



TRAINING PLAN: A PERSONAL AND ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT TOOL

By Thiago Dell'Armi



“Talking about people management means talking about people, mentality, vitality, action and pro-action. People Management is one of the areas that has most undergone changes and transformations over these past years, and (...) has been responsible for the excellence of successful organizations and the investment of intellectual capital that symbolizes, more than anything, the importance of the human factor even during the Era of Information.” (Idalberto Chiavenato)

This excerpt, taken from the book entitled *People Management*, by Chiavenato, clearly indicates the importance given to people at companies. The company-employee relationship has shown that these agents are increasingly interdependent, since human intellectual capital is the main factor responsible for the activities performed at the organizations. People are the ones who promote the prosperity or decadence of an institution and they are the ones who generate innovations, disseminate knowledge and create methods so that companies can progress in today's competitive market.

However, what do these people need to do after all to develop professionally and contribute toward a company's growth? It is well known that human beings inherently detain Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (KSA ideogram) in order to perform different daily activities, and things are no different in the corporate environment. These three pillars, when consolidated, form the competencies that allow people to achieve professional differentiation. When well managed, these individuals act as the gears for the machine called the company.

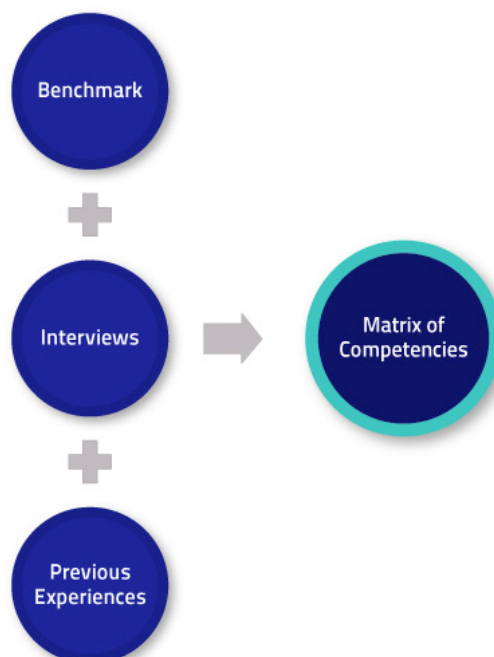
However, the market's appetite requires managers to seek the continuous development of the group and themselves, repositioning to confront adversities, focusing on innovation and on differentiation with stakeholders. Let us take innovation companies as an example. They require their employees to stay constantly updated and develop competencies that help generate new ideas.

Considering the need to work and develop the competencies of their employees, different companies from the national market have demanded the elaboration of professional development plans in a structured fashion (many times assisted by specialized consulting firms), including for the training of new leaders, designed primarily to formally qualify employees and/or partners. The target public of a de-

velopment plan can be as varied as possible, since its application is not restricted to a specific type of individual, social class or educational level. It involves training for a range of different job functions and positions at a company, since the competencies addressed may be of a technical, tool, organizational or behavioral character, with the latter the most commonly demanded at modern companies, primarily in leadership positions.

The processes used in the training plans are diversified, where much depends on the customizations required by the organizations, whether due to sector-level characteristics, local economic scenarios or the hierarchical levels in focus. The development of robust methodologies, already tested and applied at companies from different sectors, is crucial for training plan success due to the dynamics of the different environments.

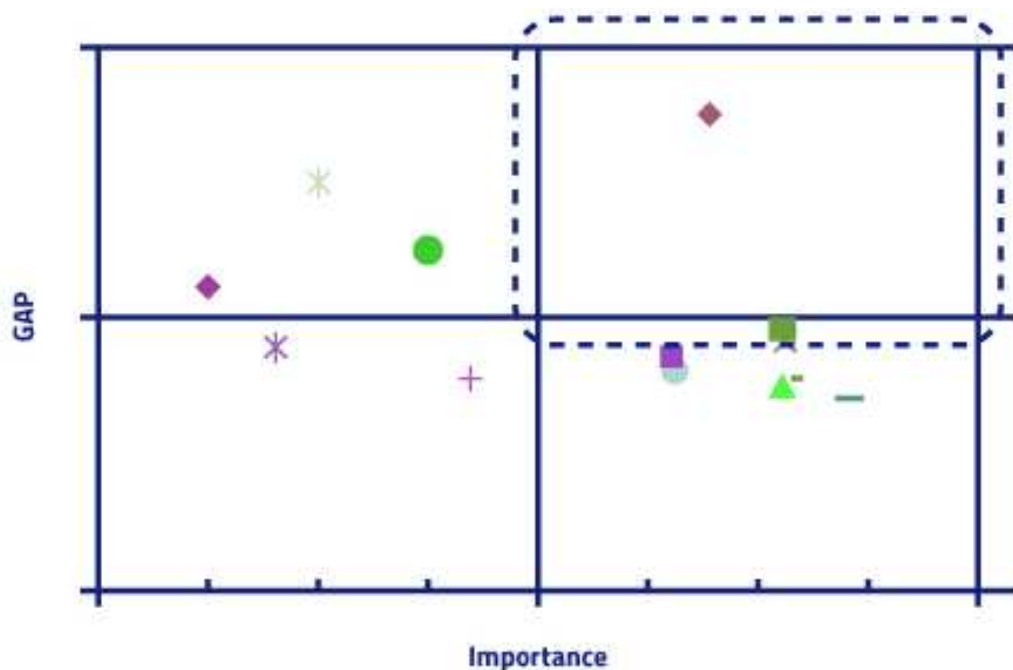
We will now take a look at one of the methodologies more commonly used in professional development plans, consisting of four macro-stages, aiming toward the collective or even individual training of an organization's employees. The first of these consists of the mapping of competencies, which surveys the knowledge, abilities and attitudes necessary for performing activities in the segment in question, whether through interviews, benchmarks, questionnaires or by revisiting previous competency maps, considered competency databases that are fundamental for enriching information. This is how a preliminary competency matrix is created for the plan.



Once the initial competencies are surveyed and pass through a first selection, it becomes necessary to validate each one within the context to be analyzed. In order to validate each topic addressed, assessments are elaborated to identify the relevance of each listed item and/or the levels of proficiency required for each position, function or hierarchical level. In addition to the identification assessments, there must also be a surveying of the individual proficiency levels, whether through self-evaluations or evaluations by the managers of those they lead. This brings us to the second macro-stage of the process, whose main activity is the mapping of the training gaps found through the assessments.

The gaps are the results of the difference between the current proficiency level and that necessary to work in the area or perform the function. However, the identified gaps alone are not considered sufficient parameters for elaborating an action plan for training. It is also necessary to consider the level of importance that each competency holds when it comes to performing the related activities. Therefore, the third macro-stage is the most relevant in the process as a demonstration of the priority competencies for development, developed through the elaboration of the following matrix.

The quadrant highlighted in the graphic demonstrates the prioritized competencies, since they indicate a high level of importance and high training gap, demanding a short term professional development strategy. It is important to point out that the rates are volatile and adaptable to the organization's needs.



With this tool, it is possible to identify and define the actions necessary for reducing the gaps by elaborating a portfolio of educational actions, and consequently, defining the priority training action plan, which characterizes the fourth and last macro-stage of the process.

A possible extension of the process is the structured elaboration of a career trail, with the creation of a career evolution flow, where a cycle is completed by defining the competencies considered fundamental for performing the functions; identifying the evolution options for the employee along his or her own career; with the indication of the points to develop for his or her effective transition of position, and finally; training in the key competencies in the new function to be performed.



As it was observed, despite the fact that the elaboration of a training plan is not something trivial, it is extremely necessary for each individual that makes up an organization, since every human being has something they lack that must be developed in order to better perform their activities. After all, the only Super Man we know is that one wearing a blue suit and red cape found in the movies and comic books.

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