Effect of On-the-Job Coaching on Management Trainees Performance
A Post Merger Case Study of Glaxo-Smith-Klein Pakistan

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Abstract

Training is the most important form of enhancing the Job Performance and Work Output of an employee. In training, On-The-Job Coaching plays an important role in improving a major part of performance of an employee which has been mentioned by numerous researchers (Judge et al, 2001, Russo, S. Charlene 2000).

Mergers and acquisitions, strategic alliances, downsizing, reengineering, outsourcing, and restructuring have been common responses to the new challenges facing organizations. Glaxo Smith Kline (GSK) enjoys a strategic position in the global market of Pharmaceutical industry. With high research and development costs and extremely high demand dependence, progressive pharmaceutical companies can leverage their market dominance.

This research has identified the relationship of on-the-job coaching on job performance and will help to identify external forces involved in this relationship. It will benefit other researchers to further analyze this relationship and will make the research as a secondary source for aiding their findings. The framework of the study illustrates the relationship between on the job coaching and job performance. The research was both qualitative and quantitative in nature using questionnaires for primary data collection Marketing Sales Executives (MSEs) Rawalpindi/Islamabad region of GSK.

The study has identified several variables that effected coaching and it was concluded by the results that job performance was certainly affected by it. The several variables of coaching like coach ability, team coordination, action learning, and flexibility of the coach had determined the factors that are affecting Job Performance e.g. Self Confidence, Motivation, Job Satisfaction but the overall Job Performance was low due to ineffectiveness of coaching at GSK.

The paper suggests that for solving this dilemma at GSK, coaches need to lead from the front and use action learning techniques more often and they should perform what they deliver to the employees. Several rewards can also be given to trainees who perform well during the session. Sometimes a pat on the back can increase motivation immensely which in turn increases their performance on the job.
Introduction

We have been hearing this saying for many decades that “Employees are the assets for the organization”. Obviously it is true in its every sense. As the bones, mass, skin, blood and soul are essentials for creating the human body, in the same way employees are necessary for developing the organizations.

It’s important to have well structure employees in the organization for the purposes of getting good output. So for this purpose organizations have the HR department with them for the purpose of selecting right people at the right place with the right knowledge.

However, the story doesn’t end here. The organizations have to mould them according to the requirements of the organization which we call in general terms as “Training”. (Chase, Nancy 1997)

Today organizations face increasing competition and more critical scrutiny due to environment dynamism. Managers have been confronted with greater challenges in securing organizational survival and competitive advantage. Management faces a conflicting set of demands- they are expected to minimize costs while increasing quality and fostering innovation and creativity. Consequently they have sought strategies and practices to meet outside pressures. Mergers and acquisitions, strategic alliances, downsizing, reengineering, outsourcing, and restructuring have been common responses to the new challenges facing organizations. (Jacobs, et al 1995)

Pharmaceutical industry enjoys a strategic position in the global marketplace. With high research and development costs and extremely high demand dependence, progressive pharmaceutical companies can leverage their market dominance to create monopoly power. After hundreds of focus groups and dozens of surveys with people from major organizations in the public and private sectors, identified a number of key characteristics that talented, high potential people from diverge backgrounds say are important to them when they are selecting a “worthy organizations” to join. (Industry Week, 1993)

GlaxoSmithKline Plc. is a United Kingdom-based pharmaceutical, biological, and healthcare company. GSK is the world's second largest pharmaceutical company and a research-based company with a wide portfolio of pharmaceutical products covering anti-infective, central nervous system (CNS), respiratory, gastro-intestinal/metabolic, oncology, and vaccines products. It also has a Consumer Healthcare operation comprising leading oral healthcare products and nutritional drinks. (GSK, 2008) GlaxoSmithKline has been a leading name in the pharmaceutical industry for many a years not just because of its quality medical supplies but also for its strong and effective management. The company has been a dominant leader in this industry and has
maintained its competitiveness for a long time. Quality drugs such as Panadol, Ventolin, Amoxil, Augmentin, Betnovate and Zantac have been the most used and referred by doctors all over the world. GSK carries with it a long and dazzling history that has inspired not just pharmaceutical firms but many other organizations of the world. GSK was not a single firm from the first day. Actually it is a merger of four different firms which formed a giant like this.

**Objective of the Study**

The main objectives of the study are,

i) To determine whether on-the-job coaching affects the job performance of trainees.

ii) To recognize the external factors affecting on-the-job coaching and job Performance.

iii) To find out if the on-the-job coaching given by GSK to the trainees are good enough to increase their job performance

iv) To suggest ways to improve job Performance at GSK along with other organizations by making on-the-job coaching more effective.

**Research Methodology**

The research was both qualitative and quantitative. Research tool used was questionnaire to quantify the variables. The scale used was likert scale and also ordinal scale was used.

**Conceptual Framework**

The Conceptual framework describes the two variables On-The-Job Coaching and Job Performance of Employees taken as independent and dependent variable respectively. More specifically this framework shows the relationship between on the job coaching and job performance. Therefore, it is a co relational study. The findings of the literature study are used here to describe the different variables that effect Coaching and Job Performance respectively.

The level of Job Performance here is taken as a function of on the job coaching. The variables describe the factors that can effect on the job performance along with on the job coaching. These variables will be used in questionnaires to quantify them and to draw result of the study.

The systematic relation of the variables concluding from the literature study is illustrated below,
Population & Sample
The sample selected is from GSK employed Marketing Sales Executives (MSEs) from its Rawalpindi/Islamabad region.

The sample selected will be 20 MSEs and all of them will be floated questionnaires.

Data Analysis Technique
Judge et al (2001) state that “Percentages” are the most simple and affective tool for data analysis, mostly for literary research studies. Data Analysis will be done using Percentages with the help of SPSS software. According to a report of Harvard Business School (2007), “SPSS has evolved to be one of the most practical and efficient tool for data analysis both in literary studies and in field research projects”. Tables and Bar charts using SPSS will be used to show the results.

Scope of Study
This research will be able to identify the relationship of on-the-job coaching on job performance and will help to identify external forces involved in this relationship. It will benefit other researchers to find out this relationship and will make my research as a secondary source for aiding their findings. Also it will help to analyze that either HR is practically practiced in Pakistan or not.

Hypothesis
• $H_0$: Coaching has a positive relation with job performance and it enhances and increases Job Performance

• $H_1$: Coaching has no relation with Job Performance

Limitations of the Study
1. It will be not possible for me to take sample from all the Sales offices of GSK because of limitation of time.
2. Personal Interviews and discussion will be difficult because of the tight schedules of MSEs.
3. It will not be possible to generalize the results of research on all of GSK because the coach appointed at different sales offices have different characteristics.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Training is a major component to predict future job performance of employees that’s why organizations are spending billions of dollars on training every year; about $29 billion every year (Feuer, 1987). Training allows individuals get the necessary Knowledge, Skill and Ability to perform the job (Kleiman & Gordon, 1986).

Coaching
Coaching has been one of the oldest methods used for on the job training which roots go back to the Middle Ages (Jacobs, Ronald L. and Michael J. Jones, 1995). The importance of coaching has been highlighted in many recent discussions in the management literature, where coaching is viewed as an important means to achieving the desired goal of becoming a learning organization (Dunphy, Turner, & Crawford, 1997).

Charlene S. Russo (2000) states that job training is a supervisory responsibility as she says; "it is the number one duty of the manager to develop, counsel and coach his employees". Managers are required to spend considerable time on personnel matters giving attention to the performance management system and the operational plan. These efforts contribute to a continuous learning environment. She further states that “Problem Identification” should be a major trait for coaches and management trainers whose main job should be providing feedback to correct the performance discrepancy of trainees instead of punishing substandard performance.

Troutman, A. Kevin (2008) recommends that “Leadership” should be a major trait of coach because an effective leader can shape the work that the employees do.

Devaraj, Sarv and Babu, S. Ramesh (2004) did a study on a software company to find the relation between training and job performance and found out that “Instructor ability” has a positive correlation with respect to overall job performance of individuals. They Used a TERM model to further study the relations given as follows,

Here Class size (trainee’s size), analytical performance, technical performance and instructor ability have a direct impact on training effectiveness and age and experience of trainer has been taken as an intervening variable having effect on training and job performance.

As observed by Ellinger et al. (2003, p. 436), “the concept of coaching has emerged as a new paradigm or metaphor for management.” Within the growing academic literatures on coaching, two main streams of research can be identified: one focused on executive coaching and a second on developmental coaching. Executive coaching is typically viewed as an activity performed within a limited period of time, where an internal or external consultant supports an executive manager in the development of specific competencies or in solving specific
problems (Hall, Otazo, & Hollenbeck, 1999) and helps the executive manager to become more self-aware through the use of “action learning” methods. In contrast to this, a second form of coaching occurs in the day-to-day relationship between supervisor and subordinate (Ellinger & Boström, 1999; Evered & Selman, 1989; Yukl, 2002). In this ongoing and persistent interaction, the supervisor provides constructive feedback to the subordinate, offers suggestions for performance improvement, shows how to handle a difficult problem or situation, and creates opportunities to practice complex procedures before using them in the work setting (Stone, 2002; Yukl, 2002).

Agarwal, Ritu et al (2006), state that in this dynamic environment, coaches readily have to change strategies along with coaching styles. The “coaching intensity” needs to be varied always according to the environment. So according to them “coaching Intensity” plays a major role in effective job Performance. Coaching intensity in other terms can also be referred as a coach who challenges employees by giving challenging tasks to increase their performance. (Agarwal, 2006) Nowadays, a leader who can transform itself is thought to be a successful and effective one (Tejeda, Scandurra & Pillaia, 2001). Ritu Agarwal (2006) confirms that a “Flexible” coach is sure to enhance the Job Performance of an individual.

**Job Performance**

Judge et al (2001) states there is a huge positive relation between job performance and “Satisfaction level”. Since an attitude represents an evaluative disposition toward a certain situation or object, individuals who have a positive attitude are likely to behave consistently with the attitude (Judge et al., 2001). Bala, V. & Goyal, S. (2006) estimate that “Self Confidence” is a major attribute of achieving increased Job Performance. They state that a coach plays a major role in enhancing an employee’s self confidence and makes him attain confidence in what he is performing. So Self Confidence is a major trait of increasing the overall job performance.

“Skill Acquisition” has been characterized by Jones et al (2008) as a major source of enhancing the job Performance to a very large extent. He states that if the coach manages to convey the trainee the skills he requires and the skills are acquired by the trainee, then his overall job performance both on the job and off the job can increase significantly. Also a major attribute of job performance as defined by McInnes et al (2006), is “Motivation”. It has been observed by many other researchers that Motivation is a major source of increasing the overall Job Performance of an employee.

**Results and Discussion**

The paper has discussed different aspects of coaching and its impact on performance at GSK. The first question was asked about the overall training level of the organization which in this case is GSK. Most of the respondents (70%) rated their organization training level as “High”. So overall they think that their organization is good at providing training to its employees. Judge et al suggest that training is the major part of organizational development so in overall training, GSK is going in a positive direction.
The importance of coaching has been highlighted in many recent discussions in the management literature, where coaching is viewed as an important means to achieving the desired goal of becoming a learning organization (Dunphy, Turner, & Crawford, 1997). In general, I asked respondents whether they require a coach on job and the result was as expected. Most of the people agreed to my statement and not a single respondent disagreed. It shows how important they think coaching is and how it affects their performance.

Agarwal, Ritu et al (2006), state that more face-to-face meetings between coach and coachee should be held so that performance deficiencies can be removed. Now here we
see a similar case that affects coaching effectiveness. I asked whether the respondents discuss their training needs with their coach. Few people answered that they discuss it every week. In fact just one person answered every week. Most of the people said every month, quarterly and some answered they never discuss their training need. This is a major deficiency that needs to be filled by GSK.

Judge et al (2001) states that there is a huge positive relation between job performance and “Satisfaction level”. Here when asking about the satisfaction level of the respondents regarding coaching in their organization, a major proportion said they are satisfied (12 out of 20) while 8 respondents said they are not very satisfied. We will see further on why this is the case.
As suggested earlier by Agarwal, Ritu (2006), coaching is a major source for increasing job performance. Here a simple question was asked whether the coaching given by their present coach enough for increasing their job performance. About 70% of the respondents answered “No”. It shows there is some deficiency in the trainer or coach that is currently being appointed for the respondents.

Charlene S. Russo (2000) states that “Problem Identification” should be a major trait for coaches and management trainers. Using the first variable of Problem Identification I defined, I formulated a question that whether their coach understands their problems and tries to remove them, majority of them said their coach never understands their problems. This is a real problem and the organization really has to work on this.
As suggested earlier by Troutman, A. Kevin (2008) that “Leadership” should be a major trait of coach because an effective leader can shape the work that the employees do. When asked about the leadership qualities of the coach, majority of the respondents answered “Often”. However that is quality of every coach that he acts as a leader and makes his trainees follow him. This following can be a forced one which was not characterized in this question.

Agarwal, Ritu et al (2006), state that in this dynamic environment, coaches readily have to change strategies along with coaching styles. The “coaching intensity” needs to be varied always according to the environment. Here a good ability of the coach has been found that he gives challenging tasks to employees. Challenge has been characterized as a major source of increasing the job performance of the employees. However it is not known whether the respondents gave the answer in a positive or negative manner. They could have thought that challenge means getting them in trouble and increasing workload. But whatever the case is, challenge surely increases job performance.
Agarwal (2006) confirms that a “Flexible” coach is sure to enhance the Job Performance of an individual. When asked whether the coach was flexible in giving them tasks and whether he adjusts to the environment and different employee’s character, majority answered “No”. This is a major flaw of the coach and he has to adjust himself to be more flexible to ensure the trainees or coachees’ job performance.

Ellinger et al. (2003) suggests that teamwork in an organization confirms higher performance level. When asked whether the coach encourages working in teams, 80% of respondents answered YES. This is a good point for GSK but when looked at the other side of the mirror, pharmaceutical firms such as GSK work run on working as teams because the job of Marketing Sales Executives (The Sample) is to increase their sales while working as teams. But whatever is the case, working in teams increases Job Performance.
When asked from the respondents how often does their coach motivate, majority answered that very often their coach motivates them and they feel de motivated. We can see that when the coach is not effective, there is no motivation for the employees and resultant is low job performance. So GSK should work on that, as McInnes et al (2006) observed that Motivation is a major source of increasing the overall Job Performance of an employee.

Attaining new skills is a major attribute to increasing Job Performance of the employees as recommended by Jones et al (2008). If the coaches are unable to develop new skills in employees, they are sure to have low job performance as indicated by different researchers. So when asked the question from the respondents that how often does their coach help them to "attain new skills", majority (60%) answered “Very Often”. So the coaches appointed by GSK have to ensure that employees gain new skills in order to increase their performance.
At last I asked about the most important aspect of Job Performance that is Self Confidence. Bala, V. & Goyal, S. (2006) estimate that “Self Confidence” is a major attribute of achieving increased Job Performance. Most of the respondents replied that the self confidence in them is low and their coaches have not been able to create self confidence in them. If the self confidence is high, job performance is sure to be high as stated by Bala, V. & Goyal, S. (2006). So GSK has to work on developing Self Confidence in employees.

### Conclusion

Coaching has been a major source of enhancing the Job Performance of employees since old times (Jacobs, Ronald L. and Michael J. Jones, 1995). The relation of coach and coachee is a sacred one and needs to be respected. From the findings that I did, it can be safely concluded that my hypothesis “Ho: Coaching has a positive relation with job performance and it enhances and increases Job Performance” holds true. When I did the study on different variables that effected coaching, I found out that job performance was certainly affected by it. The several variables of coaching like coach ability, team coordination, action learning, and flexibility of the coach are determining the factors that are affecting Job Performance (e.g. Self Confidence, Motivation, Job Satisfaction etc). From the study we can clearly see that low coaching performance in GSK has lowered the job performance of the employees. Due to time & money constraints, I was unable to compare the performance of employees in case of GSK employing effective coaching techniques; with the current performance level of the employees. However, using this analysis and the literature study done, it is pretty sure that GSK by employing effective coaching techniques illustrated here can surely increase the job performance of its employees which in this case were Marketing Sales Executives (MSEs).
Recommendations
To increase the job performance of its employees, GSK can take several steps but in the light of my study, I state that the overall coaching standard of GSK needs to improve. The coach’s role is to help learners to achieve their goals by acting as counselor, facilitator, advisor and guide. Counseling is an important function because it can lead to an improved relationship between the supervisor and supervisee. So coaches at GSK need to find the problems of the individuals and correct them. One of the important functions of a supervisor is to be a role model for the supervisee. So coaches need to lead from the front and use action learning techniques more often and they should perform what they teach the employees. Several rewards can also be given trainees who perform well during training. Sometimes a pat on the back can increase motivation immensely which in turn increases their performance on the job.

The coach and coachee should have regular meetings. The meetings can be face-to-face. On the other hand, some employees rely more on phone calls or e-mail discussion. However, face-to-face meetings are the most practical in mentoring, coaching and supervision. In mentoring, the mentee and mentor should make an attempt to contact each other at least one or two weeks.

Giving Challenging tasks to employees should become the order of the day at GSK. However these challenges should not be for the purpose of irritating the employee but their intension should be to increase the performance of the employees. Coaches should be flexible in supervision strategies depending on the individual requirements. A healthy and professional relation should be created between the coach and coachee. A good relationship can make both parties comfortable with meeting regularly and sharing ideas or knowledge with a view to increasing the job performance. As a trainee, one must be eager to learn, enhance ones self-awareness, learn from mistakes and successes, develop and apply new skills. In addition, he/she must be diligent, conscientious and hardworking, open to criticism, willing to listen to the coach and talk openly.

An effective coach should have access to a range of training and learning methods, and should be able to adapt to individual coachees and trainees and provide clear and focused feedback to facilitate learning. Using these strategies GSK can surely enhance the Job Performance of employees.
References

Bala V. and S. Goyal, 2006 “Training and Development-Its role in achieving Organizational Success” pp 4-6


Industry Week (1993) "On Being an Employee-Oriented Company", p 33


