

**THE BUSINESS STRATEGY WITH THE TACTICS OF T&D
IN SMEs - A CASE STUDY IN SERVICE INDUSTRY**

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ABSTRACT

In the past, development efforts have been seen in rather static terms. Training was directed toward maximizing managerial effectiveness in terms of contributing to some presently perceived functional need. As firms became more long-term and strategic in their outlook, it became increasingly necessary to match the managerial training efforts of today to the strategic needs of tomorrow. If managers with development expertise are not included in the SHRP process and allowed to provide input into the overall corporate planning effort, this is unlikely to occur. There is not difference in large or small companies on training and development as well. Training and development should contribute to the attainment of short-term and long-term goals both for the company and for its individual employees. In order to be effective, a training and development program requires the full commitment and support of senior management, and it must reflect the overall philosophy of organization.

The most important and often-mentioned reason is that business performance highly depends on the behavior, aspirations and dedicated of the work force (Caldwell, 1984). If the behavior, aspiration, and dedication of the work force can be developed and directed toward supporting the overall business, positive performance outcomes are likely.

Various procedure that delineate how these two processes (business and human development) can be linked have been reported (Harvey, 1983; Sweet 1981; Winer, 1983; Wissema et al., 1981). Although each procedure attempts to achieve the same outcome, how these results are achieved differs.

Harvey (1983) suggested that if human resources development is to be integrated into the overall business plans, then it be up to the HRM staff. Because the human resources development effort cannot fulfill its maximum potential without a clear and direct link to the strategic business plan, the burden rests with the HRM staff to provide integration into the strategic planners will recognize that the HRM staff can create a plan. The HRM staff should ask planning questions, because the majority of the information required to create a strategically-linked human resources development plan must come from the corporate planners, communication between these department is vital.

The purpose of researchers is to examine and support how the training and development program can be implemented and be integrated into the business strategy in a small and medium sized company. To answer and support those concepts the researchers interview a chain-store company, which is located in Kaohsiung City. The results support the researchers' concepts of a small and medium sized company can be benefit by implementing the training program and integrating into the business strategy.



INTRODUCTION

In the past, development efforts have been seen in rather static terms. Training was directed toward maximizing managerial effectiveness in terms of contributing to some presently perceived functional need. As firms became more long-term and strategic in their outlook, it became increasingly necessary to match the managerial training efforts of today to the strategic needs of tomorrow. If managers with development expertise are not included in the SHRP process and allowed to provide input into the overall corporate planning effort, this is unlikely to occur. Besides, there is no difference in large or small companies in training and development. Training and development should contribute to the attainment of short-term and long-term goals both for the company and for its individual employees.

In order to be effective, a training and development program requires the full commitment and support of senior management, and it must reflect the overall philosophy of organization. The most important and often-mentioned reason is that business performance highly depends on the behavior, aspirations and dedication of the work force (Caldwell, 1984). If the behavior, aspirations, and dedication of the work force can be developed and directed toward supporting the overall business, positive performance outcomes are likely.

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BENEFITS OF STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Walker (1980) defined that strategic business planning is the process of setting organizational objectives and determining action plans that will achieve these objectives. Three elements are vital to a successful strategic plan: (1) a corporate mission and strategy, (2) a corporate structure, and (3) human resources (Tichy, Devanna, & Fomburn, 1982). In order to survive and prosper, organization must have a well-developed and well-maintained business strategy. Thus, it is useful to see planning in terms that relates to organizational,

managerial and strategic activities (Hall & Goodale, 1986). According to Sonnenfeld (1985), to be successful in maintaining or regaining the competitive advantage, companies must concentrate on developing human infrastructure in the organization. Relating employee development to competitive strategy of the firm has come to be viewed as an effective way to bring about these changes in employee's attitudes. Combined with other developmental programs, which have an impact on the success of the firm's strategy, these efforts are referred to as strategic human resources.

Strategic human resources development has been defined as "the identification of needed skills and active management of employee learning for the long-range future in relation to explicit corporate and business strategies" (Hall, 1984, p.159). Later, Hall and Goodale (1986) extended the concept to include intermediate-range planning. Organizational career management has been described as activities and opportunities sponsored by the organization, an attempt to ensure that they will meet or exceed the future human resources requirements of the organization (Stumpf & Hanrahan, 1984).

Benefits afforded in a company that integrates its strategic planning and human resources development are numerous. One benefit that may arise because of this linkage is reduced costs. According to Friedman and LeVino (1984), when organizations do not take management development seriously, it may be a costly mistake. Repercussions from this ignorance will cause high replacement costs because the company is forced to recruit from outside. In essence, this means the firm is paying for another company's development programs. This practice of raiding other companies with good development programs was once common in banking and brokerage businesses. Even worse, lack of an integrated management development program will lead to great loss of motivation and increase of instability in the managerial ranks.

Human resources development programs are usually extremely costly. When development programs are initiated with no clear connection to the needs of the company, time and money are wasted. However, if every development activity performed is clearly linked to the organization's goals, each program would be beneficial for both individual and company, thus reducing its possible costs, as mentioned by Abelson, Ferris, and Urban in 1988. Similarly, Abelson et al (1988) also suggested that by linking the strategic business plan to human resources development, employees are more aware of what their future with the company will be like. Such efforts are likely to fulfill its maximum potential (Harvey, 1983), simply because that by integrating human resources development planning into strategic planning, all activities sponsored by the human resources development become more legitimate. Both the company and employees realize that being involved in a human resources development program means a better future for both the company and the workers.

Another benefit is when future plans are explained to firm members, they will understand why they are being trained (Sonnenfeld, 1985). By showing the importance of the training and development programs offered to the individual, good chances are these



programs may become a productive and useful exercise, instead of a waste for both the organization and the individual. And this can be accomplished only when there is a clear link between the company's business plan and its human resources development.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES OF HRM TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

Training and development refer to a planned effort by an organization to facilitate the learning of job-related behavior on the part of its employees. The term behavior is used in the broad sense to include any knowledge and skill acquired by an employee through practice. The general purpose of training and development involves knowledge and skill acquisition. Any training and development effort can have one or more of the following three goals: (1) to improve an individual's level of self-awareness; (2) to increase an individual's skill in one or more areas of expertise; and / or (3) to increase an individual's motivation to perform his or her job well. Self-awareness involves learning about oneself. It includes understanding one's roles and responsibilities in the organization, recognizing differences between one's actual and espoused managerial philosophy, understanding how one is viewed by others, and learning how one's actions affect other people. Certain training and development techniques will give trainees increased self-awareness. (Latham, 1991)

Second, most of what is traditionally considered training and development deal with increasing an individual's skill. This skill may involve electrical wiring, painting, blueprint reading, using a computerized cash register, following safety procedures, setting priorities, delegating or handling employee grievances, or increasing one's effectiveness as a leader. Obviously, these are just a few of the many different kinds of skills that can be learned during training and development programs. Regardless of the type of knowledge and skill involved, the training program is based on the assumption that it will increase an employee's ability to perform effectively on the job. (Latham, 1991) Often, people possess the skill and knowledge to perform the job, but they often lack the motivation to exhibit their abilities. For this reason, the goal of some training and development programs is to maximize the employee's desire to perform the job well. These programs, admittedly, are relatively few in numbers.

These three broad goals--namely, increasing employee self-awareness, skill (including decision making / problem solving), and motivation are attained by using one or more training strategies. There are at least three basic strategies that are available to a training specialist. The specialist can try to improve an employee's performance by directing his or her efforts toward (1) cognition (i.e., thoughts and ideas), (2) behavior, or (3) the environment in which the person is working. (Latham, 1991).

Depending on how concerned a company is with long-term planning, a company's training and development function may consist of such aspects as skills training and management development, in addition to career planning. The first two areas – skills

training and management development – may be accomplished either in-house or at seminars or workshops outside the company. In-house programs are conducted either by human resource staff members or by consultants who are brought into the company.

In small companies, where a training specialist is unlikely to be part of a relatively small human resource department, it is more logical either to bring consultants into the company or to send employees out to workshops. Even if the human resource representative is not doing the training, he or she is still responsible for either bringing in consultants or for processing requests to attend outside programs.

PROBLEMS AND ISSUES OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN SMALL AND MEDIUM -SIZED COMPANIES OF CHINESE TAIPEI

The human resource development in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) of Chinese Taipei has a lot of problems in many ways such as ideas and practices. Following are some descriptions of several main items.

Utilization rather than Education

Managers tend to think that human resources can be obtained from the human market at anytime they want. When employees' turnover rate stays high, the investment in education becomes difficult to return. And since small and medium enterprises have certain scale and finance limits, they usually do not put a lot of efforts on the human resource development. Unlikely, under these circumstances, the company will be able to lure away employees from other companies to change their jobs. Contrarily, the company will find it difficult to keep its own employees from switching to a better company which provides better and promising training programs.

In Chinese Taipei, many small companies do not have the vision as to manage their companies in a long-term basis. They are reluctant to invest in enhancing their employees' skills or to expand their potentials for future advantage of the company. Education may occupy a certain amount of production time, which managers view as loss of profit. Fully utilizing employees' work hours while at work seems to bring more benefits than sending them to training programs, whether in-house or outside, and wondering at the same time the effectiveness and worthiness of such investment.

Misunderstanding with Training

Comprehensive training programs should be beneficial to the present and future work. On the other hand, companies usually regard training as general education. They think its contribution to organization is not conspicuous but rather more of long-term oriented. It does not help the improvement of the present work.

Due to this misunderstanding with training, a lot of companies will consider training as fashion. Like a trend, if one company holds some training activities, other companies



simply do not want to fall behind. In trying to catch up with the company, they model after the first company and arrange their employees into some kind of training too. It then becomes a fashion.

The problem with this blind modeling is that such training is often regarded as a benefit to employees. As to whether the training content is related to the work, or whether the right people are chosen for proper training, the company has not given it proper thought, not mentioning they have to research out suitable training topics. The attitude they hold toward training is to go with the feeling. Without saying, the result is usually unsatisfactory.

Lack of Systematically Organized Training Programs

Small and medium entrepreneurs are subject to their organizational characteristics. It is difficult for them to develop well-planned training programs as big entrepreneurs do. But somehow they manage to implement some training programs to their employees. Transplanting other company's programs, regardless of its size and applicability, is like putting on the wrong size of clothes. Conditions and environment of the firm members vary from organization to organization. Yet, current training programs, in most of small and medium companies in Chinese Taipei, are usually not built for the needs of the organization specifically. Systematical analysis and serious planning help the managers to precisely calculate the cost and effect of the programs. Small and medium companies do not necessarily have the ability to make their own training plans, or just to trim the big company's programs into their own size.

Insufficient Support from Supervisors

It is not easy to evaluate the effectiveness of any training program in an organization, especially that of managerial training programs. Chang (1988) expressed that not many managers in Chinese Taipei support training programs. Usually, supervisors from all levels of organizations would think that the responsibility of bringing up training programs is on the HRM department. Moreover, some would give excuses not to offer training programs. For they worry about the subordinates' success over them; they do not consider it useful or they just do not want to spend extra time on those programs.

Also, if their subordinates' abilities are increasingly improved, this might threaten those supervisors' career development. Other than that, each supervisor is busy in struggling for better performances and has no time to take care of the HRM development, which is out of their responsibility, as they believe. In that case, how could the evaluation be conducted on some programs not even expected to be effective, unless there is support from supervisors all the way up to the top managers?

THE LACK OF MANPOWER AND THE NEED FOR HUMAN RESOURCE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Most of the enterprises in Chinese Taipei are small and medium-sized enterprises and the cost they spent in human development are higher than that of large companies. One of the main reasons is that they do not have enough ability to set up professional training institutions, and that the turnover rate is too high in SMEs. Domestic family business has more restrictions to professional personnel, which makes it difficult to recruit people and cannot retain professional personnel in the company for a long term. Therefore, it causes loss in developing professional personnel. We can describe human development problems that SMEs face in two parts:

The Problem of Wasting Resources in Education

The ratio of teacher to student in Chinese Taipei is to 13.52 in 1989. It has increased 0.42% in ten years. Public schools have fewer students than private schools and they are more adequate in use of educational resources. Take example of the year 1989 when the martial laws were just lifted, the average expense in education for every student in public schools is NT106,000 dollars, and NT37,000 dollars in private schools. Government was devoted to promote high-level education and to increase opportunities to enroll in schools. But in fact, the ratio of school enrollment did not increase equally. **In 1989, the number of second-time examinees to high schools and junior colleges is 18.1% of all students enrolled, and it is 46.7% among 2-years/3-years colleges and universities.** The situation causes much waste in human resource investment.

As far as the manpower produced by schools is concerned, the problem of over-qualification for some graduates is very serious. Enterprises worry that there are not enough technical people in Chinese Taipei while high-level education is continuously pursued. Fewer people stay with vocational system to receive technical training. Unless the authority of school improves their specialty, teaching materials and resources allocation, the situation remains the same.

The Mal-function in Vocational Training Institutes

In 1989, there are 13 public vocational training institutes and they are responsible for 77 vocational training programs. **The number of people who receive training grows steadily, and people who was trained in the institutes is 5.8% of total trained people.** In recent years, people graduated from colleges have not volunteered to work in factories, so the number of figures from high-level technical education system does not increase apparently. The number of people who was trained in those institutes is 2.85% of total trained people in 1989, and it is much lower than 2.98% in 1981. Besides, in 1989 the number of the vocational training teachers fell down to 172 people, 13.13% lower than the figure of 1988, while the number of the vocational training teachers who finished the programs fell down to 199 people, 53.40% lower than the figure of the year before. In the beginning when the



martial laws were lifted, companies did not have the desire to handle vocational training, and vocational training unit of government has faced the problem that the rate of enrollment was too low. The human resources development cannot be proceeded systematically and smoothly.

Meanwhile, Korea has just set up a SMEs fund, and established SMEs colleges to train workers. In order to establish authority, Korean government established professional licenses and certificate system, so that professional training can still be carried out successfully. The efforts that other countries in Asia have put in training and developing human resources are worthy of the attention of government and entrepreneurs in Chinese Taipei.

CASE—SUCCESS OF GIYA BEAUTY SHOP CHAIN STORE

The Background of Hairdressing Industry

There are more than one hundred thousand hairdressing saloons in Chinese Taipei right now. The hairdressing industry is a technical vocation, but for the hairdressing industry in Chinese Taipei, it can only be a skill vocation. Hairdressing industries provide customers with face-to-face services. If the boss of the hair saloon wants to promote its sale, he should employ more workers to handle customers. So, it becomes an important issue as how to acquire good and sufficient human resources in hairdressing industries. In the past, employers of hairdressing industries often publicize their recruiting information on the newspaper classifieds, but it faced some problems at present. Excellent hairdressers switch their jobs usually because employers recruit them from other hair style employers, or they are introduced into companies by employers' friends. Fewer people noticed the classifieds on newspapers.

As for the training in hairdressing industries, the skill of hairdressing was learned from old tutors and by themselves in the past, run short of the basis of theories. As the Beautician Department in vocational school was gradually set up, the traditional apprentice system has been disappearing. Young students would go to school to learn rather than leading a long apprentice life in a saloon. These hairdressers trained in vocational schools are expected to become main stream in hairdressing industry in Chinese Taipei in years to come. Therefore, how to recruit appropriate human resources for hairdressing industries becomes an important factor to the development of the business.

As for hairdressers, the feature of the hairdressing industry is of great advantage to them. First, they are not easy to be replaced because the service and contact offered by the hairdressers are very important for their customers. They will not change as the progress of techniques. Second, the hairdresser is of great value as they become older, because as time goes by, the hairdressers will have more and more experiences and they will have more and more customers. Third, hairdressing industries do not place restrictions on their degrees of education. For example, if a student graduated from high school, he/she might not be

qualified in other industries, but it would not be a problem in hairdressing industries. Fourth, there is no upper ceiling on hairdressers' pay. That is, besides basic pay, hairdressers work more and earn more. The boss does not place any limits.

The Company's Condition

Giya (? ?) beauty shop chain store was established by Mr. Wu-ji Shen (? ? ?) in Kaohsiung in 1978. At first it was only a small beauty shop. But with increase of employees in years, now it has extended to 19 branches altogether. This company has about 400 employees and its operating income is about 2 hundred million NT. This beauty shop has the largest scale in Kaohsiung now.

This chain store is supervised by its president, also the general manager, with assistance of two other managers, who take charge of education training and personnel management respectively. The management department, subordinated to the president, manages accounting, finance, creativity, administration and other aspects of the business. Of all the 19 branches, each one has its own director responsible for business of that branch. Designers get to vote for a leader to share joint responsibility of running the shop. And of course, there are accountants, designers, and assistants etc. to keep the business running.

The company's managing concept is "to pursue sincerity, virtue, and beauty." Pursuing sincerity means sincere attitude toward customers, and using real and solid skills to serve them. Pursuing virtue means the concept of benefit-sharing no matter with employees or customers. Pursuing beauty means that the company asks designers to have the concept of beauty from inside out. Designers should bear the responsibility of the most beautiful and best style for customers.

The Company's Training & Development

At the beginning, the designers employed by Mr. Shen were all experienced seniors from different resources. Although their ages were not high, their attitudes were pretty haughty deeming themselves as professionals. Therefore the company could not require them to comply with the established system and obey the rules. If the company insisted on this, the turnover rate would be really high. This circumstance made the boss, Mr. Shen, realized that he had to cultivate his own designers. After continuous instruction, more and more unskilled employees could handle the major tasks on their own, and the company could also enlarge its shop size. Besides, in order to make designers feel safe to work in Giya, the boss started to encourage them to invest in new shops since 1979.

In 1981, Mr. Shen opened a cram school near Kaohsiung train station, teaching people how to design hair styles. He had two reasons why he opened this cram school. First, he felt that training people in each of his beauty shops is too ineffective; second, he wanted to cultivate more talented people. He picked this place near the train station at students' convenience because students came from many different places by train. A complete course



lasted for three months. During the full bloom of the cram school, there were about 100 students during each period of time in the morning, afternoon, and evening. So, there might be 1,000 students a year. Students are divided into two kinds. One group of students would go back home and open small beauty shops in the neighborhood. The other group of students came to the cram school because they felt painful learning skills with traditional tutors. After finishing the courses, Mr. Shen would ask the students if they were willing to come to the company.

Around 1990, vocational schools started to institute Department of Hairdressing. Students graduated from junior high schools went to vocational schools instead of coming to the cram school because they cannot only learn the skill but also get a diploma in vocational schools. Mr. Shen closed the cram school for the number of students has declined since then

Vocational schools attracted the students, and Mr. Shen detected there would be problems of human resources. At first, he recruited external people, but it was getting harder. In the meantime, representatives from vocational schools came to Mr. Shen and looked for chances to cooperate. Mr. Shen felt the cooperation might help Giya manage her human resources, so he initiated the cooperation system with vocational schools in 1991. Now, there were 400 students taking turns to work in Giya. 200 of the students acquired professional skills in the stores, and 200 of them study theory and general subjects in school at the same time.

In order to secure its human resources, Giya would actively visit junior high schools for promotion and offer to assist in their recruits. When the time comes that students have to be sent to Giya to fulfill internship, Giya obtain interns as needed and most importantly screened already. This group of interns will be provided 168 hours of basic courses about hairdressing. Afterwards, they have to receive in-shop technical training three days a week. A senior intern is assigned to each student for better adjustment. When students graduate from school, they are welcome to apply for vacancies in the shops. An evaluation committee is set up to determine the appropriate selection on the basis of the applicant's skills, internship performances, and attendance records, etc. The qualified needs to begin his/her job as an assistant, taking on-site training courses and receiving more evaluation necessary to upgrade as a perm assistant, a perm operator, and eventually a designer. In return, Giya pays equal patience believing anyone who wants to learn and devotes him/herself in this career could be cultivated as a good designer given it time and diligent efforts. Furthermore, Giya sets up a technical center, open for business on low charges, to facilitate novices' learning through repeated practices. Many customers visit the center for cheap rates and they serve as economic practical training to these assistants.

So far, Giya has a fruitful result from school-business cooperation. In an evaluation conducted by Education Bureau of Kaohsiung City Government, 11 shops are graded the first class, only one shop is graded the second, of all 12 branches open for evaluation. The number of interns who express willingness to stay in the shop exceeds their needs. Because

of this, Giya opens many more branches. If the source of labor keeps increasing, Mr. Shen thinks Giya can continue expanding its scale.

CONCLUSION

From the above study, we conclude that:

First, training and development programs could be simply a package of activities held to accompany the business strategy, or more effectively, the essence of that strategy. Most of the enterprises at present hold T&D in accordance to increase employees' skills to expedite business growth. For most, such T&D are planned activities of the business strategy. In Giya's case, whether or not there are sufficient well-trained human resources determines the fate of a new branch. Giya invests in a series of training programs available to all non-firm members, including cram schools and cooperation with vocational schools. This gradually cumulates steady reserves for qualified future employees. In the mean time, the company is able to march toward more branches. In view of this, Giya's T&D is one important step of its business strategy. As a matter of fact, service oriented business, because of its skill feature, protects itself from replacement by automatic operation. How to get adequate supply of qualified manpower becomes the most important strategy of successful business. T&D in such company can serve as an inevitable scheme to secure prosperity.

Second, in places where diploma is valued highly, enterprises should conduct cooperation with schools for better supply of human resources. Parents and school-goers of such places consider earning a diploma an important objective of attending schools. Those students are willing to acquire necessary skills for future jobs, but granting them diplomas to them is like hitting two birds with one stone. Mr. Shen, the boss of Giya, perfectly understands this double needs so closed was the cram school as fewer and fewer people came to register. The cram school once attracted numerous youngsters from many places, and yet the number of registration declined as hairdressing departments were founded one after another in schools. Unstricken by the closure of cram schools, Mr. Shen turned to look for opportunities of school-business cooperation. He made advantage of school system in which his company could provide professional skills and practicing objects while students were well trained with a degree. It is foreseeable that young people find this rewarding and are willing to join in the career. To any company like Giya, that means steady human resources.

Third, enterprises should avoid taking intern students as fill-ins of manpower shortage or as cheap labors. The appropriate management is to treat these interns as future employees and train them proper accordingly. Comprehensive school-business cooperation can be established only on long-range purpose, which is, to infuse into the human resources of future utilization, rather than just temporary surge of cheap manpower. Many enterprises plunge in this instant benefit. For a short period of time, these cheap labors can actually bring the profit uprise as the costs are relatively lowered. Yet on a long-term point of view,



it provides limited space for company's development unless it has stable technical human resources. It is suggested that enterprises design a set of comprehensive training courses for their interns, familiarizing them with the company culture as this naturally would lead to ideal source of head hunting.

Lastly, encourage employees to become shareholders of the company whenever a new branch is open. This usually ties them closer to the company especially in franchise business. To this kind of business, more branches mean bigger scale and relatively lower cost. Only that the expanse of business must have backup of adequate manpower supply; otherwise, any carefully planned strategy would be difficult to carry out. In view of its low cost to start a new shop, many designers would quit from big saloons and open their own shops once they are capable to run business on their own. This manpower drain certainly throws negative effect to the company's business. But this worry could be eliminated if the company welcomes its designers to share the holds with their colleagues. Expectedly, employees will have stronger commitment to the company and on the other hand the boss will be glad to host more shops.

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