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Employee evaluation systems: the qualitative approach

Let's explore how to effectively and objectively manage the evaluation processes of company collaborators: from choosing the model to its implementation.

If you work in Human Resources, you know well that, more than ever, simple employee training is no longer sufficient to ensure a company's competitive advantage. Any **human resources planning and development process** cannot ignore a careful assessment of internal performance and competencies.

These were the topics discussed during the webinar "**From Evaluation to Personnel Performance Management**" held by Mega Italia Media* on November 22nd.

The event, led by Laura Iacci (CEO of Skill Human Resources) and Marco Salvinelli (Business Developer Mega Italia Media), provided an overview of employee evaluation process management.

The analysis started with the consideration that the evaluation **process should be a journey accompanying the growth of collaborators throughout the evaluation period**, typically defined within a year, and should involve a series of steps.

Some companies, despite adopting evaluation models and systems, relegate the act of evaluation to the end of the calendar year. However, for the process to be effective, it is important to enter a **continuous evaluation management** logic, enabling corrective actions and constant feedback, which are significant growth opportunities for individuals.

Evaluation dimensions: "what" vs "how"

When initiating an evaluation process, **different models and styles** can be used depending on the objectives. In general, two different systems can be distinguished:

- those oriented towards evaluating the **results of employee performance**, focusing on "what I achieve."
- those oriented towards the qualitative dimension of evaluation, emphasizing not so much "what I obtain" but "how I obtain it." These systems are based on **observing the person's behavior**.

Evaluation processes focusing on the quantitative aspect are closely related to **remuneration**, aiming to activate individuals in a motivational key. In contrast, the qualitative approach acts on **personal growth, competencies**, recognition, and self-esteem.

This type of system yields significant results for both the organization and the individual, providing substantial benefits. It is based on the concept of development, conveying the idea that the company cares about its collaborators and their competencies.

Productivity, employee loyalty, and motivation are increased through this approach.

A shared qualitative system with collaborators also eliminates **concerns about being evaluated** unfairly and subjectively.

But what can be developed through evaluation?

As mentioned, the qualitative approach evaluates competencies, which can be broken down into:

- technical-professional **knowledge** (e.g., administrative, legal, commercial knowledge, etc.)
- **skills/abilities**, the characteristics enabling the optimal expression of knowledge, such as relational and organizational skills, etc.

When starting an evaluation process, it's essential to remember that knowledge and skills are closely correlated. A employee may have excellent knowledge of a specific topic, but if their ability to communicate information is insufficient, the knowledge may not be expressed effectively.

Furthermore, it is important to consider that knowledge and skills are also closely linked to intrinsic aspects of the individual, such as personality traits. In this sense, **motivation** plays a crucial role: if we have competent but unmotivated collaborators, their competence may not be fully expressed.

The Importance of Observation

In adopting a qualitative approach, competencies must be evaluated through the **observation** of the person's behavior. In this case, the evaluator will not assign a score to competence in general. Instead, it will be evaluated through the observation of behavior, which is what we see.

The evaluator will observe and record the collaborator's behavior, attributing what is observed to competence.

In this perspective, it becomes essential to train evaluators so that they can effectively manage the entire evaluation process. For the process to be effective, the evaluator must be capable of positively managing the relationship with the individual and communicating feedback and evaluations appropriately.

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