
Understanding the necessitating role of Talent coaching and Leadership on effectual talent management: An insinuating perspective

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Abstract

With increasing competition, technology expansion, workforce diversity and uncertainty with parallel upsurge of skills, knowledge and intellect the role of sustaining talent with a high level of commitment and loyalty is a tedious task but a necessity paramount.

Today's organization focus and implement at their best on branding themselves best and thus resulting into effective workforce management, leadership development and thus ensuring effectual talent engagement and retention thereof. Thus, largely the dependence is on how talent management can aid in improvising the strategic HR perspective in multiple way. Talent coaching is one practice and method that can help in ensuring building a guided talent reservoir, effectively understanding the potential and guiding the performance and thus assuring effectual retention and organization performance.

The present paper attempts to understand the role of talent coaching in building leadership, understanding Gen Y and building talent reservoir. It also aims at understanding the strategies that are utilized to build upon talent and challenges in talent coaching.

Thus, the present paper will help in developing insights on how effectively planned talent coaching can help in strengthening talent management.

Keywords – Talent coaching, talent retention, talent reservoir, leadership behaviour.

Introduction to Talent coaching and leadership

Today's organization is no longer like traditional organization with hierarchical silos and bounded authority and responsibility. With the trend of "Leading by Example" expects that its workforce the intellectual capital should be innovative and creative enough along with possessing excellent inter-personal and communication skills by way of which they can perform extraordinarily better and can create competitive advantage.

Every organization aims at developing the employees by exposing them with training and development opportunities to make them more confident, skilled thus elevating their involvement, satisfaction and contribution to organization. Thus by way of this the top management in return expects that its talented employees could be converted into effective leaders through consistent investment in training, development and coaching them to understand their roles, realize their capabilities and potential and guiding them how the present and hidden potential and capabilities can be nurtured, developed and thus could be utilized

to achieve organization goals and make them more responsible, committed and loyal towards organization. By way of providing such leadership coaching more dependable, stabilized, contributing and effective talented workforce could be build up.

According to Larson & Richburg, leadership coaching is *“a personal development process designed to enhance a leader’s success in achieving his or her professional objectives within the context of an organization’s values and business goals.”*⁷ So, the coach needs to ensure that the coaching focuses not only on the client’s personal development process but also on meeting professional objectives within the context of the organization.

According to Murray Dalziel of the Hay Group, effective leadership is tied to the answers for three questions these question are essential not only to define a direction for developing leadership skills by a coach but also helps in strategically defining the requirement of preparing employees (the talented employees) prepared for future roles.

Since as the employee moves up the ladder the organization expects a lot not only in terms of his outcomes for achieving the strategic business objectives but also the way he leads others in the group thus inculcating a supportive, encouraging and a collaborative culture in the organization, the coach needs to understand the client’s context, the coach needs to be aware of some or all of the following things about the organization: strategic plan, current initiatives, what the business is, primary competitors, values, norms, and leadership competencies. It is also important for coach to understand the job expectations, current performance, performance gaps, and desired performance of the employees being coached.

Significance of Talent coaching and leadership on talent management

Leadership coaching adds directly to business value chain where there is a direct link between organization capabilities, leader capabilities and its outcome on business. The leader competencies will vary from having a customer focus, developing the talent present in organization to help employees think strategically for the organization. Organization capabilities including enhancing the excellence in services being provided, establishing goal clarity, effective management of talent This results into effective business outcome in form of effective retention of talented employees, high loyalty and sound strategy driven culture.

Also with changing Global leadership challenges there is a need to prepare employees through coaching thus preparing successors to hold accountable position. In an environment where strategies keep changing there is a need to involve multiple stakeholders, perspectives and dimensions. An effective leadership coaching is one which integrates organization context with strategy.

The aim of such effective leadership should be on developing broad capabilities relevant to organization strategic objectives now and also for future. It can be best described as preparing the people based on organization capability and consulting perspective. thus it can be said that coaching is not only an individual activity but an organization process driving systematic change It is also important to see that coaches should be matched with the leaders so that the strategic need and organizational requirement can both be fulfilled. It should be team based function where a group of experts based on their expertise and experience can provide inputs for targeted competency development.

Three important steps in any coaching includes-

1. Aligning with organization objective the objectives and scope of leadership coaching
2. Design the coaching plan based on the objectives of providing coaching
3. Accelerate the performance of the individuals through leadership coaching

It ensures that the strategic and interpersonal skills possessed by the leader are aligned in an effective way to the preferred leadership brand name of the organization. Leadership coaching helps in developing a strategic vision in the employees by way of which the employees are able to tactically handle the learning from coaching in the well-being of the organization

It helps in developing a coaching culture in the organization thus setting specific techniques, process, culture and mind-set of learning and making organization work more effectively. A trained and competent employee brings more creative ways and innovativeness in work thus enhancing the efficiency and output. With increased focus on coaching and continuous improvement a greater sense of job satisfaction and commitment towards the work also augments.

Coaching not only helps in improving the knowledge, skills and competencies of an employee in relation to the task assigned but focuses on all round development of the employees both personally and professionally. Coaching also serves as a tool for identifying the hidden potential in employees and kindling up a trust based relationship.

It is through the expertise of an experienced coach that leadership traits, skills and abilities are shared and strengthened in the performers in such a way that they become effective leaders accountable for themselves and the task assigned in the most effective way. Properly planned and implemented leadership coaching leads to effective succession planning and internal strengthening of workforce and performance through development.

An effective leader is one who possess all required skills, expertise and competencies both functional and generic to perform the tasks well along with guiding his members to imbibe the same along with creating an environment of learning and performing by exemplary behaviour and action that makes employee clear with his career goal and growth. It is obvious that the success and long term survival of any organization depends on how well the organization has prepared and is ready with its long term strategy for development of its employees depending on their performance and how far it has strategically aligned its employee development or Talent Development plans with long term goals and plans of the organization.

Since coaching is one of an important tool and technique of Talent Development the focus of every organization should be on making the purpose, process and outcome of coaching multi-facet so that coaching should result into preparing Leaders for future as well as sharpening the skills and abilities of present work force across levels in such a way that will help in getting required skills for succession planning, effective talent retention and utilization of skills at appropriate levels.

Objectives of Study

1. To understand the need and role of talent coaching in effectual talent management.
 - 1.1 To understand role of talent coaching in developing leaders
 - 1.2 To understand role of talent coaching in effective management of Gen Y
2. To understand role of talent coaching in building talent reservoir

3.To explore different strategies for effective leadership coaching

4.To explore different challenges in talent coaching

Research design- Exploratory

Data Source-Secondary

Analysis and Interpretation

1. To understand the need and role of talent coaching in effectual talent management.

1.1 To understand role of talent coaching in developing leaders

1.2 To understand role of talent coaching in effective management of Gen Y

The first objective of the study was to determine and understand the role of talent coaching in effective talent management. Since the focus of coaching is on inculcating necessary skills and potential in employees and thus building leadership qualities and in present scenario wherein the workforce comprises of Gen Y and millennial the role becomes more prominent to understand how talent coaching can help in effective workforce building also.

Based on the available literature and various studies, essentials for coaching in developing Leaders include

Avoiding tendencies of becoming bad boss- It is easier to work and difficult to get work done from others similarly it is convenient to get instructions and implement and difficult to instruct others and follow up along with getting the desired results from them as per expectations along with keeping those who are working happy, satisfied, motivated and are self driven.

Each follower has a different set of assumptions and some particular tendencies with regard to the capabilities that his leader possess, these tendencies or capabilities if found not as per expectations dilute the relationship and effectiveness of the leader. Thus, while organizations are investing in providing leadership coaching and preparing its leaders through coaching certain essentials needs to be transferred.

Few such tendencies are-

Self-Dilution-Both the leaders themselves as well as the followers think that the leaders or their bosses possess extra skills and expertise in comparison to them. Leaders should understand the relevance of this and should keep on adding inputs and evaluating the skill's from time to time.

Heedlessness-Once the leaders or bosses possess power or authority they are been more watched more by others both by people below them as well those with equal authority .In such situations it is important that leaders should remain engaged and curious with those who report them directly , help them to achieve their results and remaining more communicative and transparent.

Avoiding Insulation-The leader once becoming successful and highly accepted wants to avoid mistakes and errors on the part of all those who work for him as well as on his part. Thus, at times when any employee will discover some problem or constraint in work will not report about the problem perceiving that the leader will not encourage this and it may lead to unexpected consequences. Such a collaborative and open culture will nurture the talented minds.

Feeling of Collectivism-The strongest trait of being a leader is the feeling of Collectivism. Any employee who is a part of system is actually a leader. An effective and people's leader is one who is not a separate individual different from any system or any unit in an organization but is a part

of such system always because leadership is not only about one who is leading but for one who is being led as a part of team or organization.

Feeling of Alignment-Other important attribute essential to be incorporated in an effective leader is that they should remain aligned with the organization goals and objectives. They should be having the capability to align hierarchy of goals right from individual to team to organization which could be aligned across the hierarchical tiers.

Feeling of up liftment- The other important attribute essential to be taught to talented employees while coaching them to become effective leaders the feeling of upliftment. This would make everybody feel that their all efforts are having a purpose, direction, and outcome and that the contribution given by them is adding to organization goal accomplishment.

Defining the Leadership Bandwidth-It is important for organizations to understand that in the practice of developing leaders and nurturing them they should first be clear with the objectives and purpose of developing leadership through coaching and how would this help them in attaining the organizational goals. Every organization should be particular in building its leadership bandwidth and professionalizing their set –ups.

The focus should also be largely on trends in industry with regard to the leadership development. The Focus should also be on the type of leadership demanded at global level to make leadership contribute in fullest sense towards the growth of organization.

Preparing Leaders to be Global risk takers-Every organization while coaching and preparing its talent workforce should keep in mind that it is not limiting itself to its organization requirement and incubating the skills which are necessary to accomplish the immediate tasks only. Rather the focus should be on developing leaders to face global challenges and expertise that can help other organization key inputs to improve organization functioning supported by key leadership qualities.

For example at Vcare the management focuses on picking and developing leaders with sound inter-personal skills, initiative taking abilities, flexible in adapting to environment, willing to take risks, ethical and are ready to work globally.

The other sub - objective was to identify how talent coaching helps in effective training and preparation of Gen Y so that the retention, diverse mind-set can be easily worked and trained.

It can be understood by differentiating strategies while coaching for leadership to Gen X& Gen Y-The Gen X that operated in a structured environment and in more hierarchies are entirely different from Gen Y that are more open, innovative and creative group. For Gen Y accomplishing means more of an individual identity compared to Gen X for whom it was organization identity. Gen Y to lead need such structures that has less formalities, hierarchy and authority. For organization it is important to first identify that what will motivate its talent and youth and accordingly plan and design its strategies to retain them for longer run.

For example, at Acer India the belief is that the Gen Y will be the future leaders for India Inc, it is important that sound leadership skills should be developed right in academics so that these skills matched with the technical skills can make them perfect experts and can make them more flexible, adjusting, learning diverse things and exhibiting many responsibilities at a time.

Following points are necessary while preparing the future leaders -

- The company needs to study the present capability against the leadership requirement of the organization.

- The organization needs to identify people who have the immense potential to take advantage of such opportunities and those who will respond most positively
- Thirdly the organization should identify where such employees are located and how to groom them further to occupy these roles
- Further it is important to identify which competencies are required to be incubated to develop them as effective leaders. This should be consistently followed up with coaching and mentoring to make this process perfectly suited to organization needs

Thus from the above it can be understood that a well-planned coaching from beginning can help in building effectual leaders and in maintaining the Gen Y with their best of honed skills.

The **second objective** of the study was to determine the role of talent coaching on talent reservoir building

The third objective of the study was to identify how talent coaching helps in building effective talent reservoir which are significant. For all this it is important that organization should in every decision right from hiring to retaining should keep a strong eye on what it wants to build in form of **leadership reservoir** and why and where it needs to show its implications both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Keeping employees aware with expected Leadership Behaviour -It is important that while preparing employees to become effective leaders and prepare a strong leadership base the top management or all those whose vision and long term moves decide the future of the organization to decide and communicate to others what leadership behaviour they expect from the leaders which will help in improving the whole leadership pipeline. This leadership behaviour includes the attitude and values along with the competencies and capabilities. Attitude and values are inherent in an individual but the second part that is competencies and capabilities can be developed by training, performance development plans where performance development has a clear role.

Such efforts will help organization in building their leadership bench, identify leader at all levels, empower them, this should be accompanied by internal coaching mentoring to utilize potential leaders.

Developing organizational learning for effective leadership development-While preparing employees and developing them to become effective leaders it is important that organization through its high performing leaders should focus on developing a learning environment where learning is not by force but by willingness of each employee which organization aims to transform to a leader. Learning organization as defined by Peter Senge are organization where employees are ready to expand their capacities, nurture new ways of learning and have collective aspirations. Such organization creates an environment of leadership and togetherness.

The five main dimensions that distinguishes a learning organization which focuses on leadership development from other traditional organization are-

System thinking- It helps an organization to decide upon its priorities while taking decision with regard to different aspects of the organization. It focuses on Causes-Event-Effect-feedback and leverage.

Personal Mastery- It refers to the competency and motivation of each employee to go beyond the job related skills and continually explore new horizons. In such environment each employee

should be willing for self - development to realize his fullest potential. This will help in giving a sense of purpose and a greater meaning to work and develop internal locus of control and develop ability to control process and events around them.

Mental Models- According to this model most of us view the world as per our assumptions. For learning to become independent it is important that we unearth our internal pictures to bring to surface and hold rigorously to scrutiny. This will help leaders to make their thinking open to the influence of others.

Shared Vision- Since leadership is about establishing commonality in achieving organization goals if there is no shared vision every effort will be in different diverse direction thus the motivation and encouragement to achieve result will be nullified.

Team Learning- This is important to be taught in coaching the people for becoming effective leaders because this feeling only will generate shared and collective commitment to the goals which is very important for effective leaders.

The third objective of the study was to understand different strategies for talent coaching –

To understand and explore this objective different strategies been practices are focussed

Identifying and building Leadership Competencies through Interaction effect- John H.Zenger,Folkman, Edinger their research on various leaders the role of interaction effect on training the employees to become effective leaders. It refers to combination of two activities to produce an improvement. Through their research they identified **16 differentiating leadership competencies** that strongly correlate with positive business outcomes like profitability, employee engagement, higher revenue generation and customer retention.

Conducting an informal 360 degree- Before an employee is been identified for occupying leadership role it is important to identify own strength so that the required improvements could be easily understood. For this an informal 360-degree evaluation can be of great help.

Focussing on building strength systematically – While developing the leadership skills the following are essential to be considered-

Identify the strength to be developed- For this the focus of the leader should not only be on what he feels is important for himself but on what will be the effect of this on others because leadership is more about how others perceive. For this conducting a 360-degree evaluation can be of great help. Conducting it formally with the help of psychometric tools whereby questionnaire consisting of judging the leadership attributes present in an employee can be judged by the superior, peers and bosses quantitatively. This can consist of open ended questions concerned to the strength, flaws of an individual. In this it is important that the feedback should be genuine and employees should be honest in giving their feedback.

Developing effective assessment system- The scope of appraisals should be expanded and should not be limited to mere evaluating the efforts that an individual has put top accomplish the task rather as a platform to assess the areas where development is needed, identifying the potential employees adding more to the talent reservoir and further training and developing them to contribute effectively for organisation.

For e.g at TCS appraisals are not merely appraisal exercise at TCS. The purpose and procedure aims at enhancing learning and preparing employees for future thus promoting their involvement, engagement and retention.

Peer coaching can serve much purpose where it can help to understand and develop leadership

qualities to handle diverse workforce matched with cultural or ethnic differences or different value sets, skills and develop multi-skills to learn diverse nature of work.

For example at CISCO in order to enhance intergenerational mentoring the organization supports internal employee networking. One active network is known as Legacy leader for Boomer aged executives which has partnered with new hire executives where both generations are learning from each other.

Integrating the role of training and Development with Coaching for developing leadership- Leadership coaching demands and focuses more on making leaders independent in terms of decision making, focussing on development of others and self by providing exposure and skill updating, integrating with organization objectives and goals to direct one's efforts towards organization effectiveness. Several executive development programs aim at developing these leadership qualities in emerging talents to nourish them with required skills for e.g at **Mahindra and Mahindra** in order to nurture talent right at step one and to make young minds (Gen Y) involved in strategic issues and make them acquainted with organizational issues they follow concept of *Shadow boards* whose objective is to acquaint the young talent with top leadership issues.

Building a collaborative culture for effective coaching and developing sustainable leadership-In order to make coaching for leadership an effective and every one's responsibility it is important to create and sustain a collaborative organization culture the characteristics of OCTAPACE equally applies in developing value of organization culture namely-

Openness-with regard to coach and executive relation and sharing ideas and values

Confrontation-Here, with regard to coaching the feature of confrontation is significant because as a leader an executive need to develop such skills where with regard to any problem instead of hiding or blaming others he should be capable enough to generate solutions with consensus in favour of the organization.

Trust-This is one of the key element in deciding the retention of key leadership skills in the talented employees as in the absence of trust **amongst** both of them will lead to suspicion, stress, no clarity in goals and purpose of coaching. This can be made effective by providing feedback timely and in a constructive way.

Authenticity-This being the value underlying trust is equally significant to be sustained throughout coaching which will give the executives confidence, strength and will strengthen their belief in themselves.

Proactivity-While coaching the employees it is important for the coach that independent responsibility should be given to employees to showcase their abilities by way of which the coach can also assess how far the leadership qualities are developing in the employee.

Autonomy-It is important for the coach to see how far the skills taught while coaching the

executives are helping them to become independent and autonomous in terms of decision making, defining goals, developing strategies to accomplish task, scanning the environment and ultimately thinking at a broader perspective for organization betterment.

Collaboration - The success of an effective coach and preparedness of the executive to exhibit his best skills and creativity in new role will depend on collaborative efforts of both coach and the executive whereby the coach can provide a better direction to integrate individual objectives with that of organization and thus maximizing the performance of executive.

Experimenting-The coach should ensure that sufficient opportunities frequently should be given to the executives to become more innovative and create a learning and sharing environment where creativity and innovation are highly welcomed.

For e.g at Zensar for managing talent and developing them they have developed culture based on **Five F** namely **Fast, Focussed, Flexible, Friendly** and **Fun** this helps in creating a collaborative environment that encourages people to deliver their best.

Objective 4

The last objective of the study was to understand the Challenges in leadership coaching-

Irrespective of the investment and awareness that an organization makes to facilitate the leadership coaching there are many factors that affect its effective functioning like-

Selection of the right coach- The overall success of the whole leadership coaching will depend on the skills, ability, experience and expertise of the coach. A coach should not only prepare the emerging leaders the traits, talent and competencies of a leader but should ensure that the executive is actually visualizing and thinking in the same way as is guided by the coach.

Clarity, support and commitment on the part of Top Management-Leadership style and its impact on the organization varies from organization to other depending on various internal and external factors in which an organization exists. For any leadership coaching to be effective and leading to building of strong leaders depends on what is the purpose of top management towards it principally and in reality. This is important because until the coach, executive and other concerned are not clear with the expectation from coaching even the best of technique will be fatal.

Lack of Rewards and recognition or lack of support after Coaching-Leadership coaching brings an overall change incrementally in an executive. Since being an effective leader demands a mix of varied skills and competencies which an executive need to demonstrate once occupying senior positions until they are facilitated by properly defined and structured rewards and benefits

Undifferentiated approach of Leadership Coaching -The organization should focus on a differentiated approach of leadership coaching for executives from normal coaching process. The approach of coaching executives for occupying leadership position should be different from coaching employees for updating skills, competencies or specific knowledge for a particular time.

Lack of planning and resource allocation-For the development and nurturing of required skills, knowledge and character traits and also to improvise them through coaching it is

important that timing, structure of program for coaching, objectives, methods and timely feedback should be provided. In the absence of adequate information and resources the overall purpose of coaching and the benefits to be reaped from an effective coaching becomes less.

Lack of evaluation and Feedback on Coaching results- It is important that irrespective of the duration of coaching the executives, for instilling the leadership abilities and making them leader's timely regular feedback is a must. It is necessary to evaluate and assess the changes or improvements during coaching whether in work, performance, commitment, behaviour, relationship with others in organization.

Thus, based on the above the focus should be right from planning till evaluation phase to ensure that in true terms coaching and leadership qualities are ingrained and understood

Findings of study

Thus, from the above set objectives and available literature it can be understood that talent coaching is one necessitating tool that can help organization in building a culture of leadership.

It can aid in understanding the needs, aspirations, gaps, need and methods of filling the gaps and preparing talent pool for future. The method and procedures adopted whether for building leadership, talent reservoir, utilizing Gen Y and understanding different strategies like adopting maturity model, peer coaching, competency management, building strength, effective assessment, integrating T&D with coaching, developing a collaborative culture and adopting OCTAPACE culture within.

Thus, it depends largely on the organization of how committed employer is it and how far it is ready to cater to its employees needs and preparing it for future roles. Talent coaching thus if utilized effectively will result to effective talent management and organization development.

Conclusion

Thus it can be understood that what organization feel most important is for the sustainability of organization is its capability of developing leadership as a part of organization culture. It is only this trait and attribute that organization can think of effective talent management. In the context of talking about transformational, inspirational and motivational leadership it is important to develop the leadership skills based on the expected job/task to be delegated thus developing internally the true leaders.

It is important to create an environment where leadership can develop and nurture; organization should keep a keen focus on reward and recognition to develop leadership and focus on job content and job process coaching, role of managers in developing a leadership environment and culture matched with strategic objectives of firm.

This all will lead to numerous benefits like effective learning, succession planning, building strong talent reservoir, workforce management, building string talent pipeline and thus overall effective work culture and organization performance. Thus, when planned in effective way talent coaching not only serves the purpose of ensuring right awareness, availability and utilization of the skilled and talented workforce but also ensures engagement and retention of desired workforce and organization survival.

Leadership coaching also gives inputs to effective human resource planning thus helping in making available right number of talented people at right place and at right time also in right

number. It is through effective coaching that the employees being coached come to know the expectations of the organization thus putting their best efforts in achieving their task and becoming effective leaders. Leadership coaching also helps in making employees emotionally intelligent and sensitive since during coaching they understand the difficulties, responsibilities and competencies needed in a leader and thus try to strategically understand, adapt and learn those skills in the betterment.

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