

Training programs: The relationship between learning in the workplace and organizational success

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Abstract

This study attempts to present to institutions the importance of the training and development programs. Organizations find it difficult to stay competitive in this actual global economy. The Importance of employee development programs is growing in this era of globalization and crucial competition. The purpose of this paper is to present a conceptual study established on the employee training and development programs and its benefits. This paper will inspect the structure and elements of employee training and development program by proposing the French case. The positive outcomes for employees and organization are guaranteed once professional development programs is implemented and pursued to receive an advantage among competitors. There is substantial discussion among professionals and researchers on the affect that development program has on both employee and organization. The study described here is a vigilant assessment of literature on fundamental of employee development program and its benefits to organizations and employees.

Keywords: Training, Development, Employee performance, Learning, Organizational Learning, Organization Strategy

1. Introduction

Many small and medium enterprises and institutions find that their employees' skills are useful tools to remain competitive in a global economy based on knowledge and to take into account the pressures of an aging workforce and more and more diverse. SMEs, companies, firms and organizations, are a key asset of the economy in developing countries, many leaders would do well to learn more about apprenticeship programs in the workplace and study how they can help them in achieving their business goals.

Training presents a prime opportunity to expand the knowledge base of all employees, but many employers find the development opportunities expensive. Employees also miss out on work time while attending training sessions, which may delay the completion of projects. Despite the potential drawbacks, training and development provides both the company as a whole and the individual employees with benefits that make the cost and time a worthwhile investment.

Most employees have some weaknesses in their workplace skills. A training program allows you to strengthen those skills that each employee needs to improve. A development program brings all employees to a higher level so they all have similar skills and knowledge. This helps to reduce any weak links within the company who rely heavily on others to complete basic work tasks. Providing the necessary training creates an overall knowledgeable staff with employees who can take over for one another as needed, work on teams or work independently without constant help and supervision from others. An employee who receives the necessary training is better able to perform their job. He/she becomes more aware of safety practices and proper procedures for basic tasks. The training may also build the employee's confidence because he/she has a stronger understanding of the industry and the responsibilities of the job. This confidence may push them to perform even better and think of new ideas that help them excel. Continuous training also keeps employees on the cutting edge of industry developments. When they are competent and on top of changing industry standards help the company to hold a position as a leader and strong competitor within the industry.

In this research we seek to acknowledge the importance of focusing on training to increase capacity for action, development and the achievement of the objectives of the institutions. The goal is to raise awareness and investigate about the adaptation of this method in an institution that stipulates in its status the training obligations, and the employees' vision about this stratagem. This study is based on the experience applied in France and its promulgated laws for the right for training in private and public sectors in order to be implemented in all Egyptian organizations. We start by explaining the context in France, its implementation and procedures, followed by a discussion considering the way it could be implemented in other organizations or countries, and some personal recommendations to improve the situation.

2. Literature Review

The topic of Employees' training and development has been treated and researched by many writers over the past few years. Due to the relevance of the topic to the well functioning of most of organization, it is important to know its principles and the factors that influence it.

Training is the planned process to modify attitudes, knowledge or skill behavior through learning

experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities (Smith, 1992).

Training programs are central to the success of transfer of learning. They should be designed and delivered in such a way that provides trainee the ability to transfer learning back to the job (Halton et al. 2000; Velada and Caetano, 2007). Training outcomes are more likely to have a positive effect on employee attitudes where training designs are structured and related to employees work (Heyes and Stuart, 1996)

In 2004, Rocky J. Dwyer stated that there has been little overlap between the development areas (employee, management, professional Development) and the adult education principles. As employee training is considered adult education, some of the shortcomings of the typical employee training sessions are caused by not paying attention to the nature of adult learning. Definition of education is activities which aim at developing the knowledge, skills, moral values and understanding required in all aspects of life, rather than a knowledge and skill relating to only limited field of activity (Smith, 1992).

Lindeman in 1926 and Knowles in 1980 offered writings on adult education that provided guidelines for practitioners on the nature of adult learning.

In his paper, Rocky J. Dwyer, provided a theoretical background on training, general principles and practical components of designing employee training and development activities that reflect adult education principles.

In late 1980s, the American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) defined Human Capital Development as the process of increasing the capacity values of human resources through development or a process of adding value to individuals, teams or an organization as a human system (McLagan, 1989).

Training workshops can heighten individuals' motivation to develop different capabilities and facilitate the development of skills needed to build these capabilities. Factors that influence the development of skills include job involvement, organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Velada and Caetano, 2007). Whether it is an improvement in job skills or a desire for social contact, adult learners will expect the instructional situation to be relevant to their needs (Brookfield, 1986; Brundage and Mackeracher, 1980; Knowles, 1980). Adults prefer to be self-directed learners and have no desire to be treated like children or told what to do. Since they have their own goals and experiences, they want to explore new activities and discover methodologies for accomplishing tasks that relate to them (Rocky J. Dwyer, 2004); and that's why Knowles in 1980 describes the role of the adult educator as a facilitator of independent self-directed learning.

As most of adult learners have defined objectives and life goals, on professional and personal levels, the training objectives need to be clear, measureable and specific so the participants and trainer can determine when they have been reached, and they should have input into the objectives of the session (Rocky J. Dwyer, 2004). Some writers argue that the goal is usually set by the organization to enhance individual productivity and competitiveness (Lang and Witting-berman, 2000)

Helping trainees achieve their goals is complicated by the fact that they come from different background environments, and bring to the training their individual values and beliefs and their personal experiences to bear, share, reflect and learn while simultaneously working together on a challenging yet unfamiliar task (Cogner, 1992)

In his research in 1989, Cranton concluded that methods for helping adults learn can be described in four categories: instructor-centered, interactive individualized and experimental.

Theorists and practitioners seem to agree on that nearly everybody seeks satisfaction in his or her work (Jepsen and Sheu, 2003).

According to Locke, in 1976, there are 3 main causes employee satisfaction:

1. Physical-economic (physical working conditions)
2. Social (supervision and cohesive work groups)
3. Natural of work (Mentally challenging tasks and work related variables)

Many researchers agreed that the critical part of training is the evaluation of outcome. It is the necessary component of every training activity. It can include a wide variety of activities, such as informal observation of participants' reactions, structured observations or performance, use of discussions and anecdotal records or comments to provide feedback to the learner. When developing an evaluation methodology to assess the impact of a training session on employee behavior performance, the general consensus is to involve participants in some way, allowing them to collect evidence of change, to set criteria and involve them in the evaluation process by identifying their own discrepancies with the trainer or to have individual or group evaluations as appropriate (Rocky J. Dwyer, 2004). According to Baldwin and Ford, 1988; Wexley and Latham, 2002; approximately 40 percent of training context is usually transferred immediately following training, 25 percent is retained after six months and only 10 to 15 percent after one year. Smart employers provide trainees with opportunities to learn and retain new job-related competencies (Velada and Caetano, 2007)

According to Garavan, in 1999, there are 3 distinct theoretical perspectives on HCD have been identified:

- Capabilities-driven HCD perspective: which focus on the resources available for an organization to attain its goals.

- Psychological contract perspective: which focuses on employment relationship between employer and employee.
- Collective learning/learning organization perspective: which focuses on the organization as a totality generating, improving and transferring knowledge.

According to John P. Wilson and Steven Western in 2000, the performance appraisal interview is widely regarded as one of the main instruments for identifying training and development needs at the individual level.

In 2011, Khalil M. Dirani conducted a research in the context of a training services program offered by an HRD department in a large Lebanese financial institution, the purpose was to explore the trainees' perceptions about the effects of a professional training program on their skill development and how cultural factors specific to Lebanon influence the learning. Professional training means formal learning and support activities and initiatives designed to provide organizations the opportunity to prepare and develop their employees. These opportunities lead to improvements in the knowledge, skills, practices, and disposition of the trainee (Khalil M. Dirani, 2011).

Training is an important component of retention and increasing the availability of training is critical for retaining older workers (The Commonwealth Fund, 1993). Employee satisfaction is the central role in the link between human capital management practices and organizational performance. (Peccei, 2004)

Employers have been largely careless in providing training for older employees so Marjorie Armstrong-Stassen and Andrew Templer treated in 2005 the Canadian response to an aging workforce, Adapting training for older employees. Eighty-three percent of the HR executives indicated that training to upgrade skills is highly important in retaining older managerial and professional employees; approximately 72% of the HR executives indicated that training to learn new skills is highly important in retaining older managerial and professional employees. Marjorie Armstrong-Stassen and Andrew Templer examined the three key areas of training and development: Access to training, customizing training methods to older employees, and the provision of age awareness training for management. Baldwin and Ford (1988) and Holton (1996 &2005) provided a framework with the three main determinants of training transfer: Training design or enabling factors, Individual factors or trainee characteristics, work environment or transfer climate.

3. Development of training programs

A structured training and development program ensures that employees have a consistent experience and background knowledge. The consistency is particularly relevant for the company's basic policies and procedures. All employees need to be aware of the expectations and procedures within the company; this includes safety, discrimination and administrative tasks. Putting all employees through regular training in these areas ensures that all staff members at least have exposure to the information.

Employees with access to training and development programs have the advantage over employees in other companies who must seek out training opportunities on their own. The investment in training that a company makes shows the employees they are valued. The training creates a supportive workplace. Employees may gain access to training they would not have otherwise known about or sought out themselves. Employees who feel appreciated and challenged through training opportunities may feel more satisfaction toward their jobs.

Training, workshops, conferences, or seminars remain useful tools for employee's development. The Training is a right for each and every employee. We must understand first, what does the Right For Training (RFT) mean?

The word Training includes development opportunities, formal and informal learning as learning, seminars, courses, conferences, videos, lectures, orientation sessions, rotation of workstations, training learning, coaching, mentoring, exchange programs for employees and internships.

There is no doubt that training is an important success factor for both employees and organization. Improving knowledge and skills of managers and employees, improve retention, engagement and productivity of the workforce. Adequately trained employees will be better able to manage risks, adapt to change, to advance their careers and maximize net profits of the company.

Each organization is unique but in general, this device concerns internship training on basic and principles of learning as well as case studies and best practices that meet the objectives of the organization and provide employers and employees with the tools, increases the degree of employee engagement, and harmonize the needs of employees with the goals of the organization.

In today's market, there's a huge competition facing most companies in all industries or sectors. To develop a competitive advantage, they start to use effective Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) systems, different quality management techniques and investing in their human capital, which is going to help achieve strategic business goals eventually. Majority of the companies nowadays attempt investing company's resources to improve and optimize its workforce. The best way to improve the workforce is by training and development of employees. Most professionals agree that employee training is a complex human resources practice that can

significantly impact a company's success. The training industry as a whole has shown significant growth through the past few years. Statistics indicate that investment in training is continuing to grow as more and more companies realize its importance. Training and development is a crucial issue to building skilled employees and employee retention, it has always been important to companies even in 1995; researchers found that \$7.7 billion was spent on the wages and salaries of in-house company trainers and \$2.8 billion was spent on tuition reimbursement (Frazis, Gittleman, Horrigan, Joyce, 1998). Training and development is a great process that leads to direct results while being cost-effective and time-effective. There is many important factors in training and development, it is a complicated process, influenced by many factors and needs to be part of a whole organizational culture and behavior. The first step is to make sure that organizational & personnel goals are aligned together, and that way the training outcomes will be applied and fruitful. The Evaluation part of the training is also a critical issue that needs reflection from the human resources department and the top management.

In this research, we will discuss the importance of training and development program in organizations, present the context of this process in France and its possible implementation in institutions that does not giving importance to training programs.

As labor is increasingly restricted, employers face increasing difficulties in terms of hiring and retaining qualified employees. It is particularly important to provide development opportunities to young employees and new recruits. These employees consider lifelong learning as a way of life and are attracted to workplaces where learning, mentoring and innovation are valued and practiced.

In addition, opportunities for professional development and training offered to employees drive the commitment of these, increase the level of job satisfaction and, by the very fact, contribute to productivity, competitiveness and retention employees.

The individual right for training (RFT) is one of the access roads of employees to professional training. This device is issued in France from the National Inter-professional Agreement of the 5th of December 2003 and from the 4th of May law related to "the professional training throughout life and social dialogue." It allows each employee to capitalize 20 hours of training annually for 6 years, capped at 120 hours, except for the provisions of an agreement or a company providing a superior duration.

This hours' capital is used in the employee's initiative with the employer's agreement on the training content.

The part-time employees benefit from the same terms and conditions but the number of hours is calculated pro-rata of working time. The ceiling is also 120 hours.

The fixed-term contracts get rights for the RFT according to the number of working months in the last 12 for one or many employers.

Currently, new laws were approved to make improvements to the laws that didn't fulfill all the expectations of French employees in terms of reducing the inequalities facing the training access. It then becomes urgent to secure the employment and help the companies to face the current economic crisis.

The economic and social context of the last 5 years in the entire world should have been a fertile ground for the generalization of the establishment of a similar RFT everywhere. However, the comprehension complexity of this process by the institutions and the employees with the difficulties for the state agencies to accompany its implementation didn't allow a real deployment on the expected scale. Point that support the need of a real adoption for this process.

4. Background and development in France

The implementation of an organization for professional training appeared after the 16th of July 1971 law in France. It regulates especially the financial obligations, the terms of use, the leave for training for the employees. These main objectives were the insertion in the employment and the social and professional mobility of the persons.

Since the 80s, the training legislation has been marked by the development of individual courses and the concept of co-investment between the employee and the company.

The "competence" model has a strong development because it's judged as more flexible than the "classification" of the classic system of qualification. The concept of professionalism sees its rise through the negotiations of professional branches to respond to the appearance of new qualifications related to technological innovations.

The European economy and the globalization have confronted the companies to a fast technical evolution. The communication, marketing, conveyances, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) development creates new trades at the expense of others. The companies then have to adapt to this new context and make more and more calls for initiative and competence always bigger than those of its employees.

In order to achieve it, everyone owes to its evolution, one to maintain its profitability and prevent the shortage of skills erosion of his employees, the other to maintain his employability and his professional

evolution.

Another factor will play an important part in the implementation of the new reform: the baby boom of the after-war and the decline in birth rate that causes an ineluctable demographic aging. This phenomenon had a strong influence on the retired massive departures in the next 10 years. Therefore, preventing the escape of professional expertise through adapting the new generation's training to new professional courses was a must.

The 4th of May 2004 law related to the "professional training throughout life and social dialogue" aims to prevent the demographic evolution, to develop the professional qualification access through training and validation of acquirements, to fight against the inequality of training access, to develop the professionalizing courses and to maintain the insertion devices alternately, through focusing on the social dialogue and making the employee an actor of his professional course.

4.1 The implementation

The 4th of May 2004 law opened a 3rd route of access to training as complementary step to the training plan to the employer's initiative and the individual leave to the employee's initiative, they promulgated the: Individual Right for Training (RFT).

The RFT concerns all the employees under certain seniority conditions: The employees on permanent contracts: get their rights to the training hours in the RFT context after one year of seniority. These trainings take place out of the working time, in exchange for a training allowance calculated according to the net average of the last 12 months. The employee perceives 50% of the hourly wage multiplied by the number of hours of training; this payment is not submitted to any social contribution.

Once per year, the employer has to inform the employees about the balance of these acquired rights under the RFT, and the company chooses the method of communication.

Concerning the employees on fixed-term contracts, They get this right after 4 consecutive months of work activity, during the last 12 months at one or many enterprise. The training must take place during the contract duration. The funding is financed by joint approved bodies financing the Individual Training Leave, on the 1% of the Individual Leave for Training (ILT) for the employees on FTC who take charge of verifying the seniority conditions (the company having no way to verify whether the seniority is really acquired).

4.2 The vision of the Court of Audit

For the Court of Audit, the objectives of the 4th of May 2004 law haven't been reached. They judged the devices of the individual leave for training and the RFT as too compartmentalized, however they estimate that they should be complementary, they didn't target the most fragile audiences and therefore the inequalities in terms of training access haven't been corrected.

Its common that certain companies replace the financed shares from the RFT with those of the spring of the plan, they may replace too the financed actions on the RTF by others revealed by the company strategic plan

The Court of Audit also noticed that employees without qualifications or belonging to the Supervised Personal Work SMEs have lightly mobilized the RFT.

It estimates that the RFT causes a risk in the financing of the training system: if all the employees used their capital at the end of 6 years, the load could reach 77 billion Euros for the private sector.

In 2007, the overall cost of the professional training represented 27,1 billion Euros. If the employees used their credit hours every year, the associated expense would be 13 billion Euros annually, that's close to half the annual overall training spending, while only 9,4 billion Euros have been dedicated to the professional training for the same year by the companies.

The court of audit has made six recommendations to be followed:

- To refocus the RFT to the training activities that enable securing the professional courses.
- To finance the RFT by a part of the payments made under the individual leave for training to make these funds mutual.
- To make the usage of the RFT when applying for an Individual Leave for Training obligatory and limiting the probability of the ILT according to the same modalities of the RFT.
- To merge the devices of the ILT for the employees on fixed-term contracts and the RFT of the employees on fixed term contracts, and increase the contribution of the companies in the individual leave for training for the employees on FTC
- To refocus the collections made for the joint approved bodies for the financing of the Individual Training Leave to a national and inter-professional agency.
- To make the professional training mutual between both of the national and regional plans, using the reservations of the Fund single based equalization to the profit of the employees in priority.

4.3 Procedures

A new national and inter-professional agreement was concluded on the 7th of January 2009. This agreement

foresaw the 3 following provisions:

1- Reinforcement of the role of the Strategic Workforce Planning.

2- Creation of a new definition for the training plan, the 3 categories of the current training plan are hard to be applied because they fall within a category or another depending on the status of the employee.

The new plan include only two categories: Adaptation actions of employees to their jobs to maintain their ability to hold a job which make the training achieved during the working time and Skills development actions that can be performed outside working hours.

3-The portability of the RFT:

The new agreement states that the employees will be able to raise the balance of the number of hours acquired under the RFT, multiplied by an inclusive sum calculated as follows:

- Concerning the employees who cut their contract & eligible for financing by unemployment insurance system: The financing of training activities, report of competences, the Validation of Official Experiences or the accompanying measures will be financed by joint approved bodies of the company in which the employee has acquired his/her rights.

- Concerning the employees hired in a new company: Once an agreement has been signed for new employer and during the 2 years following his hiring, the financing of training activities, the Validation of his/her Official Experiences by the employee will be financed by the joint approved bodies of the company in which the employee has been hired.

5. Discussion

We recognize that training is an organizational effort aimed at helping employees to acquire the basic skills required for the efficient execution of the functions for which they are hired. Development, on the other hand, deals with activities undertaken to expose employees to perform additional duties and assume positions of importance in the organizational hierarchy. It pushes them to perform even better and think of new ideas that help them excel. It is essential for the organization to design the training very carefully, the design of the training should be according to the needs of the employees¹. Continuous training also keeps your employees on the cutting edge of industry developments. Employees who are competent and on top of changing industry standards help the company to hold a position as a leader and strong competitor within the industry. On the job training helps employees to get the knowledge of their job in a better way.² A structured training and development program ensures that employees have a consistent experience and background knowledge. Employees with access to training and development programs have the advantage over employees in other companies who have to seek out training opportunities on their own.

People learn from their practical experience much better compared to bookish knowledge.³ On the job training reduces cost and saves time. After conducting qualitative research and focus groups, we could conclude that today, it is still largely underrated. Most employees, as well as employers are not aware of the benefits of training. The concept itself should be used in every company and organization. However, many are unaware of the extent to which it influences the efficiency of companies.

It often starts with creating a culture that encourages your employees to consider themselves valued partners in your business.

The problem is that for the last few years, brands are too caught up in marketing and technology and they are forgetting to actually connect with their employees.

Proposed steps for implementation in Egyptian institutions:

1- Implementation of a mandatory training status in the institution

2- Evaluation of the skills of employees.

3- Providing resources for the training programs

4- Improving the level of employee engagement

5- Suggesting effective and structured learning opportunities.

6- Assessing needs of the institution and define the desired results

7- -Balancing the needs of learning with goals of the organization

8- Developing a learning program with a strategic approach

9- Using an approach for a long-term strategy

10- Ensuring programs relevant to the work environment

11- Recognizing the achievements of learning³- Supporting organizational changes

12- Continuing to attract labor, retaining, and achieving goals

¹ Ginsberg, 1997 & Michael Armstrong, 2000.

² Deming, 1982

³ Flynn et al., 1995; Kaynak, 2003; Heras, 2006

- 13- Overcoming the challenges that have the learning programs in work context
- 14- Encouraging the informal learning
- 15- Sharing programs learning with other organizations
- 16- Measuring the performance of learning investments in work context
- 17- Maintaining an efficient sustainable statement of measurement and evaluation.

When an organization implements a mandatory training status, it motivates employees to improve their skills and support the organizational culture. When employees support the culture, the implementation is easier and more efficient. Having great training and development programs contributes to attracting and retaining labor, employees become more involved in the organizational activities and more engaged as well. It seems that Training design plays a very vital role in the employee as well as organizational performance, a poor training design is nothing but a loss of time and money¹. The training and development programs goals must be in line with the overall organizational goals and objectives, and that allows the top management to overcome the challenges that face the organization.

6. Conclusion

In the time where the new reform is implemented, it is difficult to have a precise idea about the expected results because no study about the follow-up of financing the RFT has been planned during its implementation. According to the role of each actor of training, the conclusions are different in terms of financial results and objectives reach, which are reducing the training access inequality and securing the employments.

The malfunctions observed in the last 5 years have been handed over to the agenda, the training development throughout the professional life, the professionalization and the security of the professional courses: Their objective is to better articulate the employment policy and the professional training.

The Social Cohesion Programming Law of the 18th of January 2005 called Borloo² Law has established an obligation of a three-year negotiation about the strategic workforce planning that should lead the companies to implement its strategy and work towards the completion of the RFT objectives.

The employers-employees relations have to be directed to a “win-win” dialogue, because the competences evolution and the individual objectives of the employees of a company are inseparable from the strategy of the company. The supervised personal work and SMEs must be accompanied in these steps so that the training access inequality can be reduced.

However, a fear related to the current economic crisis remains, it can be an element of nature likely to slow the deployment of the RFT from the companies and employees in the entire world.

After all, many hopes are allowed with the new momentum generated by several adjustments. It will be hopeful that a report will be produced regularly to make sure that these last devices are enough for the good deployment of the RFT device

The objective of business owners is profitability. The organization's success depends on your employees' performance; poor performance is detrimental to your company's success. Creating a well-rounded approach to managing and coaching your work force requires the expertise of a human resources leader and the support of your company's executive leadership.

An important part of every manager's job is that of continuing the development of the people who work under his/her direction to ensure a productive workforce and the on-going ability to meet changing job requirements.

There is a clear strategic value in continuously training and developing employees in order to enhance the organization's ability to meet its mission and to increase the ability of employees to achieve rewarding careers within the organization. Managers have several responsibilities in this area: analyzing organizational needs and identifying specific training requirements, developing training plans for the overall organization and individual employees within it, obtaining and allocating resources effectively to accomplish training needs and produce desired gains in organizational efficiency, and evaluating the impact of training efforts and making necessary adjustments to ensure maximum results.

To make training count, it must be matched directly to the needs of the organization and people in it. One tool that is used to accomplish this is the Training Needs Assessment³. Training and development makes the employee also feel satisfied with the role they play in the company or organization. This is driven by the great ability they gain to execute their duties. They feel they belong to the company or the organization that they work for and the only way to reward it is giving the best services they can.

¹ Tsaor and Lin, 2004

² Jean-Louis Borloo is a French politician and was the leader of the Union of Democrats and Independents, and French Minister for Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and Town and Country Planning between 2007 and 2010.

³ Susan D. McClelland, The Graduate School University of Wisconsin-Stout, August 2002.

A properly trained employee becomes more informed about procedures for various tasks. The worker's confidence is also boosted by training and development. This confidence comes from the fact that the employee is fully aware of his/her roles and responsibilities. It helps the worker carry out the duties in better way and even find new ideas to incorporate in the daily execution of duty. An employee who receives the necessary training is better able to perform the job. The training may also build the employee's confidence because she has a stronger understanding of the industry and the responsibilities of her job. This confidence may push her to perform even better and think of new ideas that help her excel. Continuous training also keeps your employees on the cutting edge of industry developments.

Training is a development method that can strongly influence people's lives, thoughts, actions, decisions, work ethics, and behavior. Companies must ensure they satisfy their Employees in order to improve their performance, HR departments should provide sufficient training opportunities for employees, Line Manager should encourage their employees to develop their skills and learn new ones, and Organizations should introduce the training and development culture and reach all employees in all levels.

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