

Talent Development : the view from the R&D in the industry

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In a large and complex corporate, the “one size fits all” for talent development will not work. We cover the whole innovation value chain, from ideation to technology transfer to factories, from basic life-science to process & product development, to industrialisation. We may have scientists with a high academic achievement next to a technologist with a high impact from technology transfer. Each has different skills and competencies that may contribute equally, but in a different way, to the company. And these may be employees in Europe, Asia, or America, from our different centres. Each will contribute with a different culture, and background. And they may be working also on very different product categories, having to master different practices as well. Operating along the innovation stage, whether at the fuzzy front-end, or whether at the execution, is also requiring a different mind-set. In order to cover this, we have defined an approach that is linking achievements, defined as impact on the company business, to a valuation of the contribution of the employee. This can be summarized as an ability to generate and transfer relevant knowledge that contributes directly or indirectly to the success of a business stream. For this, we have developed tools and practices that allow us to get a sense of the impact of our R&D employees. And to make it short, generating knowledge would reflect expertise, while transferring it would reflect leadership. Both are required, and both must go together in order to achieve high impacts in our organisation. These impacts and achievements are periodically reviewed, typically during the yearly discussion, and more often when required. This is then the opportunity for the employee and his line manager to discuss the development needs, or the enablers that will facilitate a career progression. Such enablers, reflected in development plans, have the structure of 70/20/10, where 70% of the talent development is the result of stretched assignments, 20% of relationship with peers and other experts, and 10% only resulting from a formal training.