

## BUILDING COMPETENCIES THROUGH EXPERIENCE MAPS

**M**any HR Heads are struggling with the answer to providing career paths to employees. Employees who are hi-potentials (Hipos') want to see clear direction and something they can look forward to stay in the company. Promotion for everyone in corporate world automatically means better designation, bigger car, higher bonus and more money, lastly the respect they get from their colleagues and sub-ordinates. If you do not provide the path or promotions, they are very happy to knock on the next door where a higher designation is available. This round robin continues and puts us in a big dilemma of buying or building talent. Depending on the organization hunger, need and the phase most managers take call suiting the situation. Most of us generally agree that we would like to build our own talent but give opportunities to employees from outside to take on higher positions paying lip service to building Talent.

In case we want to build talent we have to take a slightly organized and longer path, this pays in the long term, we all know that from our own experience. Most of the HR Heads struggle to build a great career path for the employees, we build great presentation(s) on the number of years taken for one to move designations but few would map out the experience we should gain to move to the job role. If we have personal mentors they normally guide through the games of snakes and ladders for us to know the right path to our ultimate destination. It is a known fact now that to build competencies we have to have particular kind of skills, knowledge and behavior but these have not been mapped out for various job roles in a company.

Would it not be wonderful if some of those paths are simply put together by the organization and shared with larger audience so that they can know what they can do to get the next job, having gone through particular kind of experiences? Let us take an example of Director – HR, if one was to know that to become Director – HR in a FMCG company, she must have managed IR experiences at the manufacturing location, should have experienced one Long Term Settlement, one full year of experienced manufacturing cycles, been a part of new initiatives of TPM, Lean management or other production techniques, run the welfare and other programs for workmen, experienced participation in Union – Management committees and taken tough decisions of convincing Union Leaders on an item of contention then a lot of resistance from Management Trainees to go to a plant would be overcome .

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A clear experience map will ensure that management sees the person in various kinds of situations to make up their mind on which edges of this diamond need more polishing to decide on the development journey. I am sure we can all draw out similar maps for our functions; it is not a difficult task. Marc Effron from Talent Management Group and self have been talking and working on these for a while. It takes time and thinking through, it is a lot of hard work, alignment and agreements on future capabilities but in the end it is worth it.

The experience maps can make our job a lot easier as managers. We can have easy dialogues around next job and promotions, a clear indicative path with experience map laid out can determine for us the next set of experience our subordinates must take to vie for our job.



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