

Key components of career and workforce development

By Bob Dietzel

While famed advertising industry executive Fairfax Cone may be credited with first saying, “The inventory goes down the elevator every night,” I can’t imagine he was the first.



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Whether your company operates in the service, retail, digital or manufacturing space, your success will hinge on the skill, dedication, knowledge, level of training, social cohesion, judgment and attitude of your workforce.

Another national treasure, legendary University of Alabama football coach Bear Bryant shared this observation, “You need chickens to make chicken salad.” Even a team packed with star performers, though, will come up short if the players are not properly nurtured, trained and developed.

In a similar manner, when career and workforce development is properly employed team members can achieve their full potential and achieve company goals. By empowering team members with training, development opportunities and continuing education programs companies can maximize their job success and career pathway.

Following are key components of career and workforce development your company can put in place:

Education and Training:

Providing access to education and training programs is crucial for career development. Programs can be formal, such as college degrees and vocational training, or informal, such as workshops, seminars, study groups and online courses. Continuous learning is vital to help team members and your company keep up with evolving technologies and industries, especially in this fast-changing environment. Artificial Intelligence, alone, could potentially change the rules of the game.

Skills Development:

Identifying and fostering essential skills needed in the job market is a fundamental aspect of workforce development. These skills may include technical abilities, soft skills like communication and problem-solving and critical thinking.

Career Planning: Help team members set career goals, chart potential career paths and create actionable plans to achieve personal objectives.

Career Counseling and Coaching: Provide guidance and support – both formal and informal – through career counselors and coaches to help team members navigate career challenges, make informed short- and long-term decisions and overcome obstacles to success.

Promote Diversity and Inclusion: Ensure equitable

access to career opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds and communities. This will help to create an agile workforce able to meet myriad marketplace challenges in a fast changing, often surprising environment.

Employee Upskilling and Reskilling:

Invest in training and development programs to upgrade the skills of your workforce and prepare team members for new roles within your organization. As events and the pace of marketplace change accelerate, upskilling and reskilling will become increasingly important to your organization.

Promote a Workplace Culture that Encourages Lifelong Learning:

Cultivate a culture of lifelong learning within your organization to encourage team members’ continuing skill development and career advancement. By starting at the top, you will set a good example for staff.

Why Career and Workforce Development are Important:

Individual Growth: You will empower your employees to explore their passions, develop their talents and achieve personal fulfillment through meaningful careers.

Economic Growth: A skilled and adaptable workforce will contribute to your organization’s economic growth and competitiveness.

Address Skills Gaps: By addressing internal skills gaps your company can bridge the gap between the skills you seek and the skills available in the labor market.

Employee Retention:

Employee turnover can be disruptive and expensive. By investing in your employees’ development, you will be more likely to retain talent and improve workplace satisfaction.

Future-Proof your Workforce:

With rapid technological advancements becoming de rigeur, ongoing development ensures your workforce will remain adaptable and relevant in response to industry change.

Career and workforce development play a crucial role in shaping the future of work and fostering a skilled, motivated and successful workforce for your company. While the benefits attributable to career and workforce development may be obvious, it remains a complex subject requiring experience and expertise. Your trusted human capital professional can provide both.

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