

Omega's sales success. To make things more complicated, until recently there was no clear understanding of the role of the sales representatives and there were no formal sales processes in place. Sales representatives varied greatly in terms of their level of skill and knowledge, most put out little effort beyond taking orders, and they did not feel motivated to make additional sales. Finally, franchises varied greatly regarding their management strategies and follow-up with Omega.

Recently, understanding the need to improve the performance of sales representatives, Omega agreed to partially fund and support a training program for them. The network of franchise owners in turn agreed to work together to implement a performance management system. As a first step in creating the performance management system, the franchise owners conducted a job analysis of the role of the sales representatives, wrote a job description, and distributed it to all sales representatives. The franchise owners also adopted a franchise-wide mission statement based primarily on the need to provide high-quality customer service. This mission statement was posted in all franchise offices, and each franchise owner spoke with his employees about the contribution made by individual sales on achieving their mission. As a second step, the managers set performance goals (i.e., sales quotas) for each employee. Then, all sales representatives attended extensive training sessions. The employees received feedback based on their performance in the training course and then were reminded once again of their sales quotas.

Back on the job, managers gave feedback to their employees regarding their standing in relation to their sales quotas. Since the employees had no way of monitoring their own progress toward their quotas, the performance feedback consisted of little more than a reiteration of monthly sales goals. There was no performance appraisal form in place, so

discussions were not documented. This lack of feedback continued, and although sales quotas were being met for the first few months, franchise owners received complaints from customers about the low quality of customer service they were receiving. Subsequently, sales began to decline. Furthermore, many orders were often incorrect, forcing customers to return items to Omega.

While the new performance management process was an improvement over no performance management (at least initially), the franchise owners were still far from having a system that included a smooth transition between each of the components of the performance management process. Based on Omega's situation, please answer the following questions.

1. Consider each of the links of the performance management process as shown in Figure 2.1:
 - a. prerequisites → performance planning
 - b. performance planning → performance execution
 - c. performance execution → performance assessment
 - d. performance assessment → performance review
 - e. performance review → performance renewal and recontracting
 - f. performance renewal and recontracting → prerequisites

Discuss whether each of the links is present, and in what form, in the performance management system described.

2. Given your answers to question 1, what can be done to fix each of the disrupted links in the process?

Source: This case study is loosely based on J. Swinney and B. Couch, Sales Performance Improvement: Getting Results Through a Franchise Sales Organization, International Society for Performance Improvement Case Studies (2003). Available online at http://www.ispi.org/services/getResults/2003/GetResults_Swinney.pdf. Retrieval date: March 6, 2007. ■

CASE STUDY 2-3

Performance Management at the University of Ghana

The University of Ghana in Legon, Ghana, was established in 1948 as an affiliate college of the University of London called University College of the Gold Coast. In 1961, the university was reorganized by an act of Parliament into what it is today: the independent, degree-granting University of Ghana (<http://www.ug.edu.gh/>).

The Balme Library is the main library in the University of Ghana library system. Situated on the main Legon campus, it coordinates a large number of libraries attached to the university's various schools, institutes, faculties, departments, and halls of residence, most of which are autonomous. The

library was started as the College Library in 1948 and was then situated in Achimota College, which was about 8 kilometers from the present Legon campus. In 1959, the College Library moved into its brand-new buildings at the Legon campus and was named after the University College of the Gold Coast's first principal, David Mowbray Balme.

As in the case of many other modern university libraries worldwide that face resources challenges and the need to serve an increasingly diverse customer base, the Balme Library has implemented numerous initiatives. One such initiative is a performance management system. However, several of the

components of the performance management process at the Balme Library are in need of improvement. First, there is no evidence that a systematic job analysis was conducted for any of the jobs at the library. Second, the forms that the employees are rated on contain vague items such as "general behavior." The forms include no specific definition of what "general behavior" is or examples explaining to employees (or managers) what would lead to a high or a low rating in this category. In addition, all library employees are rated on the same form, regardless of their job responsibilities. Third, there is no evidence that managers have worked with employees in setting mutually agreed-upon goals. Fourth, there is no formal or informal discussion of results and needed follow-up steps after the subordinates and managers complete their form. Not surprisingly, an employee survey revealed that more than 60% of the employees have never discussed their performance with their managers. Finally, employees are often rated by different people. For example, sometimes the head of the library rates

an employee, even though he may not be in direct contact with that employee.

Based on the above description, please answer the following questions.

1. Please identify one component in the performance management process at the Balme Library that has not been implemented effectively (there are several; choose only one).
2. Describe how the poor implementation of the specific component you have chosen has a negative impact on the flow of the performance management process as a whole.
3. Discuss what should be done to improve the implementation of the component you have chosen in question 1.

Source: This case study is loosely based on Martey, A. K. (2002). "Appraising the performance of library staff in a Ghanaian Academic Library." *Library Management*, 23, 403–416. ■

End notes

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