

Piloting of Performance Assessment

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Organisation: General Directorate of Civil Service

Country: Spain

Level of government: Central government

Sector: Defence, Economic affairs, Education, Environmental protection, General public services, Public order and safety

Type: Organisational Design

Launched in: 2011

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Description

2007 Public Employees Basic Law (2007-EBEP) outlined the introduction of performance assessment to the Spanish public employment system.

A Performance Assessment System has therefore been implemented as a pilot project across eight different ministries in order to gain better knowledge on the implementation of such a system and to raise awareness among public administrations concerning these new objectives. Via the implementation of performance assessment in selected units, performance assessment culture should be introduced and methodology and tools should be tested.

Methodology outline:

- Self-evaluation and evaluation interview.
- Objectives and competencies assesment.
- Focused at 26-30 levels (junior managers and managers).
- Focused at civil servants (no contract staff).

Means of support to participating Units:

- Monitoring committee: support and coordination functions.
- Virtual community (coordinated by INAP).
- Common documents for planning and programming: DPA.
- Training.
- Diagnosis activities and screening reports.
- Performance Assessment application (PA-APP).

Why the innovation was developed

The new regulation (2007-EBEP) aims to foster performance assessment inside Spanish Public Administration. The pilot project aims to prepare the central administration for this internal and far-reaching change concerning human resources management, and to develop knowledge before implementing performance assessment across central government. The project is applied in 50 units within eight different ministries and on a limited scope within each unit by only including pre-directive and top-levels.

- Testing this tool in a pilot makes the future implementation much more efficient by providing prior knowledge and learning. It also is an opportunity to correct, amend and change the process before real implementation.
- The pilot will also help to raise awareness about performance management systems among civil servants.

Public employees.

Existing similar practices

Pilot of performance assessment

In my own organisation

DG Personnel Costs and Public Pensions

The unit mentioned above was the first unit to launch a similar pilot in my organisation.

Other units that have experience of performance assessment -CIEMAT (Ministry of Industry), Compensation Insurance Body, *Boletín Oficial del Estado*, DG Traffic, and the Social Security National Institute.

<http://www.inap.es/boletin-de-funcion-publica-del-inap>

Regional system

In public administration of my country

Regions like Asturias, Castilla La Mancha, País Vasco-Euskadi have worked on performance assessment developments.

These regions have ruled their own PA systems, linking career, mobility and payments to PA results. They are working underway to implement new legal frame.

Results

Other improvements

Development

Design

The idea for the pilot emerged followed internal discussions within the ministry and with another directorate, the DG of Personnel Costs and Public Pensions. This resulted in a communication to all the ministries explaining the project and asking for volunteers.

Testing

We tested a performance assessment methodology under controlled conditions before wider implementation. Elements of the pilot include:

- No real impact on career, salary, mobility or training.
 - Limited number of participating units.
 - Use of a Monitoring Committee with common documents, software and methodology.
 - Use of mixed methodology e.g. interviews, self-evaluation, competency and goal assessment.
 - Steering committee to coordinate information exchange, meetings, and monitor process.
 - Only existing internal resources, e.g. staff were used.
 - Existing software was used for implementation.
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Challenges and solutions

- Lack of knowledge as sometimes units did not have much information from their ministries about the project.
 - Coordination and sharing information and training.
 - Different units had different levels of knowledge and experience of performance assessment.
 - Change in government after elections in 2011 slowed down process with new meetings scheduled to introduce newly appointed staff to the project.
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Partnerships

Participating units across eight different ministries.

Other Public Sector

Eight different ministries participated in the implementation of the pilot and they are providing the final reports for the project's evaluation process.

Lessons Learned

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- Pilot testing is a *soft approach* that makes changes inside organisations easier to understand. Workers get used to these HRM tools or changes more easily with this soft approach.
 - Information and *know how* inside Public Administration was useful to design and implement this project, and made it much more efficient.
 - While participation based volunteering makes the project easier we must consider that it is not the real scenario for performance assessment in the central public administration so many more difficulties should be expected with real implementation.
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Conditions for success

- Top level commitment and support.
 - Partners commitment: trade unions and main players.
 - Strategy based on training –information and *praxis*.
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Other information

Under the frame of CORA report, performance assessment is included as a strategic measure in human resources.

The development of this measure will take shape as a new pilot process in 2014.

