Chapter 78
Performance Appraisal Approaches and Methods for IT/IS Projects:
A Review

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ABSTRACT

In increasingly demanding environments, organizations need to manage their human resources effectively, as these are fundamental to their success. Therefore, it is important to improve the performance of these resources by conducting systematic evaluations and by collecting information on their productivity, training needs, and individual and team performance. In the context of Information Technologies/ Information Systems (IT/IS) projects, there is not much research work focused on human resources performance evaluation. This paper aims to fill this gap by reviewing approaches and methods for performance appraisal, which can be successfully applied in IT/IS projects. Are presented approaches and methods focused on: personality; behaviors; comparison; and outcomes/results.

INTRODUCTION

Organizations need to enhance the performance of their human resources by conducting effective and efficient management of those resources. In this context, the performance evaluation is an important component of the human resources management activity, bringing together different approaches and methods which might contribute to improve the performance of organizations. With the evolution of human resources management, it has become clear that human performance not only need to be planned using organizational objectives, but also need to be assessed and oriented to achieve those objectives.

The appraisal of human resources performance is thus fundamental in virtually all projects and organizations, and the case of Information Technologies/Information Systems (IT/IS) projects is no exception. These projects "have maintained an unfortunate reputation when it comes to success", since many of them exhibit serious problems in terms of meeting the scope, the time or the budget (Varajão, Dominguez, Ribeiro & Paiva, 2014). The success of IT/IS projects depends on rigorous project management processes, in which aspects such as the involvement of top management and customers, the definition of clear objectives and requirements, an effective management of human resources, among others, are critical (Colomo-Palacios, Gonzalez-Carrasco, Lopez-Cuadrado, Trigo & Varajão, 2014).

Although people recognize performance appraisal to be essential to the management of human resources and a key factor that influences the success of organizations and projects, there is little research focused on the particular case of IT/IS projects. The present paper aims to fill this gap by reviewing performance appraisal approaches and methods which may be successfully applied in IT/IS projects.

In the following section, we discuss the importance of performance evaluation. The third section describes the different types of IT/IS projects. In the fourth section, we present several approaches and methods for performance appraisal identified in the literature. Finally, some concluding remarks and future work ideas are presented in section 5.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

Performance appraisal is a measurement and systematic comparison of individual, group and organizational variables, supported in a framework of skills and/or pre-defined objectives. Performance comes from the competencies (knowledge, experience and attitudes) inherent to the individuals, from their personality, their motivation, interpersonal relations, the work environment and the characteristics of projects and organizations (Lussier & Hendon, 2016).

In organizations, it is common to implement performance measurement processes to assist, at the organizational level, in administrative decisions (e.g., salaries, promotions, compensations, transfers and dismissals) and, at the individual level, to help people to recognize the assessment made based on their performance (positive or negative), but also to allow the evaluator to give the employee feedback on his/her performance and how to improve. This evaluation process confirms the quality of the recruitment and selection process of employees, allows one to verify the effectiveness of paid training, and seeks to improve team and the organizational climate (Bernadin, Kane, Ross, Spina & Johnson, 1995; Carrel, Elbert & Hatfield, 2000). Performance evaluation should be carried out with particular caution, since employees who are dissatisfied with the results of their assessment processes may leave the organization. The turnover of human resources involved in IT/IS projects may represent a loss of valuable knowledge and organizational experience, accumulated over the years, with direct and immediate implications in

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