



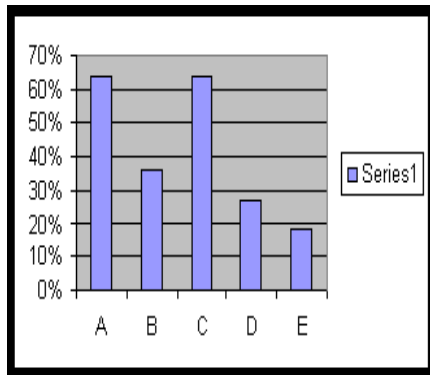
CAREERS – PEOPLE SUCCESS TRENDS: A PERSPECTIVE

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PEOPLE SUCCESS TRENDS



A	MULTIPLE SKILLS	- 64%
B	TEAMWORK	- 36%
C	COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT	- 64%
D	VALUE BASED LEADERSHIP	- 27%
E	TECHNOLOGY COMFORT	- 18%

MULTIPLE RESPONSES FROM EACH RESPONDENT HENCE TOTAL IS NOT 100%

In addition to critical people success factors, some trends and perspectives were obtained that involved some key learning's on what additional factors determines that elusive successful person. Here are the responses and some learning.

- a. **Multiple skills and Versatility.**¹ That the organization needs managers with skills and capabilities that are beyond learned or academically inclined attributes has been identified as a CEO expectation. Versatility again implies going beyond generic specialization and seeking capabilities and knowledge that make managers do beyond current recognized areas of expertise. Asking for skills beyond current role would necessitate appropriate identification of desired skills and concurrent training. Self-learning methods need to become organizational practice with time off for learning and up gradation of skills. As employees gain additional skills their confidence to make role shifts or handle more complex work increases. Team working necessitates some degree of multiple skill competence given scare human resource for each team assignment. Versatility although combined along with multiple skills could mean additional conceptual features that need to be studied. For one thing versatile may mean a combination of knowledge, skill and behavioral attitude to do other things. Versatility could indicate an attitudinal disposition to be open and willing to learn the unknown. It could mean creativity and the ability to risk into unexplored areas.

¹ Renuka Ramnath, Chief Executive and Business Head of ICICI E Commerce initiative calls multiple skill and versatility as the "Key Quotient" of the new age professional.



Versatility to some implies experimentation and wandering along paths beyond job role and expectation. Simplistically stated versatile managers demonstrate potential to grow and shoulder additional responsibilities and are normally identified as high flyers in the corporation. Some key issues are:

1. Multiple skills no longer indicate rudimentary technical efficiency skills or productivity enhancing capabilities. The skills of the modern corporation could range from complex computing to effective writing or ability to connect one project learning to another given similarities of goals or purpose.
2. Multiple skills and talents are sometimes learnt on the job rather than through a formal training workshop. While a formal platform or a foundation could be laid, the trainers capability to make a trainee into an effective writer, a computer operator, a data analyst or a payroll processor through a three or a five day workshop is not reality. Self-learning, simulated learning, colleague coaching, virtual web learning schools are some additional ways to make this learning happen.
3. Defining usefulness and relevance of multiple skills and its implication to work is but a fair organizational process requirement. An innocent employee working nights and learning advanced windows application in a Java environment or a learning Spanish when the company is planning to close down its offices in South America deserves a honest communication on what additional skills would help him/her add value.
4. Versatility should be encouraged where employee has shown an inclination to take up untested unproven roles. A deserving case would be executive sabbatical when the employee wants to break work for one year to learn finance and move from his/her current manufacturing supervisor role.
5. Business management graduates who are risk averse despite possessing multiple skills and versatile capabilities should be dealt with a firm career counseling discussion to make the move.
6. Traditional managers who have seasoned into their roles over many years but are now in the way of young aspiring managers should be encouraged to make mid-career moves that are in sync with their intrinsic capabilities.
7. Versatility indicates capability of both personality and academic intellect. These managers form an essential part of tomorrow's knowledge managers. Nurturing and caring for their well-being and job satisfaction is a role that corporate CEO's would take upon them personally.

b. **Teamwork and Group Work.**² The second area identified by the CEO's as a key trend and consequently their expectation from successful managers is the behavioral

² Ulhas Deshpande, Director (Personnel) of Parke Davis, India calls for change management to usher in team work and group cohesiveness as critical functionality's for the new economy.



competence to work, enjoy and perform in team, group and a cohesiveness environment. While individual excellence is measurable and easy to practice or execute, making teams happen has been more written about than actually practiced and measured effectively. Even today organizational capability to reward team performance has not reached a level of transparent credibility. Asking potentially good managers to become comfortable in teamwork and group situations continues to be a favorite CEO expectation. In fact performance appraisals and competency models continue to show team working as one of the most important behavioral trait for effective managers. If all individuals were to work as team, individuals are no longer required is one perspective. Again if individuals connected by effective systems do all work, teams are not required. The question before organizations is what is an ideal mix for bottom line impact. Neither teams by them or high performing individuals make organizations successful. High performing individuals working in teams make organizations successful. All other logic of making teams effective with multiple competence levels of people together run into some amount of rough weather given inherent competitiveness in work settings. Organizational processes require creating structures that are appropriate to a work role situation and the demands made by the customer. Not all customers are happy dealing with teams. They are forced to deal with a new person every time instead of one single point relationship manager. But a single point relationship manager supported effectively by a team makes the customer happy for it is no longer one person that the customer is dependent upon. When goals attain a level of clarity and are quantifiable with roles attributable to individual member's teams make effective performance happen. For individual effectiveness despite these stated weaknesses team working becomes an inevitable reality. And that is the point being made here. Interdependence is built into organizational systems and work roles enhancement organizes around people who work and perform together. There is an implicit and tacit understanding that teams make better work environment and people prefer a climate where colleagues and peers help and support each other. Some critical assumptions are:

1. Group working indicates organizational belief system that teams contribute more effectively to bottom line performance. A formal statement to the effect would help people believe in the good of team working.
2. Team building is a formal training methodology and should be appropriately implemented across various organizational levels.
3. Organizational policies and systems, more so HR policies should support and sponsor team working. Goals, quality of assignments, freedom to perform, open ended structures, self-governance and appropriate rewards form some parts of this policy directive.
4. Team values and behavioral norms for group working should be communicated while attempts are made to introduce team structuring.
5. Group working implies cultural and personality influences over tasks, deadlines, past standards, personal styles and managerial attributes.
6. Multiple skills should be consciously encouraged to help members supplement for missing links and skill gaps and shortfall.



7. Teams mean an element of personal sacrifice for the overall good of team effectiveness. Intellectually outstanding individuals would need to downsize their speed and articulation to make way for peer equivalence and group standard setting. In the short run this could be frustrating but some willingness to let go current advantages may mean a summation of group effectiveness that could more than overwhelm individual talent and capabilities.
- c. **Competency Development.**³ ⁴CEO perspective on competency development deserves critical evaluation and a clear elaboration. While organizations have identified their core competence through an internally and externally adapted strategic planning and competitive scanning exercise, organizational need to integrate these competencies with that of people who would make it happen is critical. Essentially competency development relies on creating behaviorally anchored rating scales that define role competencies, job details, individual competencies and attempts to match them appropriately. At the start up stage is the identification of the competencies and creating appropriate matches between organizational and individual competencies. Thereafter follows benchmarking competencies that are critical and supportive for each role being performed and each role incumbent. These competencies become the minimum standard for effective performance. When Organizational and job role competencies are matched it is eminently possible for several mismatches and inappropriate people placement situations to arise. The task now would be make these people and job role changes to make the best fit happen. Obviously this is easier stated than done. Moving large-scale population across jobs over night is not the best of managerial acts. On a constraint choice basis organizations now indulge in competence development to bridge the identified individual competence gaps. Some organizations like the Canadian Imperial Bank have created competence maps to plot available and desired status of competencies. Generically individual effectiveness implies knowledge, competence, skills, talent and behavioral attitude. Some overlap has become inevitable conceptually in this entire hairsplitting break up. Some quick measures are:
1. Creating Competency Matching Clinics that perform an all year job of identifying and bridging competency gaps.
 2. Making the continuing synergy between organizational core competency and individual/job role competency.
 3. Integrating competency building exercise beyond just the appraisal system and making individuals constantly worry about prioritizing which of the 25 competencies identified for his/her job role is critical and which of them are supportive and what remains as nice to have. Planning a logical learning curve methodology to bridge the gap, if any, should be a part of the program.

³ HSBC has over many years used "Assessment Center" as a method for recruiting, training and career planning.

⁴ Presentation by the author at **Compensation 2000 and ESOP** at Taj Mahal Bombay for ICM Worldwide.



4. Creating a selection and hiring system that evaluates competencies at the start up stage is a good beginning to ensure future competencies are gained at entry level.
5. Training on competency is not always an easy task. For example, strategic thinking capability through a 5-day workshop may not return an enlightened strategic thinker for the corporation. Instead mentoring through a formalized coaching system through an attachment with a superior who has proven strategic thinking skills could be a starter, perhaps smarter.
6. Competencies today form an important development tool for many people evaluation factors. For example competencies are used for selections, training needs identification, compensation where competencies are linked to pay, performance appraisal to link judgement over competencies for the year under evaluation (expected vs. actual behavior) potential assessment and succession planning. Choice of a leader for this corporation is dependent on the existence of the following competencies to a high degree.

Illustration 1:

The following illustration shows competence pay linkage to levels of contribution, existing pay zones and stages of competencies. There is a direct linkage to competencies and the corporate pay structure. Both base pay and performance is double linked to competencies. As individuals excel through their achievement of goals as well as their competencies pay reflects both.



COMPETENCY : PAY ADJUSTMENT PROCESS

LEVEL OF CONTRIBUTION	COMPETENCY STAGE				% OF BASIC INCREASE
	NEW	DEVELOPING	COMPETENT	EXCEPTIONAL	
OUTSTANDING	6	8	10	12	
EXCEEDS	4	6	8	10	
ACHIEVES	2	4	6	8	
UNSATISFACTORY	0	0	0	0	

EXISTING PAY ZONES
TEL BANK COMPANY

Illustration 2

Another example of the importance of competencies can be explained through the chart given below. Essential competencies and reward linkages for a British Insurance company has been listed below. Each desired competency has been linked to a select list of reward and managerial process reinforcers. Customer orientation and problem identification would necessitate pay increase through the 360-degree, bonuses and non-cash awards. The linkage deserves study, as competencies are no longer treated as a performance appraisal attribute evaluation. A direct connection to bottom-line orientation, customer satisfaction and other business variables are appropriately integrated. As a consequence competencies no longer follow the traditional behavioral and skill evaluation set. Business competencies, for example, customer satisfaction, financial statement understanding and interpretation, cost management, concern for quality and manufacturing excellence. Innovation, new product development, intellectual property creation all could form a part of the desired competencies. For HR professionals reaching consensus on company, individual competencies and reward systems is an important step to make competencies understood and implemented in right earnest.



ESSENTIAL COMPETENCIES & REWARD : INSURANCE

COMPETENCIES	REWARD REINFORCERS
Customer Service Orientation Problem Identification	360 Degree for Pay Increase Bonus for C Satisfaction Non Cash Awards/Recognition
Initiative Tolerance for Stress	Market Rates for Pay Increase Flexibility of Package/Broad banding
Communication Work Standards	Open & Simple Reward System Employee Assistance Program Pay Equity & Monitoring
Teamwork/ Cooperation Planning and Organization	Team and Individual Bonuses Celebrate Successes
Maximizing Performance Decision-Making	High Variable Pay Element New Performance Mgmt System Bonus at all Levels
Leadership Delegation & Follow Up	Even Higher Variable Pay Increase Open Communication of Results Catch People Doing it Right

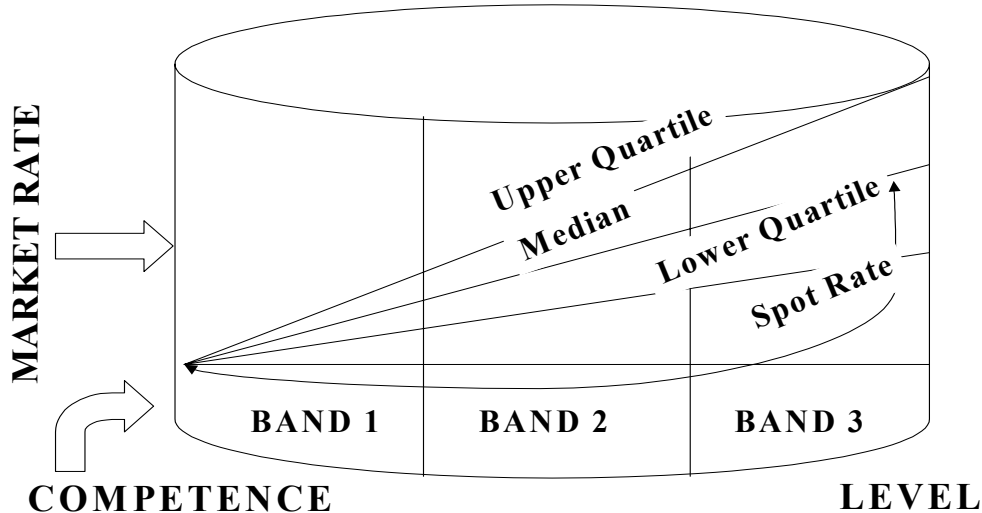
Illustration 3:⁵

The chart below indicates market comparisons and appropriate benchmarks to connect the pay curve with market rates and competence levels all within pay bands. At the top end of the pay curve would be employees who deserve upper quartile pay increase or fitment and that which is in consonance with their benchmarked competence level. Both market and the benchmarked competence level at the top quartile does not mean that the incumbent deserves the pay but is an indicative level of pay subject to the incumbent meeting absolute standards in respect of performance, market value and competence benchmark. A unique tweaking done here indicates a spot rate for individuals who could be fitted at any end of the market and competence level provided the person possess a competence for which a unevaluated spot rate is desired and made eligible.

As organizations develop capability to pay for competency hiring individuals who possess the desired competency is made possible. Compensation surveys that have hitherto before been studying comparable compensation based on job value would now have to evaluate a combination of job value and the appropriate competency as is relevant to that job role incumbent.

⁵ Pfeffer, Jeffrey, and Alison Konrad. (1991). "The Effect of Individual Power on Earnings". *Work and Occupations from Managing With Power by the Pfeffer, Jeffrey.*

PAY CURVE - COMPETENCE RELATED MARKET RATES



This is likely to become complex given uniqueness of some competencies that are quite relevant only to the organization in question as they are linked to the core competence of that particular company. This is a potential area to study.

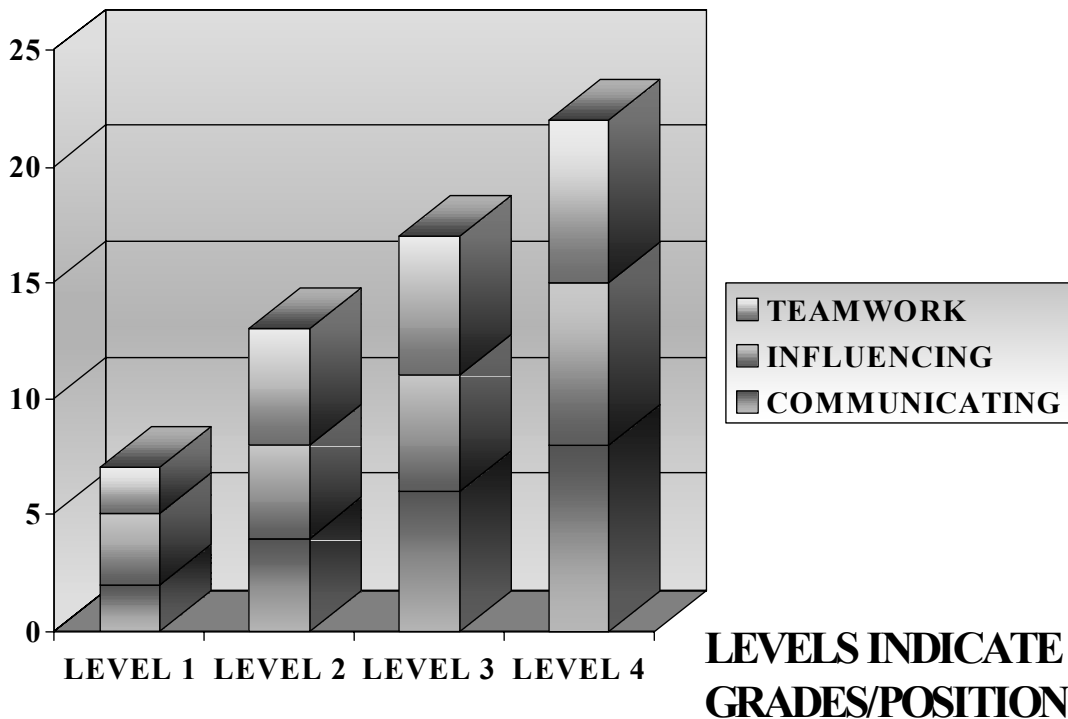
Illustration 4:

This chart profiles quite clearly with some illustrative examples of some competencies and how they are connected with appropriate Weightage for each level/grade or a position. Here the competency assessment is a function of the evaluated target job level and how each of the competencies fit in at each level. At the highest level being level 4 the weightage is reflective of the job profile and consequent complexity. Seeing this illustration along with illustration 3 would help us understand level/job related competence pay as a function of benchmark and market value.

In addition to the competencies mentioned illustratively the method for pay could include both managerial and functional competencies as measures for rewards. The double linkage to both level of the job (grades/position benchmarks) together with competency makes it relevant to ensure pay is also linked to the position and responsibilities shouldered by the incumbent.



ASSESSMENT OF COMPETENCY AGAINST TARGET JOB PROFILE : INSURANCE COMPANY



- d. **Value based leadership.** This has been dealt with as a part of the people success factor responses analyzed in Part A.
- e. **Technology comfort.** ⁶CEO's are asking for employee technology comfort and this obviously is not directed at technocrats and IT engineers. This is at 18% of the sample size asking for technology comfort. CEO's are insisting on an above average level of IT and computer understanding, including user friendliness and managing capabilities. Everyday use of lotus notes, windows messaging, outlook express, spreadsheets, access or the use of the web and the Internet is perhaps a way of life for a select and inclined few. Not for the remaining many for whom this neglect is either by choice or default. People success factor as demanded by the CEO's of this research appear to be quite clear. A friendly and positive disposition towards IT and

⁶ Gopal Rajagopal, Managing Director of Schoolnet India Limited desires virtual institution as the model learning organization of tomorrow. His institution has identified critical niche areas for propelling organizational growth with individual and collective learning as an area of foci.



computer systems is but a necessary minimum condition for individual effectiveness. Seeking technology comfort is not demanding an impossible act. With the advent on user-friendly software and mouse operated systems computers are no longer a tech wiz kid domain. Instead it is possibly a retired man's dream. Imagine all the time that can be spent browsing the web and writing emails to grandchildren. Guess the issue is not one of competence but of an attitude and disposition towards an untested and unexplored arena. This research clearly shows no escape from the reality of technology friendliness. Some suggestions:

1. Make data and information computer dependent and make people seek IT for their basic work, and day-to-day functioning.
2. Stay away from employees who refuse to offer their communication through email and are keen on writing memos.
3. Eliminate individual secretaries who are made to read and respond to emails and type reports or make research and data analysis.
4. Mandate minimum computer literacy.
5. Tech comfort also implies a CEO expectation that much of the future businesses are likely to be driven by IT. E Commerce, ERP, supply chain effectiveness, logistics and the entire work on knowledge management – warehousing and mining.
6. People capability on technology is an attitudinal issue and should be addressed as such. No longer is it a competence issue. Behavioral intervention would be an appropriate tool to resolve this dilemma in the minds of the non-users.
7. There is no substitute to the boss asking for reports, presentations, analysis and all that the computer can do from his team members.
8. People work to demonstrate performance and enhance their basic productivity. There is no reason to believe why employees if offered the incentive and motivation to work in a computerized environment would decline to do so.
9. Reiterate the fact that the new economy is highly individualized and managers are unlikely to find young colleagues who are willing to waste their time doing the boss's work on machines.
10. Despite all effort where computer literacy is still a problem we probably have a problem employee and should be dealt with appropriately.

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