

An Integrated Performance Management Model to be used by the Botswana Public Service Sector

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Accepted: May 15, 2014

Doi:10.5296/ jpag.v4i2.5717 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/ jpag.v4i2.5717>

Abstract

The call for improved performance by government ministries and departments is not a new phenomenon in both the developed and the developing countries. The Botswana public service experiences problems which hamper the country's ability to be competitive. It is therefore important to investigate strategies used by the Botswana public service for the management in performance. Performance management entails formally guiding, directing, measuring, evaluating and rewarding employee effort, competencies and talent to achieve organisational and strategic objectives (Boselie 2010, p. 173). Performance management is also a combined effort between a supervisor and employee to achieve organisational goals. This study investigates the performance management strategies needed for the effective management of performance in the Botswana public service. Subsequently to review literature, the paper proposes a performance management strategic model for the effective facilitation of the of performance management system for the Botswana public. The proposed integrated model serves as a basis for drawing up a survey questionnaire to establish the extent to which supervisors, line and senior managers in the Botswana public service agree or disagree with the model. The questionnaire was sent to a random sample of supervisors, line and senior managers in the Botswana public service, in the Gaborone, Botswana. The empirical results obtained from the survey were analysed and interpreted. They indicated a strong concurrence with theoretical performance management strategies presented in the study. On the basis of the literature that was completed and on the basis of the results of the empirical study, a performance model for the effective implementation of performance management in the Botswana public service was developed. It must be noted that performance management should not be done in a mechanical manner, but should be

understood as an essential tool in achieving the vision and mission of an organisation. Performance management also does not take place in a vacuum. It is essential that an organisational culture be analysed to see in which aspects it fosters or hinders effective performance. The organisational culture should be crafted and reinforced to create a high performance environment. Specific attention should be given to leadership, learning and the alignment of individual, team and organisational goals.

Keywords: Performance management, appraisal, service delivery, public service

1. Introduction

Based on the theoretical study, an integrated model for performance management strategies was developed. This model is presented in Figure 1. The integrated model consists of ten strategies and four critical organisational factors required for effective performance management. This model formed the basis for the development of the questionnaire used in the empirical study. Each strategy contained in the model is briefly discussed below. The call for improved performance by government ministries and individual government departments is not a new phenomenon in both developed and developing countries. The structural adjustments programmes (SAPs) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank are examples of programmes aimed at improving productivity in developing countries even though such programmes are increasingly being received with some resistance (Amin, 1998:8). Although Botswana, by international standards, with a per capita income of US \$4027, is one of the richest countries in Africa, its delivery of products and services is low. In his budget speech (1995,p.164), the then Botswana Vice President and Minister of Finance and Development Planning, Mr Festus Mogae, asserted that the government of Botswana continued to be concerned about poor service delivery, poor productivity and inefficiency as these had a bearing on the country's international competitiveness. He attributed Botswana's sub-optimal performance partly to a function of low productivity consciousness, which resulted in the under-utilisation of both human and natural resources. According to Mogae, the government has to confront this problem speedily or face the fate of many African countries, which is, corruption, escalating economic crime, social and political turmoil, together with low economic performance. Performance in this environment thus becomes imperative (Budget speech, 1995, p.21). According (hacker & Washington, p.45), even though the problems of underperformance, poor service delivery and low productivity were diagnosed in the Botswana public service sector as far back as the 1980s, it was not until 1993 that stringent measures were taken to improve the situation (Marobela 2011, p. 12). In response to the above problems and the public outcry for better quality service and general improvement in performance levels, the government introduced measures to improve service delivery. These measures included the following: a performance management system; Work improvement teams; The Botswana National Productivity Centre; Frequent salary reviews; and Performance related pay. This article aims to focus on the first initiative namely, the performance management system. Following the review of public service performance and the evaluation of past reforms by AED consultants coupled with the need to complement the concept of Work Improvement Teams, the Directorate of Public Service Management (DPSM) admitted that there is need for a new system and a new way of carrying out government

business. The need for a new system of carrying out government business was clearly expressed by DPSM in 2002 when it reminded public servants and the nation about the rationale behind the introduction of PMS in April 1999. As DPSM states, “We desperately need to “leap frog” and forge ahead, and the PMS has been identified as the appropriate system to facilitate this necessary transition” (Republic of Botswana, 2002, p 4). The primary aim of this paper is to present an integrated Performance Management Model (as highlighted in Figure 1 below) to be used in the Botswana public service

2. Literature Review

Dzimhiri (2008, p.19) and Hatcher and Washington (2009, p.51) state that an effective performance management system is aimed at achieving the strategic objectives of an organisation. These authors highlight critical components of an effective performance management system. They argue that firstly, managers and employees must have a clear understanding of the development, implementation and management of a performance management system in the organisation. Secondly, organisations must develop and implement a performance appraisal system that is suitable to an organisational culture. Thirdly, a reward system must be linked to performance appraisal and consider the employee needs and also be designed for performance. Fourthly, organisations must manage poor performance in accordance with the Labour Relations Act of 1995. Finally, the performance management system must be continually monitored, evaluated and re-aligned according to changes in the strategic objectives of the organisation. The above-mentioned critical components of a performance management system, as highlighted by Dzimhiri (2008, p.19), form the basis of the discussion in this article.

2.1 Performance Management Contextualised

To clarify the function and role of performance management, the definition of performance management, its purpose and application at individual, team and organisation levels, are discussed in the next section.

2.1.1 Definitions of performance management

Performance management is an ongoing communication process between an employee and an immediate supervisor. It involves establishing clear expectations and an understanding of the essential job functions the employee is expected to fulfill (Bacal 1999, p.5). Specific aspects of the employee’s job, which should be discussed with him or her, include the following:

- a. How the employee contributes to the goals of the organisation;
- b. What performing a job well means in concrete terms;
- c. How the employee and the supervisor will work together to sustain, improve and build on the current performance level of the employee;
- d. How job performance will be measured; and which barriers prevent performance and
- e. How to remove them (Bacal 1999, p.5)?

Price (2004, p.498) defines performance management as a strategic and integrated approach to increase organisational effectiveness by improving employee performance and by developing the capabilities of teams and individuals. According to Joubert and Noah (2000, p.18), performance management entails formally guiding, directing, measuring, evaluating and rewarding employee effort, competence and talent to achieve organisational strategic objectives. It is therefore evident that performance management is a combined effort between the supervisor and employee to achieve organisational goals.

2.1.2 The purpose and scope of performance management:

Performance management is aimed at obtaining better results from individuals, teams and the organisation by understanding and managing performance within an agreed framework of planned goals, standards and competencies (Armstrong, 2000, p.45). Firstly, performance management is concerned with individual, team and organisational effectiveness. Secondly, performance management is concerned with continuous employee development. Thirdly, performance management is concerned with satisfying the needs and expectations of all organisation stakeholders which include owners, management, employees, customers, suppliers and the general public. During performance management, the needs of individuals, teams and the organisation should be considered and respected. Finally, performance management is concerned with communication, involvement and participation. It aims to create a climate in which a continuous dialogue between a manager and team members takes place to define expectations and share information of the organisation's mission, values and objectives (Davies 2000, p.21). In order to understand the scope of performance management in an organisation, three levels of performance management are identified, namely performance management at individual, team and organisational level De Klerk(2003, p.35) use Morhrman's model of performance management model to explain these three levels.

2.1.3 The Development of a performance management system

In recent years, organisations have been trying to address those performance issues associated with flexible workplaces by developing performance management systems to improve employee performance and productivity (Dobson, 2001, p.2). The development of a performance management system and the successful implementation thereof depends on the following:

- a. A clearly defined strategic framework, which includes explicit strategic and operational objectives and balanced performance measures that serve as the basis for setting employee performance expectations and evaluating their performance;
- b. Strong leadership, especially at senior level, that creates a positive organisational climate for performance improvement;
- c. Accountability for clearly assigned and well understood results. Organisations need to identify what it takes to determine success and make sure that all managers and employees understand their responsibility in achieving their organisational goals.
- d. Open communication between the manager and employee to increase the productivity,

motivation and coordination of the employee's contribution to the organisational objective; and

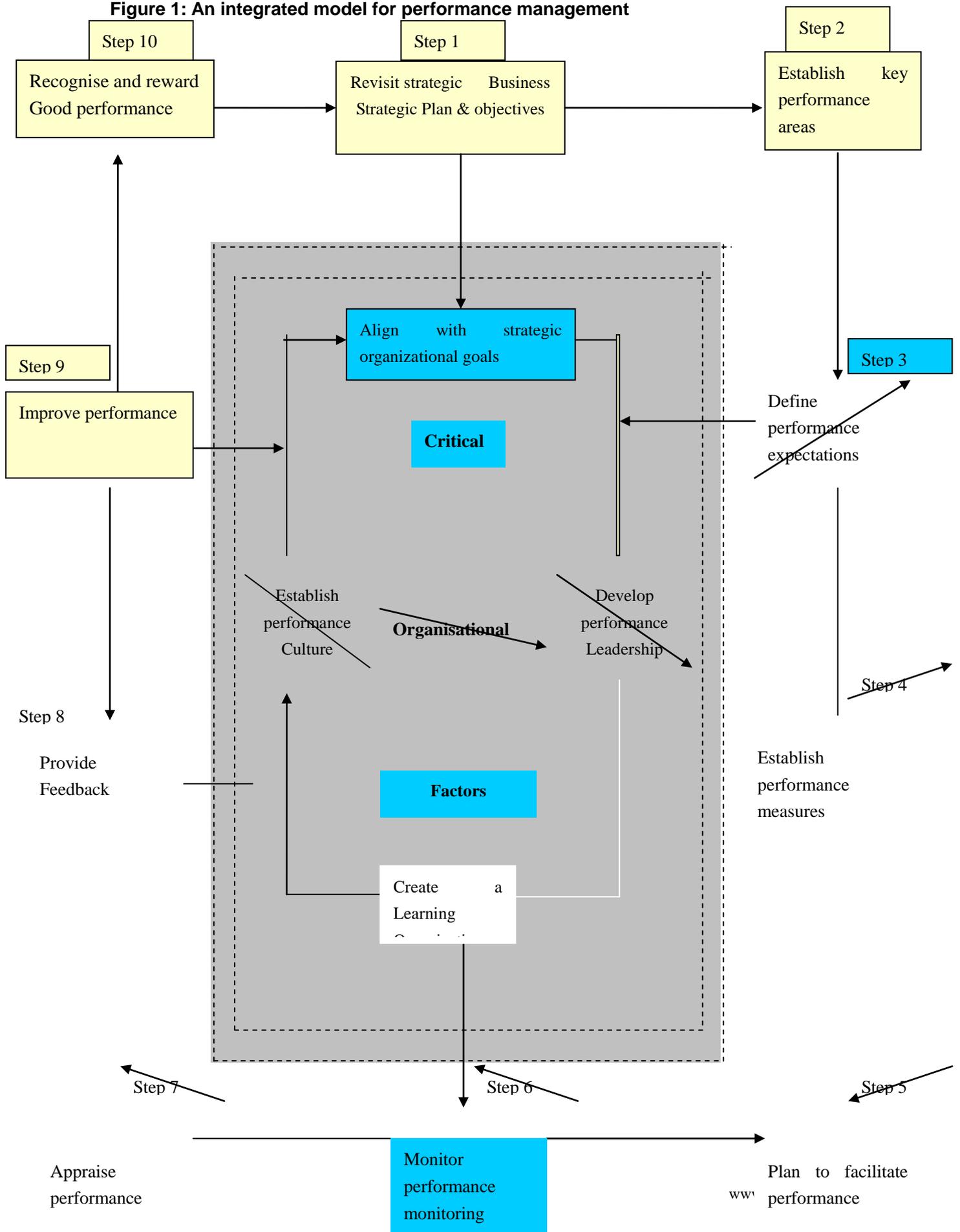
- e. Performance evaluation and rewards tied to specific measures of success, by linking financial and non-financial rewards directly to performance. This linkage sends a clear and unambiguous message that rewards are based on the attainment of predetermined organisational goals.

According to Bulawa (2013, p.2), the development of a performance management system is challenging. A well-developed performance management system will result in managers not only looking forward to performance planning and performance feedback meetings as a way to achieve goals, but they will also feel more enthusiastic about being involved in the process.

2.1.4 Design of the performance management system

Bacal (Renton 2001, p.26) defines a system as a set of components that work interdependently to accomplish an objective. He further explains that a system takes inputs from the organisational strategy and through a series of actions, transforms them into outputs, products, services or information. The desired outcome of a performance management system is the attainment of strategic goals. Armstrong (1999, p.203), Buys (2000, p.58) and Kaufman, Thiagarajan and MacGrillis (1997, p.203) emphasise the following four phases of planning, design, implementation, and follow-up and alignment in the development of a performance management system.

Figure 1: An integrated model for performance management



3. Discussion of Strategies for Managing Performance

The next section presents the discussion on the 10 strategies and four (4) critical organizational success factors used for the effective management of individual, team and organisational performance.

STRATEGY 1: Revisit strategic business plans and objectives

Revisiting strategies business plans and objectives implies checking the business goals before setting individual performance goals. Managers should ensure that employees are aware of the strategic direction of the organisation; understand the overall business strategic goals and objectives when setting individual performance goals; and participate in departmental planning.

STRATEGY 2: Establish key performance areas

The second strategy deals with establishing key performance areas. In establishing key performance areas, managers should ensure that they; discuss key performance areas with employees; discuss the responsibilities which employees must focus on; and Tie key performance areas to the overall organisational goals.

STRATEGY 3: Define performance expectations

Expectations are developed for each key performance area. In this respect, managers/supervisors should: provide clarity on what is expected of employees; provide clarity on employees' goals; regularly engage in discussions of achieved goals; mould employee behaviour to suit performance expectations; have a good understanding of employees' performance objectives; and understand what skills are required for performance.

STRATEGY 4: Establish performance measures

In this strategy the manager/supervisor should discuss the amount and quality of work to be done by an employee; how specific behaviour will be measured; and specific ways in which the quantity and quality of work will be measured.

STRATEGY 5: Facilitate performance

To facilitate performance, the manager will provide the employees with the necessary resources, capacity and skills to do their job. In this respect, the manager should assist the employee so that the employee will perform effectively.

STRATEGY 6: Monitor performance

This strategy involves staying in touch with employees while they perform. This should be done on a continuous base through regular informal discussion with employees. Managers or supervisors should; monitor performance throughout the year; and have regular informal discussions with employees about their performance.

STRATEGY 7: Appraise performance

The purpose of performance appraisal is to evaluate how well an employee is performing

against predetermined goals and expectations. Managers or supervisors should; formally appraise performance more than once a year; evaluate performance according to standards; and appraise performance in a professional and objective manner.

STRATEGY 8: Provide feedback

This strategy involves providing information to the employee about how well his or her performance has been appraised in the previous strategy. Managers and supervisors should; provide feedback soon after performance; involve employees in the feedback process; provide accurate, objective and helpful feedback; and Indicate to employees areas in which they can improve their performance.

STRATEGY 9: Improve performance

This strategy includes coaching, counseling and supporting employees to improve their job performance. The responsibility of managers and supervisors is to; provide assistance to employees so that they can improve their performance; encourage employees to find solutions to their job-related problems; and advise employees on problem solving.

STRATEGY 10: Recognise and reward good performance

This strategy involves recognising and rewarding excellent performance. Managers and supervisors should; tell employees when they have performed well; how appreciation for the employee's effort; and reward employees who perform well in an appropriate manner. For performance management to be successful, all the strategies should receive adequate attention. In the next section, the critical organisational factors which affect performance management are briefly presented. These factors are central to an overall strategy for the improvement of performance in an organisation.

4. Critical Organisational Factors

Performance management has been presented in this paper as a cycle. However, in practice there are other critical organisational factors needed for the effective management of performance. These include the following; establish performance culture, develop performance leadership, create a learning organisation, and align individual, group and organisational goals.

4.1 Establish a performance culture

Performance management cannot be separated from the organisational culture since culture directs the behaviour of employees and creates commitment to organisational goals and objectives (Kreitner&Kinicki, 2001, p.75). The aim of performance management is to improve the performance of individuals, teams and the organisation as a whole. This goal can only be achieved if the organisation has a culture that emphasises excellence, achievement and goal attainment. To establish a performance culture, organisations should:

Have a shared vision; encourage employees to be creative and innovative; encourage employees to develop themselves; encourage employees to communicate with others to find ways to improve; give employees responsibility and accountability; and value the opinion of

employees. These are important since performance management is a tool through which the organisational culture is maintained and reinforced.

4.2 Develop performance leadership

Leadership can be defined as the ability to exert influence on others, so that they will willingly and enthusiastically work toward the attainment of group goals (Davies, 2000, p. 52). According to Hacker and Washington (2009, p.171), performance management places a great deal of demand on managers to shift from normal management and maintenance of systems to provide leadership and bring about transformation in their respective organizations. Purcell (2005, p.124) emphasises that the behaviour of managers, who are responsible for performance management, contributes to the establishment of high performance culture in the organisation. Leaders ensure high performance through: encouraging employees to take initiatives and solve problems themselves; encouraging team work; and serving as good role models to employees. Leaders, through their behaviour, influence the culture of the organisation and as such, also the performance of the organisation.

4.3 Create a learning organisation

Learning is essential for future performance as it creates the ability in employees to solve future problems in a creative and innovative manner. Learning should therefore be incorporated into the performance management process through: encouraging employees to develop and educate themselves; providing technology and opportunity for employees to share information; and facilitating learning for all its members. Performance management should take place in an environment where learning is encouraged, and it should also encourage learning.

4.4 Align individual, group and organisational goals

High-performance organisations have managers and employees who share the same goals and work towards the attainment of these goals. The alignment of individual, group and organisational goals facilitates the attainment of pivotal organisational goals. In this respect, organisation should ensure that; employees understand the goals and objectives of the organization; employees identify with organisational goals; individual goals are linked to group and organisational goals; and employees are encouraged to work towards shared goals. Culture, leadership, learning and goal alignment are interrelated, as these factors influence each other, and influence performance in the organisation.

5. Methodology

The empirical research of this study consisted of a survey, in which a questionnaire was used as a data gathering tool. The development of the questionnaire was based on the model presented in Figure 1. The questionnaire was used to determine the extent to which the Botswana public service applied the strategies for performance management as described in this study. The empirical component of the study was limited to five ministries in the public service in Gaborone, Botswana, namely the Ministries of Lands and Housing, Agriculture, Health, Education and Labour and Home Affairs. These ministries are responsible for the

delivery of services to the local population of Botswana. The study was conducted in the Botswana public service. The study was limited to five ministries in the public sector which employ 50 or more employees and provide services to local communities. The research study targeted at managers and supervisors in the Botswana public service who are responsible for managing performance in the above-mentioned sectors. The article was limited to performance management only and not related aspects such as management, motivation, and job satisfaction. This section describes the specific strategies or procedures that were used for data collection and analysis in order to address the main problem of the study. The study was intended to assess performance management strategies used by the Botswana public service. The population for this study included managers and supervisors in the five selected ministries in the Botswana public service. The questionnaire was administered to 200 respondents which 163 responded. Those who participated in the study were managers and supervisors responsible for the overseeing of performance management in the Botswana public service. In this case five ministries were covered in the research namely: Ministries of Lands and Housing, Agriculture, Health, Education and Labour and Home Affairs.

6. Analysis of the Results

The results indicate that strategies five to eight are not adhered to in the Botswana public service.

Strategy 5: Facilitate performance

An analysis of the means scores and standard deviations for strategy five revealed an aggregate mean of 2.62. This suggests a tendency towards disagreement on most of the statements. The standard deviation indicated that the spread was relatively narrow, ranging between 0.79 and 0.84, indicating that respondents were relatively consistent in the way they responded to the items in this section.

Strategy 6: Monitor performance

An analysis of the means scores and standard deviations for strategy six revealed an aggregate mean 2.61. This suggests a tendency towards disagreement on all the statements. The standard deviations indicated that the spread was relatively narrow, ranging between 0.65 and 0.78, indicating that the respondents were relatively consistent in the way they responded to the items in this section.

Strategy 7: Appraise performance

An analysis of the means scores and standard deviations for strategy seven revealed an aggregate mean of 2.59. This suggests a tendency towards disagreement on all the statements. The standard deviation indicated that the spread was relatively narrow, ranging between 0.62 and 0.78, indicating that the respondents were relatively consistent in the way they responded to the items in this section.

Strategy 8: Provide feedback

An analysis of means scores and standard deviations for strategy eight revealed an aggregate

mean of 2.65. This suggests a tendency towards disagreement on all the statements. The standard deviation indicated that the spread was relatively narrow, ranging between 0.58 and 0.73, indicating that the respondents were relatively consistent in the way they responded to items in this section.

Strategy 9: Improve performance

An analysis of the means scores and standard deviations for strategy nine revealed an aggregate mean of 2.75. This suggests a tendency towards disagreement on all the statements. The standard deviation indicated that the spread was narrow, ranging between 0.66 and 0.72, indicating that the respondents were consistent in the way they responded to the items in this section. It is evident from the above analysis that most of the respondents felt that their managers did not provide effective performance feedback.

Strategy 10: Recognise and reward good performance

An analysis of the means scores and standard deviations for strategy ten revealed an aggregate mean of 2.60. This suggests a tendency towards disagreement on all the statements. The standard deviation indicated that the spread was relatively narrow, ranging between 0.71 and 0.83, indicating that the respondents were relatively consistent in the way they responded to the items in this section.

In summary, from the above analyses, it is evident that the majority of respondents disagreed that they were praised or appreciated for good performance or that good performance was rewarded. From the above analyses, the following conclusions could be drawn. The results indicate that strategies five (facilitating performance), six (monitoring performance), seven (appraising performance), eight (providing feedback), nine (improving performance) and ten (recognising and rewarding good performance) were not adequately applied. The assumption could be made that in general, employees knew what they had to do, but that the individual management of performance was lacking. As for the four critical success factors, there is tendency towards disagreement on all the statements suggesting that like the above seven strategies, all these critical organizational factors are not adhered to by the Botswana public service managers.

7. Findings

According to the empirical study results, the majority of respondents agree that strategies One, Two and Three were adequately followed in the public sector organisations where the study was conducted. In thus the Business plans and objectives were revisited, key performance areas were identified and performance expectations were defined. In terms of strategy four, establishing performance measures, only about half of the respondents felt that this strategy was effectively used. The results indicate that strategies five (facilitating performance), six (monitoring performance), seven (appraising performance), eight (providing feedback), nine (improving performance) and ten (recognising and rewarding good performance) were not adequately applied. The assumption could be made that in general, employees knew what they had to do, but that the individual management of performance was lacking.

It is evident from the above analysis that a performance culture and performance leadership were encouraged and that individual, team and organisational goals were aligned. It is clear from the respondents that However, the responses obtained to these critical factors were not so positive that it could be concluded that the internal organisational environment strongly encouraged performance and therefore, it could be concluded that there was still ample room for improvement in these areas. The responses also indicated doubt that an organisation did encourage learning and a learning environment.

8. Recommendations

On the basis of the analysis of the data obtained in the empirical study, the following recommendations regarding the effective implementation of performance management in the Botswana public service are made:

8.1 Recommendations to managers and supervisors

- Firstly, managers and supervisors should continuously appraise employee performance as indicated in the literature review. Managers and supervisors should give their employees direction for future performance, based on the results of their performance appraisal. Employees want to know what direction they should take to improve, therefore the results of appraisal influence decisions about strategic organisational goals.
- Secondly, managers and supervisors should facilitate employee performance. It is critical for managers and supervisors to assist employees with the necessary resources as a way of facilitating employee performance. This also implies an open relationship between managers and employees so that managers can become aware of the problems employees experience.
- Thirdly, managers and supervisors should monitor employee performance to ensure the effective implementation of performance management. If performance is not monitored, it would be difficult for managers to determine the success of performance management initiatives. Performance appraisal should be based on clearly- defined goals and clearly-defined performance measures.
- Fourthly, monitoring of performance leads to providing employees with performance feedback. Managers and supervisors should provide employees with immediate performance feedback. Fifthly, it is the responsibility of managers/ supervisors to improve employee performance through facilitation, appraising performance and providing performance feedback to their employees.
- Finally, performance rewards should be implemented to act as a strong motivator. The Botswana public service should ensure that budgetary provision is made for rewards. If money is to act as a strong motivator, then employees must believe that the reward is real and that better performance will be followed by monetary and other rewards.

8.2 Recommendations to human resources management

- Firstly, for any performance management system to be successful it should be well developed and implemented in an organisation.
- Secondly, managers should be well trained in the pursuit of performance management and the implementation thereof. Performance management should not be done in a mechanistic manner, but should be understood as an essential tool in achieving the vision and mission of the organisation.
- Thirdly, performance management does not take place in a vacuum. It is therefore essential that the organisational culture be analysed to see in which aspects it fosters or hinders effective performance. The organisational culture should be crafted and reinforced to create a high performance environment. Specific attention should be given to leadership, learning and the alignment of individual, team and organisational goals.

9. Conclusion

In this article, an integrated model for the management of performance, based on the literature study, has been presented. This model consists of 10 main strategies for the management of performance, which include: revisiting strategic business plans and goals; establish key performance areas; defining performance expectations; establishing performance measures; facilitating performance; appraising performance; providing feedback; improving performance and recognising and rewarding performance. The majority of respondents in this study have indicated that strategies 1, 2 and 3 are followed in the public service, whilst the remaining seven (7) strategies are not followed as highlighted under analysis of the result. It is therefore imperative to implement the remaining seven strategies in the effectiveness of a performance management system in the public service sector context. The model has also highlighted critical organisational factors that are deemed critical to the success of performance management. These include establishing a performance culture; developing performance leadership; create a learning organisation and aligning individual, group and organizational goals. This model forms a basis from which the questionnaire, used for the empirical study, was developed. It is therefore clear from the both the literature review and the integrated model that the implementation of performance management in the Botswana public service has a number of challenges and therefore the adoption of the above model will assist both managers and subordinates understand how to effectively deal with individual, team and organisational performance.

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