Talent Management Data Mining: Discovering Gold in LAP 360 Aggregate Data

By: Dr. Nick Horney

The nature of work is changing and has dramatic implications for human resource executives, especially talent-related challenges. Boundaries between organizations are blurring as companies strengthen interactions with suppliers, partners and customers, and as they decide which processes to perform and which to outsource. Improvements in connectivity, automation and technology integration have enabled companies to dynamically reconfigure business relationships in response to changes in markets, resources and skills. This has profound implications for the people who work for such companies, and the way their work gets structured, which raises important talent management questions for leaders:

• As business needs change, how can people quickly develop the new skills needed to meet those needs?
• How can a company with a varied and geographically dispersed workforce effectively educate workers in new skill areas?
• If skills change quickly to meet business demands, how can performance measures keep pace?
• Can we mathematically model and optimize human capital needs across an extended enterprise based on experience, skills, culture and even personalities?
• How can answers to the above also be made to meet the needs of the individual worker in a way that keeps him/her actively engaged and rewarded?

Questions for HR Executives to consider in creating an Agile Talent Management Process using The Agile Model® as a framework for illustration:

**Anticipate Change**

• Does the organization have a means to understand business need in terms of talent capabilities needed for a VUCA world?
• How does Human Resources continuously update the organization's shifting talent portfolio based on trends and patterns impacting the organization's strategy?
• How does our succession planning process enable us to anticipate leadership needs in a VUCA world? Have we integrated scenario planning into our process?
• How does the organization categorize departure risks according to their impact on business capabilities?

**Generate Confidence**

• What is the organization's strategy on how to deploy talent to achieve maximum business impact?
• How are capability gaps between business units' strategic needs and available leadership resources identified?
• How does Human Resources modify the position requirements or surrounding team to mitigate risk of failure within a stretch assignment?
• How confident is the organization that its succession planning process is dynamic and reflects the fluid nature of our business environment?

**Initiate Action**
• How fast can the organization flex its talent portfolio to meet the changing demands of a VUCA world?
• How do individuals receive feedback from others beyond their direct manager within their first six months with the company?
• What is used by the organization to strengthen relationships between new and current executives?
• How are the strategy and leadership planning cycles integrated to allow the organization to identify misalignments between leadership structures and strategic priorities?

**Liberate Thinking**
• How is role restructuring actively used as a strategy to align leadership roles with business strategy?
• Does the organization have guidelines around how to restructure leadership roles to minimize the potential costs of restructuring?
• How does the HR department build competence in organizational restructuring to be able to offer targeted assistance to the line in future cases of restructuring?
• What does the organization do to provide the individual with a formal opportunity to share his or her perspectives on the organization?

**Evaluate Results**
• How is an accurate picture of the long-term costs of not developing talent determined?
• How does the organization proactively assess the degree to which individuals will be stretched before placing them into developmental assignments?
• How are line managers held accountable for alignment between talent deployment and strategic goals?
• How does the organization determine the key challenges individuals face when moving into senior roles within the organization?

**Aggregating Assessment Data for Use with Talent Management Decisions**

Organizations typically use a 360 feedback system as a Development Tool to help employees recognize strengths and weaknesses and become more effective.

When done properly, the 360 is highly effective as a development tool. The feedback process gives people an opportunity to provide anonymous feedback to a coworker that they might otherwise be uncomfortable giving. Feedback recipients gain insight into how others perceive them and have an opportunity to adjust behaviors and develop skills that will enable them to excel at their jobs.

An illustration of a leadership 360 is the Leadership Agility Profile 360™, illustrated below. It includes the LAP 360 Report and a Leadership Agility Development Guide that provides recommendations on developmental experiences and resources to support the results of the LAP 360 Report.
When an organization uses multiple LAP 360s across business units, geographies, organizational levels, etc., these demographics can be used to sort leadership trends and patterns to help inform Talent Management decisions. The types of Talent Management decisions would include:

- What talent management trends cut across the entire organization that could be addressed through a comprehensive, but focused, organization development/training initiative?
- What talent management needs are unique to Marketing, Finance, Operations, etc. that might require a targeted effort in specific business units and not the entire company?
- What talent management needs are identified by level (e.g., manager, director, VP, etc.) that help inform the portfolio of leadership training/coaching initiatives by level?

Illustrative Aggregate Data Formats

**HeatMap Illustrating Gradient of Mean Scores for All 75 Items of LAP 360**

| HeatMap Illustrating Gradient of Mean Scores for All 75 Items of LAP 360 |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Visioning                  | Sensing                     | Monitoring                  |
| Anticipate Change -- All   | 3.39 3.2 3.25 3.29 3.35 3.24 2.85 2.76 2.98 3.00 2.90 2.64 2.85 2.89 |
| AC - Marketing             | 3.28 3.25 3.14 3.29 3.30 3.21 3.18 2.58 2.57 2.57 2.64 2.56 2.64 2.68 |
| AC - Operations            | 3.18 3.25 3.40 3.49 3.47 3.37 3.21 3.18 3.06 3.12 3.02 2.87 3.00 3.05 |
| Aligning                   | 3.17 3.20 3.21 3.20 3.17 3.34 3.22 3.29 3.29 3.29 3.29 3.29 3.29 3.29 |
| Generate Confidence -- All | 3.38 3.35 3.25 3.35 3.35 3.35 3.35 3.35 3.35 3.35 3.35 3.35 3.35 3.35 |
| GC - Marketing             | 3.17 3.20 3.21 3.20 3.17 3.34 3.22 3.29 3.29 3.29 3.29 3.29 3.29 3.29 |
| Decision Making            | 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 2.88 |
| Collaborating              | 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 2.94 |
| Liberate Thinking -- All   | 3.02 3.02 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 3.08 |
| LT - Marketing             | 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 3.95 |
| Overall Quantitative Results -- Highest overall item is found in the Initiate Action Competency (3.53) - Follows through on commitments and stated intentions (LAP item # 44); Lowest overall item is found in the Evaluate Results Competency (2.57) -- Aligns goals and key performance measures into scorecards for self and team (LAP item # 71)
Line Graph Organized by LAP 360 Leadership Competency Mean Scores

**Anticipate Change**

- Visioning
- Sensing
- Monitoring

**Generate Confidence**

- Connecting
- Aligning
- Engaging
The implications from these sample data on Anticipate Change might lead the Talent Management leadership team to invest in the following initiatives:

- As a result of an overall average score for Anticipate Change, a companywide organizational development initiative to improve its overall process for anticipating change in the marketplace by identifying key trends, patterns and shifts so that fewer surprises occur requiring knee jerk reactions of talent redeployment.
- The two key skills of environmental scanning and scenario analysis should be the primary areas of focus for improving the overall competency of Anticipate Change.