Leadership Development Activities

Malikeh Beheshtifar
Management Department, Rafsanjan Branch, Islamic AZAD University, Iran
E-mail: m.beheshtifar@yahoo.com

Zohreh Vazir-Panah
Management Department, Rafsanjan Branch, Islamic AZAD University, Iran

Abstract:

Nowadays, human resource development is considered as a developed concept in HR field. It is a process for helping personnel to conduct their duties better. Most organizations tend to leadership development as a separable subject and as areas of responsibility within organization. Whereas the leadership development plans have been unsuccessful. This article aim to draw attention to the fact that leadership development is crucial in organizations. A literature review was conducted by searching journal databases, textbooks, and relevant reports. A categorization of the evidence allowed informed discussions on the key themes surrounding leadership development activities. Leadership development is caused to employees' promotion and progress via nurture of new talents, stimulus in employees by persuade to do individual development, save time and cost, and increase customers' satisfaction by relations improvement. Accordingly, the development systems can cover a wide scope in organization. They are effective to career management, training and development, performance management, strategic human resource planning, recruitment and selection, and succession planning activities. Despite the need for further scientific and validated studies, organizations should be urged to devote sufficient resources and attention towards leadership development for promoting long-term survival and prosperity.

Keywords: leadership development, activities, human resource

Introduction

Emphasizing on modern competitive world, it senses need to development (Jepson, 2009), because the sudden changes in the world force organizations to invest on development and training actions.

Human resource development actions design to prepare workforce in future, and to up to date employees’ knowledge, skills and abilities (Brooks & Nafukho, 2006).

American Society for Training and Development (ASTD) defines development as a process for increasing HR quality (Wan, 2007). Also, individual development can consider as growth of person’s ability by consciousness or unconsciousness leaning (Talbot, 1997).
Three different perspectives identify about human capital development as followings:

- Perspective of human capital development based on abilities, which emphasizes on present resources within organization;
- Perspective of mental contract, which focuses on relation between employee and employer;
- Perspective of collective learning/organizational learning, which emphasizes on organization as production, improvement and transfer of knowledge (Wan, 2007).

Evidence shows training actions and coaching as a tool for HR development is essential (Rowold, 2008). HR development helps to individuals for learning new skills and knowledge, realizing organizational values, and developing organizational performance.

**Leadership Development**

Burnes (2003) suggests most organizations tend to leadership development as a distinct subject, whereas the leadership development plans often to fail. One reason is that manager’s needs are not in accord to organization’s needs, and organization has less emphasis on experimental learning (Shanley, 2007). It was thought that leadership development is created by training individual skills and abilities. But surveys show there is an intricate interaction between selected leader and his/her organizational and social environment (Day, 2000). That is, leadership development accents on making the social capital of organizations (Spendlove, 2007), and making employees’ skills and competencies (Olivares, 2008).

There are some reasons for leadership development within organization:

- to increase benefits by right leadership;
- to save time and cost;
- to permit employees’ promotion and advancement by develop new talents;
- to strengthen clienteles’ satisfaction via relations improvement; and
- to make stimulus to persuade individual development (Addison & Cunningham, 2009).

Concerning leadership development, Barlow (2006) believes that anyone upgrades to a point with different needs and responses to change in different ways. This issue is illustrated in figure 1. First stage is readiness for new role. This may form when person is identified as a talented. After upgrading, he/she needs to development exchange in change stage. It is not important how is proceeded the exchange. Finally, person needs to be supported for role development along his/her career in future. Many managers fail in transmission stage because there is not enough support for role development.
Some surveys present following processes regarding leadership development:

1. To identify organizational challenges: the required leadership competencies should define to confront organization present and future challenges in organization. These questions may be raised: What is your organization vision? Which are the performance goals? What are doing to attain this vision?

2. To identify and prioritize leadership needs: the required leadership resources should summarize to confront organization mission challenges. To consider leadership needs, it is necessary to focus on these questions for develop leaders’ traits: How leader’ behavior could be an obstacle to introduce organization needs? How the leadership development could help organization to describe its own goals? What changes may need within system to support development plan?

3. To adjust leadership competencies with organization goals: The leadership needs should adjust to leaders’ competencies when they are attained. A useful tool is the database base on leaders’ competencies.

4. To specify selected persons and to determine competency level for per leader: Competency level for per leader should determine, that it attains by leadership development activities.

5. To realize presented format: A required format should plan to attain outcomes. What learning events are needed to help leaders’ competencies? (Hammett, 2008). To raise leadership development, it is necessary to study specific activities for leadership development. To choose any activity, it depends to goals and strategies of the organization.
Leadership Development Activities

Surveys show that successful organizations focus on building the comprehensive set of leadership development activities, as they support a large extent of talents through organizations (Amagoh, 2009). Choosing activities such as coaching, development centers, and feedback 360 are correlated to development (McDowall & Mabey, 2008).

In addition to the above methods, Gerstberger & Snyder (2006) present the following leadership development processes:

- **Leadership Valuation**: Using analysis tools for leadership effectiveness and feedback 360 to prepare comprehensive data of managers and supervisors about leadership traits;
- **Leadership Training Workshops**: A leadership training workshop in two days presents leadership principles;

Two types of chief leadership development activities in successful organizations, coaching and feedback 360, scrutinize:

**Coaching**: Coaching emerges as a significant tool for training and development and it emphasizes on specific issues correlated to real life (Jones et al., 2006). Coaching usually consists of a series of sessions between a coach and a trainee (Palmer & Whybrow, 2004). Coaching is different from training. Training is usually a one-way relation. Managers can train their employees to do tasks, but employees may not realize or accomplish their managers’ expectations. Coaching is a two-way relation. When trainees realize consequences, the trainers present feedback and permit trainees to justify their activities again. This process is a continuum until they achieve the expected results (Champathes, 2006). Therefore, it provides practical learning opportunities for trainees (Toit, 2007). The coaching success depends on the partnership between the organization and the trainer (Stewart & Palmer, 2009). Meanwhile, the main aim of coaching is facilitation of performance, learning, and individual development (Downey, 2003).

**Feedback 360**: Performance appraisal or valuation aimed at development is a vital element in HRM (Dierendonck et al., 2007). For the first time, Lawler (1967) mentioned appraisal based on one source could not provide enough information to performance appraisal. The performance difficulties could be possible by multiple-information. Feedback 360 or multiple-appraisal is the process of collecting useful information of multiple-source relevant to an individual. Individuals usually receive feedback from multiple internal and external sources, such as supervisors, managers, subordinates, and sometimes customers. Any source provides specific feedback (Rensburg, 2006). In fact, feedback from multiple-source can be a valuable source for performance (Dierendonck et al., 2007). This tool is used to evaluate the competencies and behaviors which relate to individual's job performance (Korotov, 2006).
A survey shows that feedback 360 advantages for individuals, team and organization as following:

For individuals:

- this process helps people to realize what is viewpoint of people toward them;
- it detects blind spot;
- it gives a feedback that is necessary for learning;
- people could manage their performance and career better;

For team:

- it intensifies relation between team members;
- it makes better trust and relation;
- it supports team via partnership of team members in development process;
- it increases team effectiveness;

For organization:

- it reinforces cooperation culture;
- it makes better opportunities to employee’s career improvement;
- it improves service to customers via customers’ partnership in appraisal; and
- it facilitates to implement the respective training plans (Saiyadain, 2003).

Although the feedback 360 stem is hidden in performance evaluation, but it essentially is used as a development tool because managers and employees could improve your performance and behavior skills by knowledge of viewpoints others. Therefore, the organizations utilize this method for many aims, such as performance evaluation, planning to employees’ promotion, HR planning and organizational evolution.

Conclusion

Leadership development helps managers to learn new knowledge and skills, to realize organizational values, and to improve organization performance. Viitala (2005) believes the organizations in which are organized leadership development well and it is related to strategic management, managers are primarily conscious of development necessities in individual level and so in general level.

Mighty & Ashton (2003) discover leadership development effectiveness from viewpoint of educated people. They believe this plan is influenced on them and on their organization, positively. Particularly, they realize it affects on their career improvement and professional development.

Surveys show that investment to HR development and particularly to train causes to increase productivity and profitability in organizations. Therefore, leadership development should occur
continuously. Meanwhile, developmental plan could cover wide district in organization. This plan is effective to career management, training and development, performance management, strategic human resource planning, recruitment and selection, and succession planning activities. These factors take priority over the congruence with organizational requirements.

References