Sequencing and combining your own activities – capacity to organize your work by prioritizing, switching and refocusing attention, and combining and linking activities
- Interweaving activities collectively – capacity to follow up tasks, follow through on undertakings and interlink activities with those of colleagues
- Maintaining and/or restoring workflow – capacity to maintain, balance or restore workflow, deal with emergencies, overcome obstacles, or help put things back on track
- Points to consider when analyzing coordinating skills
- Coordinating skills involve managing work flows and longer-term time lines and deadlines.
- Whilst coordinating their own work, job-holders also need to mesh their activities with those of colleagues and also people such as contractors and suppliers.
- Particular skill is required when working with people who have a different approach to time.
- Finally, there are preventative skills used in foreseeing potential obstacles and averting potential crises.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is the ability to identify, use, understand, and manage your own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges and defuse conflict.

High EQ individuals understand the chain reaction that occurs that brings about their emotions. They also can explain why they are experiencing certain feelings without blaming someone else. High EQ people are never emotionally dishonest and don't withhold information, or downright lie, about what they are feeling.

- Self-awareness.
- Self-regulation.
- Motivation.
- Empathy.
- Social skills.

BENEFITS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN WORK PLACE

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is the ability to identify, use, understand, and manage emotions in an effective and positive way. A high EQ helps individuals to communicate better, reduce their anxiety and stress, defuse conflicts, improve relationships, empathize with others, and effectively overcome life's challenges

JUDGMENT AND DECISION MAKING

Judgment has a number of meanings, so some additional clarity is needed. To address our questions on judgment and decision making, we are excluding specific legal and religious definitions. For our purposes, we will confine the meaning of judgment to:

- An ability, capacity, or faculty to make considered and effective decisions, come to sensible conclusions, perceive and distinguish relationships, understand situations, and form objective opinions especially in matters that affect action.
- The internal thinking, cognitive process or act of reaching a decision, drawing sound conclusions, forming an opinion, or making critical distinctions, about people, situations, ideas or events through assessment, comparison, and/or deliberation.
- The opinion, conclusion, determination, or outcome produced from exercising or demonstrating judgment.

Judgment in the context of decision making could be summarized as:

1. The ability or capacity to decide
2. The thought processes used to decide

- Some of the importance decision outcome that comes from exercising judgment methods
- **Take an outside view:** Changing from an inside view to an outside view motivates ignoring the details of the specific case to look at the statistics of a class of similar cases. This is similar to our tip on getting an outside opinion.
- **Consider the opposite:** Ask the question, "What are some reasons that my initial judgment might be wrong?" This motivates seeking disconfirming evidence that makes the gathered information more representative of the likely outcome, reducing some of the systematic thinking errors.
- **Combine the individual judgments of a group:** Aggregating the decisions of an appropriately formed group has been shown to be more accurate than the judgment of experts.
- **Automate repeatable decision-making situations:** For certain circumstances, linear models have methodically outperformed the experts, suggesting that recurring decisions should be automated to a much greater extent.

SERVICE ORIENTATION

Service orientation is the ability and desire to anticipate, recognize and meet others' needs, sometimes even before those needs are articulated. **Service oriented** people focus on providing satisfaction and making themselves available to others. Developing **Service Orientation**.

CUSTOMER SERVICE ORIENTATION

Must be able to display positive attitudes and behaviors, which demonstrate an awareness and willingness to respond to customers in order to respond to and meet their needs, requirements and expectations.

- Attentiveness.
- Clear Communication Skills.
- Knowledge of the Product.
- Ability to Use "Positive Language"
- Acting Skills.
- Time Management Skills.
- Ability to "Read" Customers.

NEGOTATION SKILLS

Negotiation Skills are required to negotiate superior deals in both your business and personal life. Negotiation Skills can be learned; 'born negotiators' are a myth. Successful negotiators need to develop a variety of skills drawn from various disciplines

A successful negotiation requires the two parties to come together and hammer out an agreement that is acceptable to both.

- Problem Analysis.
- Preparation.
- Active Listening.
- Emotional Control.
- Verbal Communication.
- Collaboration and Teamwork.
- Problem Solving.
- Decision Making Ability.

COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY

Cognitive flexibility is the human ability to adapt the cognitive processing strategies to face new and unexpected conditions in the environmen.it involves three important concept characteristics. Firstly, Cognitive Flexibility is an ability which could imply a process of learning, that is, it could be acquired with experience. Secondly, Cognitive Flexibility involves the adaptation of cognitive processing strategies. A strategy, in the context of this definition, is a sequence of operations which search through a problem space. Cognitive flexibility, therefore, refers to changes in complex behaviors, and not in discrete responses. Finally, the adaptation will occur to new and unexpected environmental changes after a person has been performing a task for some time.

Cognitive flexibility training the main goal of most skill training programs consists of automating skill in order to speed performance and to save cognitive resources for other task demands. However, as explained above, the automation of a skill can be associated to cognitive inflexibility and performance errors. For this reason, different training programs have been proposed in order to overcome performance problems associated to automation. These programs come from two cognitive explanations of the cognitive flexibility phenomenon: knowledge representation and attentional processes hypotheses.

When a person performs a complex task her/his behaviour needs to be adapted to the environmental conditions in which the task is being performed. However, these conditions continue to change as the task develops, therefore in order to be flexible a person has to focus attention on these conditions on a regular basis. In addition to this, in order to adapt her/his behaviour to the new conditions the person needs to restructure her/his knowledge so as to effectively interpret the new situation and the new task requirements. Cognitive flexibility, therefore, depends on attentional processes and knowledge representation.

BENEFITS OF EMPLOYEE SKILLS

- Keep up with industry change
- Stay ahead of competitors
- Be able to see weakness and skill gaps
- Maintain knowledge skill
- Provide internal promotions

LIMITATIONS OF EMPLOYEE SKILLS

- Increased stress
- Loss of interest
- Too much of theory
- Time requirement
- Sometimes it maybe failure

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