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CASE

Walgreens Scores Victory with Volunteers

In an effort to better utilize the talent level of its human resources, Walgreens created an innovative talent management program for its finance division, which involved getting input from current employees who volunteered their time to help the firm. A key component of this career development plan was the use of HR business partners throughout the

organization who worked to create skills-based trainees. By focusing on the skills, current workers were prepared for the challenges that existed in Walgreens. What is particularly unique is its

identify important skill sets and create the kinds of initiatives that would help employees gain the most relevant competencies.

The creation of this training and career development effort was a detailed process that required extensive teamwork, coordination, and strategic planning. The primary components of the program were also based on several key themes and institutional approaches:

1. Walgreens initially advertised and promoted the program in the company's newsletter and in various meetings. Employee volunteers were told that their commitment to the program would ultimately help all workers enhance their long-term career opportunities at Walgreens. This strategy generated great interest among employees, and the company quickly identified the appropriate number of volunteers to kickoff the initiative.
2. Developmental blueprints were developed by employees so that individuals could better control their own career prospects at Walgreens. These blueprints helped
 - identify possible employment paths that operated through a variety of career tracks;
 - provide the proper training activities and enhancement opportunities that facilitate the accomplishment of career goals; and
 - position the company as a desirable employer.

3. A multistep phase-in of the program was initiated, which involved placing employees on teams that supervised different functional components of the blueprint model. These components included training and development, managerial succession, reward systems, technology utilization, metric identification and scorecards (using an employee survey), and many others.
4. Online educational videos and multimedia content was offered to employees to enhance their career development in the firm.

While the program has improved talent management at Walgreens, another big change has occurred because finance and accounting professionals were trained to better manage human resources, broadening the discipline's appeal across professional boundaries.⁹⁰

QUESTIONS

1. Why was it good for Walgreens to get input from volunteers?
2. Why was it necessary to rely on employee blueprints to enhance career management in the company?
3. Why was it important to familiarize individuals in other business functions of the organization? How should this approach help Walgreens?

SUPPLEMENTAL CASES

Leadership Leverage

The case demonstrates how a healthcare company utilized talent group to better management the development of employees. (For the case, go to www.cengage.com/management/mathis.)

Equipping for the Future

This case shows how one company in the oil industry started a succession planning program. (For the case, go to www.cengage.com/management/mathis.)

Developed Today, Gone Tomorrow

This case illustrates a serious concern some employers have about developing employees only to have them leave. (For the case, go to www.cengage.com/management/mathis.)



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