

## Executive Insight >> Thought Leaders

### Mission Critical

#### Aligning Employee Contribution, Commitment and Careers

A peek inside the average corporation reveals organizational systems (pay, performance management, employee development, career management) that have not changed in any fundamental way for years.

In our era of changing employment relationships, employee expectations and workforce balance of power, it is increasingly incumbent on organizational strategists to correct this situation and design new systems to meet the ever-shifting organizational context.

This Executive Insight Thought Leader profiles one division of a major multinational who recognized this need, and drew on Charlesmore's best practice portfolio to configure and integrate a system that leverages employee contribution, commitment and career development.

The company supplies industrial automation and infrastructure systems to the automobile industry. Engineering capability is central to its value proposition, yet it enjoyed little tangible differentiation from competitors in the ongoing battle for the hearts and minds of the best and the brightest in the industry.

We studied the key factors that affected employee commitment of technical knowledge workers. Drawing from business and academic research, and validated in a series of employee focus groups, we concluded that the following factors were critical to creating an "employer-of-choice" work environment:

1. The ongoing development of technical skills
2. Working on leading-edge and skill-developing activities, with state-of-the-art tools
3. A climate for innovation
4. Pay for individual contribution
5. Work-life balance and flexibility

These five factors provided the conceptual underpinning of the design effort and a fully integrated organizational system was configured to meet these needs and to provide a platform to become a choice employer in its industry.

Through this design phase, the key questions that we asked were:

- What would constitute an employee development process that could truly be termed “industry leading”?
- Can one really leverage such a process to significantly improve our ability to attract and retain key talent?
- Can such investments in employee development tangibly be justified in terms of performance and contribution returns?

Our client decided that it could indeed win the war for talent if it could differentiate itself from the competitive pack, provide a purpose and a means for employee growth and development, create an environment of enterprise and commitment and continually add to the skill base of the business. Moreover, investments could be readily justified by enhanced organizational capability, reduced employee turnover, the reduction in costs of poor quality, lower recruitment costs and increased employee satisfaction, commitment and performance. Most importantly a strengthened organization would position them to achieve strategic objectives and business goals.

Following a conceptual design period, which mapped out the required elements, integration points and deliverables, a detailed specification and project plan was developed. The engineering function was selected to pilot the process so that templates and models could be developed and migrated to other parts of the business.

A key prerequisite of the process design was that the individual should drive, shape and own their development, so the system was developed on a groupware platform that allowed the individual to access and manage their development process from their own desktop or laptop, from work, or home, and when on the road.

The process design includes:

- A clear definition of competencies (knowledge, skills, personal attributes) required to be successful at different responsibility levels. Over 40 distinct competencies are organized into six skill clusters — business, behavioral, communication, processes and methodologies, core technology and applied skills and knowledge.
- A number of formal and informal electronic assessment tools (self, mentor, 360°; have-need and gap analyses etc.).
- A personal development center complete with different personal assessment tools, life-work balance/satisfaction tools and resources, health/wellness links, and a sequential on-line program that facilitates the creation of a customized personal development plan for the individual.
- A career development center full of tools, resources and techniques that help create a customized career development plan for the individual, together with electronic links to available job and

assignment opportunities elsewhere in the corporation. Also from the center individuals can review and sign-up for a range of different technical and professional skills training courses.

- A learning center that facilitates the capturing, dissemination and sharing of core technical and business knowledge, together with on-line links to other company, industry and business datasources to aid organizational capability development.
- A career path center that informs on job profiles and progression options, requirements and process.
- A reward and recognition center that details pay structures, increase guidelines and process, variable pay plan designs and summary descriptions and performance review guidelines and process.

This integrated system provides a platform to truly differentiate this company from all others in its industry in terms of employee-appeal and development. It also facilitates the development of an increasingly strong organization that provides distinct competitive advantage...

This case study highlights key best practice elements from Charlesmore's service portfolio, and shows how these can be customized and applied to meet client needs.



Charlesmore Partners helps clients develop the organization to deliver their strategies; to convert strategic intent into results.

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