

# College Students' Performance Appraisal Based on Professional

## Competency: An example of Human Resource Management

### Professional English Course

ZHANG Wei<sup>1</sup> ZHONG Weidong<sup>2</sup>

School of Management, China University of Mining and Technology, Jiangsu, Xuzhou, 221008

.Business Administration Postdoctoral Mobile Station, Xiamen University

#### ABSTRACT

Because of the disjoint of appraising pattern from educational circle and employers in China, by 360 Degree Feedback, we apply the competency theory to professional performance appraisal of college students in order to help them improve their professional competency and realize the transition from colleges to jobs orderly.

**KEY WORDS:** professional competency : performance appraisal : education of college students

#### PREFACE

In China, it is very common that the graduates who were excellent in universities don't perform well. Why is it? Referring to the competency theory, we are able to find out that the tests in universities are only restricted to written exams on major knowledge whereas employers pay more attention to the assessment of non-written abilities and outstanding achievements. The competency theory inspires that universities should focus on the deficiency of students' professional competency, improve the performance in time and shorten the post adaptive period after graduation.

#### COMPETENCY THEORY

##### Concept of Competency

David McClelland (1973) <sup>[1]</sup>first put forward the definition of competency in an paper titled *Testing for Competency Rather Than Intelligence* in the *American Psychologist*, He brings forward that personal qualification and behavioral characteristic which really effect performances are competency rather than others. What is the competency? There're four more influential opinions as follows:

- L Spencer and S Spencer (1993) <sup>[2]</sup>believe that competency is the potential personal characteristic which is the reason of outstanding achievements in the working environment, generally including motivation, characters, self-concept, attitude, values, knowledge and skills

- Fleishman and Wstrogen (1995) deem that competency refers to the comprehension of knowledge, skills, abilities, promotion, ideas, values and interests;
- Mirabile (1997) figures that competency is the knowledge, skills, abilities and characters connecting with high-effective performances; and
- Green (1997) thinks that competency is working habits and personal skills that are measurable and helpful to the realization of the goals.

In conclusion, L Spencer S Spencer's opinion (1993) is the most systematical and widely accepted. Therefore, this paper adopts their view.

### **CHARACTERISTIC OF PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY**

Compared with the domestic research about competency, the overseas begin earlier. Comparatively more mature competencies of different professions have already been established.

At present, domestic research about competency show the only concern to managers of communications industry, top managers of family enterprises, stock brokers, teachers, pilots, human resource managers, marketing managers, technology researchers and technical developers, and no research is the link between competency in the education field and competency in the organization practice field. On competency of human resource managers, by demonstration research, Ph.D Gu Qinxuan et al. proved that the competency of human resource managers in China includes the abilities of communication, analysis, perception, problem-solving, service consciousness, reliable, appetency, self-study, self-control, pressure-enduring, adaptation, activity and the mastery of knowledge on human resource management<sup>[3]</sup>.

### **PROCESS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE ON PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY APPRAISAL**

How shall we appraise the college students' professional competency? We bring forward eight steps:

#### **1. Establishing the professional development strategy.**

Under the guide of universities' strategies and strategic management theory, by the theory of MBO, we establish the professional development strategy.

#### **2. Establishing the overall dimension of students' professional competency according to the professional characteristics**

Based on domestic findings of demonstrative research, combining with professional development strategies of one's own, investigating and researching scientifically, each teaching research team establishes the overall dimension of the students'

professional competency. If there are no ready research findings, teaching research team take the opportunity to make a wide social investigation and establish the overall dimension of students' professional competency on the basis of teaching experience and private environment of each university.

**3. Analyzing the nature of all professional courses and establishing skill-training carriers of each professional course**

In the process of this step, the professional courses can be divided into three parts: training carrier of conceptual skills, relationship skills and professional skills. For example, *Human Resource Management Professional English* is the course's conduit of mainly assisting the cultivation of human and professional skills as well as conceptual skill development essentially.

**4. Establishing specific dimension of each course's professional competency assessment on the characteristics of professional courses**

Take Human Resource Management Professional English for an example, combining with the course characteristics and teaching experiences, based on the theory of competency established by Ph.D. Gu Qinxuan, etc., we establish specific dimensions of professional competency: The abilities of strategic thinking, English-listening, expression, English-writing, translation, communication, problem-solving, self-study, creativity and the mastery of human resource management knowledge form these dimensions.

**5. Establishing the suitable ways of examination according to the specific dimension of professional competency assessment.**

Taking Human Resource Management Professional English for an example, examination practices of the course are primarily: role playing and written exam as assistant. Role play is that students offer appropriate solutions to a case in question, in groups in the form of role playing under the circumstances of a simulative case. It doesn't only test the mastery of English, but also checks the abilities of communication, self-study, and problem-solving. The assessment of strategic thinking is implemented by the well-connected design of simulated cases and improving the levels of managers with the background of globalization in the case.

The assessment of creative thinking can be carried out through not only the specific project but also role playing designed by students themselves, such as holding press conferences, debating among top groups, the process of demonstration, conversations during lunch in the canteen and so on. Yet, the weakness of the role play lies in that students' professional knowledge can't be tested systematically through this way. So the written examination is regarded as an assistant means of assessing the mastery of professional knowledge.

## **6. Establishing more than two appraising ways and the weight of each one**

Weight can be ascertained through the AHP and the Delphi Method. After a lot of experience, it is considered suitable that the weight of role play accounts for 70% and that of the written examination is 30% in Human Resource Management Professional English.

## **7. According to the result of performance appraisal, tutoring the performance, improving earlier and heightening professional competency.**

After their performance appraisal, students can acquire their performance result through private password. Scores of each specific dimension, especially establishing performance tutorship about the low-efficient and heightening professional competency personally are provided.

## **8. Realising the transition from college students' career plan to professional career management orderly, combining with college students' career plan.**

In conclusion, college students' growth in professional competency and competency in practice are connected with each other, which is good for realizing the orderly transition from college students' career plan to a professional career management path.

### **360 DEGREE FEEDBACK IN THE APPLICATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY EXAMINATION**

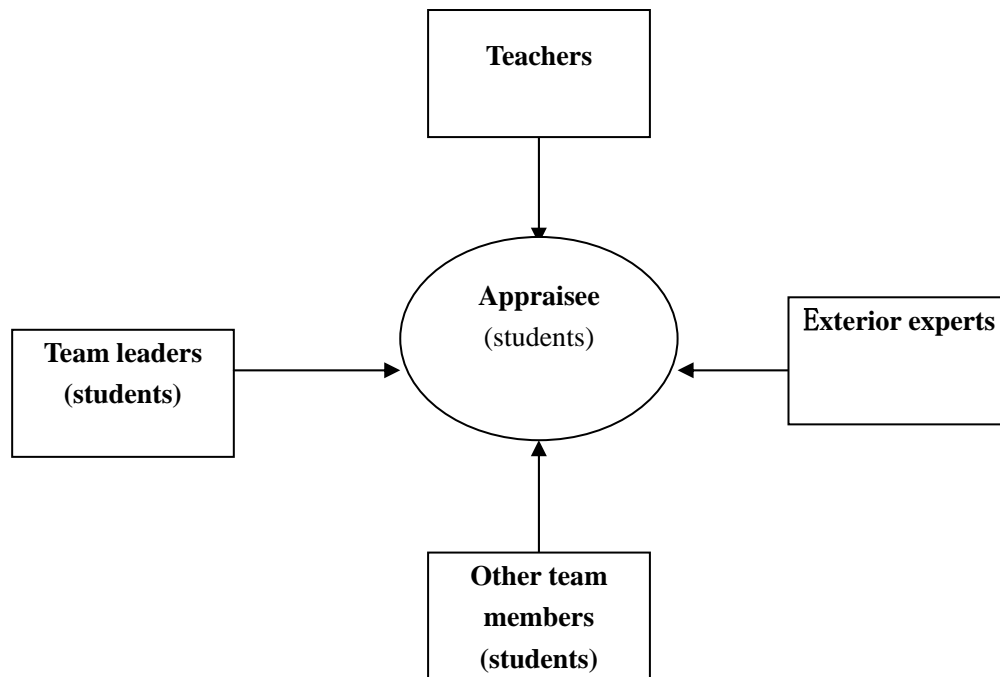
In the above-mentioned fifth step, we only show that different courses should be given different course evaluation formats. However, how to obtain the appraisal scores of various formats, where we need to research deeply. In China, as for the appraisal of traditional courses, it is only our teachers who come to the evaluation. From the performance appraising theory, teachers, as the sole source of performance appraising, have a lack of scientism. The performance of students in the process of formation of the performance appraising can not be reasonable. Therefore, taking 360 Degree Feedback method is an effective appraising method.

360 Degree Feedback, also known as the Multi-Source Feedback (MSF) or Full-Circle Appraisal, is a new kind of performance management tool; from the famous Intel Corporation's first. It is usually applied to the enterprise performance appraising. The so-called 360 Degree feedback is assessment by performance appraising of information sources, not only referring to the traditional examination by the expert managers, but also to be inclusive of peers, subordinates, external customers (or suppliers), as well as appraised by the employee. In short, the relevant personnel of performance appraising sources are closely linked to the appraised employee.

#### **Sources of Performance appraising about college students in the 360 Degree Feedback**

When 360 Degree Feedback introduced to the performance appraising of college students, employee's managers, colleagues, subordinates, external customers (or suppliers, etc.) and the

appraised employee himself may be replaced by the leaders of the appraised students' team, other team members, teachers, the appraised students themselves. If conditions allowed, we can also invite outside experts (experts of teaching inspector group, experts of practice enterprises) in the appraising.



**Figure 1. Outline of college students performance appraisal information sources by 360 Degree Feedback**

- **The main course of the evaluation**

For example, the team leaders in the performance appraisal, as the main performance appraisal information source, appraise professional competency based on different appraisal dimensions, and the scores of specific dimensionality will be given. Then put them together to form the overall appraisal of the students and the team leaders for the main appraisal.

Similarly, the other main appraisal will be given the scores of the specific dimensions and total score.

- **Make certain the weights of the entire appraisal are considered**

It can be discussed and decided by the teaching and research unit, but the appraisal can also draw on a quantitative method to determine the weights. With the sixth step of the second part, we can get the final appraisal of students' performance.

## **A FEW ISSUES HOW TO IMPLEMENT COLLEGE STUDENTS' PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE APPRAISEMENT**

- **First, reform in teaching to stimulate professional reform**

It is a complicated assessment process of college students' professional competency. As such it requires a lot of time and effort in initial teaching reform for teachers and the teaching research team. Therefore, according to the experimental nature, we can make teaching reform as a program as representative of an effective specialty of all institutions of higher learning .If successful, we can promote gradually in other professional areas.

- **Second, envisage the efficiency and the effectiveness of the reform.**

The eight steps of performance appraisal, basically established the overall idea and major work of the professional teaching reform. Once the reform is on track, (in a certain stable period, and professional development strategies, the overall dimension of professional competency, nature of professional courses, the specific dimensions of professional courses assessment, methods and weights of course assessment) there will be no need for a fundamental change. Initial inputs will increase but there are multiple benefits. Therefore, strategically, teaching efficiency and effectiveness is higher

- **Third, the support and development of network platforms and calculation procedures**

The calculation of 360 Degree Feedback is more complex, and it may increase the workload of teachers. But this work can be through the development of professional network platforms where the main appraisal can input its own appraisal. And through developing procedures related to the calculation automatically, the student's appraising final value will be formed. It can reduce the teachers' additional workload.

In addition, establish an exclusive account and private password for each student in the network platform. In the end of course examination, students can receive their information on the results of the performance and only see their own feedback, which is conducive to the protection of children self-esteem and personality rights.

- **Fourth, the overall dimensions and the specific dimensions divided into of the professional competency, performance tutor system should be constantly improved.**

Under the professional development of strategic stability and socio-economic stability, established professional competency and decomposition of the overall dimensions of the specific dimensions by students in the school. The employment cycle (four years) above, constant changes are required to keep up with the employing units and education between the balance of supply and demand. For the performance tutor system, it can be improved in at the end of the school year.

## REFERECES

- Mcclelland, "*Testing for competency rather than for intelligence*", American Psychologist , (NN), 1973,pp. 28, (NN)
- Spencer, L. M, "*Competency at work*", (NN), 1993, (NN), John Wiley & Sons , Inc
- GU.Q, Zhu.M, "*Research on competency of human resource managers*" China Human Resource Develop, (NN), 2001,pp.10, (NN)
-