Research on the Construction Path of IBM's Learning Team Enterprise

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Abstract. The foundation of a company's success lies in its internal management and team building. With the change in times and economic environment, the company also needs to establish different teams and construct different organizational cultures to adapt to the new environment. As an excellent team can bring more benefits to the company, the construction of an organizational culture is particularly important. However, the organizational culture cannot be established to fit the team at once; it should go through a series of attempts and innovations, constantly finding problems, solving problems, and creating new types that are more suitable for the company. In this article, through the case of how IBM built its learning team, we analyze the challenges IBM has faced and how IBM can solve these problems. Case studies can prove the correctness of the theory. This study is based on the path of IBM's team construction, trying to come up with solutions to problems facing the company. Firstly, introduce the current situation and analyze the challenges the company has faced, then give solutions to the problems in specific situations. There is no common structure that adapts to all organizations, every company should choose the structure that fits its strategy and environment.

Keywords: team building, learning team, IBM's management, organization culture.

1. Introduction

IBM (International Business Machines Corporation) is the largest IT Company in the world which was founded in 1911 with operations in over 170 countries. As Time Magazine said, the history of IBM is the history of computers. No organization like IBM has had a greater impact on the world's industries and human lifestyles. Commercial typewriters were the company's primary product at first, followed by word processors, computers, and related services. In 1964, IBM introduced the system/360 which has been used in large business companies, Multiple Virtual Storage (MVS) debuted in 1974 and became a more successful operation system than system/360 and it had been at the center of IBM's mainframe OS technology for more than 40 years. The operating system z/OS used in current-generation z system mainframes can be traced back to MVS. Long a pioneer in the computer sector, IBM is best known for its work on the ThinkPad and large/small computers. It still influences and advances the personal computer (PC) standard. IBM also offers consulting, technology, and business services like cloud computing, data analytics, and artificial intelligence (AI), and it has led the industry in mainframes, supercomputers (mostly represented by Deep Blue, Blue Gene, and Watson), UNIX, and servers.

Long-standing corporate ties exist between IBM and China. For the Peking Union Medical College Hospital, IBM installed the first commercial processor as early as 1934. As the economic environment changed, trade with China grew a lot, and finally, International Business Machines China Limited was established in 1992. To this day, IBM is still the representative of the giant enterprises in the IT industry. One of the most important reasons is its organizational learning strategy [1]. As the pace of change in the workplace is accelerating rapidly. Learning and harnessing the power of continuous learning to keep up with this change is critical [2].

IBM's organizational learning strategy has helped IBM to maintain its strong organizational ability and competitiveness in countless market changes. An important factor that makes IBM stand firm in many worlds' economic storms is the characteristics of IBM's learning enterprise, which relies on its internal learning experience, strong knowledge capital and world-class top learning experts. It has built a complete learning strategy methodology and created a perfect learning organization worthy of

learning from all enterprises. Another typical case is Huawei, which, with a profit of billions of dollars that year, directly invested 4 billion tuition fees to learn from IBM and learn from many aspects such as battle path, management, organization, authorization, process, system, and innovation. To achieve self-transformation, building a learning organization is the fundamental to the evolution and iteration of all enterprises, and it is fundamental of the century-old foundation and the foundation of the long-term development [3].

In this article, case analysis approach will be used, with the particular case to illustrate that the significance of an enterprise builds the learning team. In the next section, the basic concepts of learning team will be explained first, then select some of the representative points of its characteristic to discuss, and finally explain the significance and why organizations should build a learning team.

2. The Connotation and Significance of Learning Team

2.1. The Concept of Learning Team

A learning team is a team that is good at improving the thinking habits and learning ability of employees at all levels through learning to solve problems, and an enterprise team is good at discovering and solving problems through learning. Under the leadership of the organization, whether it is an individual or an organization, it is constantly learning new knowledge, new skills, and new ideas, applying what it has learned to promote learning and learning to use. A learning organization is an innovative, self-renewing and dynamic organization [4]. In this organization, all employees are encouraged to learn, so that learning becomes a part of each employee's work, and employees take "completing their own work and how to complete the work better" as their responsibilities and work tasks, and constantly break through their own abilities to achieve the common vision, mission, and goals.

2.2. The Characteristics of Learning Team

2.2.1 Share a common

The reason why an organization should learn in a team is that it helps bring all the employees from different positions and levels together so that can achieve a common vision. The organization is the place for employees to learn, also the purpose of learning. In other words, employees are study in the organization and the result of learning will influence the organization. A learning organization combines its own development mission, clearly delineates the future development vision, so that employees have common expectations, goals, and the direction of progress, and encourages employees to determine and develop personal vision through a common vision and forms a community of destiny with the enterprise [5].

2.2.2 Continuous learning

Learning can not only enhance personal self-value, but also the needs of enterprise development. Peter Senge, a famous management scientist, believes that "the learning of enterprises can only be learned by individuals, and the learning of individuals cannot guarantee the learning of enterprises, but without individual learning, the learning of enterprises is out of the question." [6] The learning organization emphasizes the whole-person learning at all levels, the whole-process learning of each process, and the joint learning of various collaborations, so that learning becomes a habit and a necessity for the development of individuals and enterprises.

2.2.3 Flat and efficient

The organizational structure of the learning organization is flat, or from the highest decision-making level to the bottom operating level with very few layers in the middle, as opposed to the traditional enterprise organization, which typically has a pyramidal structure. It creates a flat organizational structure with "local focus" by delegating decision-making authority to the lowest level of the organizational structure in order to give those lowest level units complete autonomy and

accountability for the outcomes. In order to develop enormous and long-lasting innovation, the business can only do so by forming a group of mutual understanding, mutual learning, general interactive thinking, coordination, and cooperation [5].

3. IBM's Learning Team

3.1. Current Situation of IBM

According to IBM's official website, the purpose of training and development project is aims to help people within the company to study and gain more professional abilities, at the same time, these skills can also help them to progress their carriers [7]. In IBM, orientations, lectures in classrooms, case study, role-playing, simulations and computer-based training are included in the training programs, these trainings are usually the responsibility of a department which called Human Resource Development (HRD). HRD is the primary department responsible for staff training and skill development, it divides training programs into two categories: employee training and management training [7].

3.2. Challenges of Learning Team in IBM

3.2.1 Training ineffective

With the development of technology, data as an important source for human in today's society is easier to get [8]. However, humanity as the heart at the center of an enterprise, to extract value from data and apply it, people are essential. These key human resources are under pressure in how to extract value from data. With the rapid changes in the market, the business need to be more flexible so that can adapt the change. In other words, employees need to have more skills that can solve the new problems so that it is important for both organizations and employees to gain more trainings to get skills. However, for employees, their energy is limited, and the content that they have learned cannot be effectively digested and absorbed by them and applied to their work. According to a report on the impact of talent shortages on employers, even 45% of companies cannot find the skills that the organizations need. And about 30 percent of employers said that the main reason they cannot fill vacancies is a lack of candidates, while 20 percent said candidates do not have the necessary experience the company is looking for. More than a third of people are adjusting their education and experience requirements to fill job openings [9]. What is more, compounding the problem is the accelerating rate at which expertise is becoming obsolete. It is estimated that professional skills have a half-life of ten to fifteen years, which meaning that the skills will be halved in 10 years or so, or that half of the knowledge which is associated with these skills will be irrelevant. Today, the half-life of an acquired skill is estimated at five years, while the half-life of a technical skill is even shorter - in other words, a skill learned today will be worth half or less in five years. Rapid changes in skills make it difficult for companies to train staff. This rapid change in skills makes it difficult for companies to train their employees. By the time an employee has mastered a skill, that skill is no longer suitable for the current work environment. In other words, such a situation will lead to the employee's learning skills are ineffective and the work efficiency is greatly reduced.

3.2.2 The skills gap

The skills gap requires more time to fill using conventional training methods, such as virtual learning and classroom learning, according to the IBM official website [2]. throughout 2014, it took three days on average throughout the world to close the skill gap through corporate training. But by 2018, the median duration had increased to an astounding 36 days. In just four years, the amount of time needed to close the skills gap has increased more than tenfold [9]. According to research, while some abilities are quickly becoming outdated, other ones are rapidly in demand. In 2016, executives selected basic computer and software/application abilities and technical core competence in STEM as the two most crucial talents for employees [2]. According to Amy Wright, businesses are facing increasing concerns, such as a widening skills gap and a tightening labor market, which could impact

their future and the global economy. However, while executives have recognized the scale of the problem, they say there is no skills development strategy to address the biggest gaps. There are many reasons why the gap become bigger, for example, a large number of skills that are required in today need longer time to learn such as teamwork, communication, creativity, and empathy which are a kind of behavioral. As these skills are developed through real-life experience, not just learned from classes and programs. And also, some skills have highly technical requirement, due to the high technical requirements, employees need a long time to familiarize themselves with these skills before they can skillfully apply them to their work. However, such technologies are often updated very quickly, which requires employees to have strong learning ability and acceptance ability, otherwise the skills gap will become bigger and bigger. The skills gap cannot be solved only by the company or employees, but should be led by the company, arrange relevant courses and projects, and employees cooperate in learning. The skills gap is only likely to close if companies and employees work together.

4. Suggestions

As mentioned above, there are a lot of articles and company surveys has shown that most corporate training is ineffective. Most employees are unable to absorb all the knowledge they learn into job skills. As this kind of situation, a “just-in-time” training and a culture of continuous self-directed, self-motivated learning through centralized distance learning programs is needed to be built by the organization [7]. According to IBM, skilled people drive the global economy. While digital skills are still critical for companies, soft skills are even more important in today's economic environment. As the half-life of skills continues to shrink, but at the same time the time it takes to close the skills gap has increased dramatically, this has increased the need for organizations to find ways to keep skills relevant. Due to this, the traditional hiring and training may not as effective as before. There is a type of management called talent management [10].

According to the CEO of ManpowerGroup, employers should stop focusing on just-in-time hiring tactics and start becoming builders of talent for today and future because the global talent deficit is at historic levels. The only way to carry out a business strategy and add value for the firm is to have the right combination of people, skills, processes, and technology. People who had the ability and motivation to learn, those who were smarter, had more skills, and were more assiduous would have been more equipped for the organization in the past, even if they did not know how the jobs of the future would look. But for now, that is not enough. What companies need to do is hire these people who already have a certain skill base and train them in a specific way based on each person's talents, and the training programs that are widely used for everyone will no longer work. If employees are trained systematically according to their strengths and talents, they will be more efficient and better at their jobs.

There are four steps to construct an effective talent strategy. Firstly, build, employers need to build a connection with their employees and make them understand that it is a two-way relationship between them. When employees learn, they not only help the company complete its performance, but also improve themselves at the same time. Purchasing is the second. Employers must have a solid employee value proposition, clear goals, and an engaging culture to recruit employees in today's competitive labor market. Employers must recognize that job seekers are also consumers, and human resources departments must master marketing strategies to draw in the top candidates. The third step is to borrow. Human resources departments frequently concentrate on permanent personnel, but when short-term projects require certain talents that current employees lack, businesses may also need to borrow talent from contractors or temporary employees. Organizations must learn how to create a sense of community among their employees, both inside and beyond the organization. They need to find new talent management solutions, develop their systems thinking and marketing skills, and utilize talent in all its forms. The final option, bridge, also involves transformation. The main responsibility of a leader is to make the most of the employees' current skills and discover alternatives

so that those who no longer fit can transition to other positions. Employers must assist employees in making a seamless transition and applying their abilities to new tasks outside the organization if it is not practicable to shift them into new roles within the organization. To fulfill the demands of the current skills revolution, a new talent landscape is currently being created gradually.

Companies need to foster a culture of continuous learning within the organization and a workforce strategy that includes building, buying, borrowing, and transiting in order to adapt to a rapidly changing environment that is fundamentally driven by technology. Business success in the digital age will depend on identifying employees' potential for the future, fostering a learnable culture throughout the company, and offering training programmed. To help people and organizations realize their full potential in the digital era, this is a solution to the talent deficit.

5. Conclusion

The complexity of measuring, managing, and maintaining business performance is a long-standing problem within enterprises that has not been well discussed and studied by researchers and organizational managers. For enterprises, if learning within the organization cannot be translated into innovative operations and time, it will not be able to help the organization achieve the goal of high performance. The performance of the organization plays a decisive role in the success of the enterprise. At the same time, there are many factors that affect organizational performance, including internal factors and the perfection of organizational system.

There are many ways to measure organizational performance. Innovation at the organizational level, which includes the development of new products, the generation of new services, the innovation of organizational and marketing methods, the development of knowledge, creativity, and the improvement of original performance through differentiated innovation, are among the few innovations in this area is a minority of organizations in this area of innovation.

The current research results show that organizational learning is crucial to the performance of enterprises. Companies learning from external networks and implementing the results of learning across organizational networks in innovation can lead to better performance for the organization. This study examines the role of learning from external networks for enterprises, and achieves innovative learning within organizational networks and achieves better performance. A company with a learning culture builds a more highly skilled and engaged workforce that is committed to achieving a shared vision for the company and its employees. A learning culture helps companies build a strong talent pool and constantly discover greater potential and innovation in the company because their employees are always growing and developing new skills.

For employees, lifelong learning is essential for them to keep up with the rapidly changing workplace in today's society. The company divides learning areas into two subject areas, Experience and Change, to expose employees to a multidisciplinary approach to continuous learning. In the process of looking for talents and managing talents, enterprises are constantly exploring new team learning methods, and employees and the company are also learning more skills to improve themselves through continuous exploration and innovation.

Therefore, it is important to understand how teams learn to contribute to the organization, taking into account individual, group, and organizational factors. Due to this, it is necessary to conduct in-depth research on the team learning effect of organizational learning. However, due to the particularity of the case, the study of this paper is still limited. In the future, researchers should study on this topic further.

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