**THE BLUE COLLAR – (E LEVEL) TO OFFICER (L LEVEL) E TO L PROGRAM**

**PERIOD OF THE PROGRAM – ONGOING SINCE PAST 1 DECADE**

**BACK GROUND / OBJECTIVE:**

**Terminology:**

**E LEVEL: Are those who form part of the Union / bargainable work force**

**L LEVEL: Non unionised, staff/supervisory cadre**

* To provide career opportunity to the existing employees working in the manufacturing unit as workmen, to grow and take up higher responsibilities within the company.
* Identify potential talent from within the business / organization and to develop them as future leaders.
* Ensure that the cultural fabric and value systems are kept intact and spread across the organisation, by recruitment from within.
* Whenever a junior management (L2 or L3) level vacancy arises in the company, provide opportunity to experienced E Level (blue collar workers) employees, who have pursued their higher studies and have qualified as graduates or diploma holders, instead of recruiting fresh graduates/diploma holders from outside to de-risk operations and reduce high costs ,

**UNDERSTANDING THE PROBLEM / OPPORTUNITY:**

Given the growth of the organization in the early part of last decade and also, the need to fulfill the growing aspirations of the employees in the shop floor, it was imperative for us to find an innovative, yet effective approach to meet these aspirations.

The challenges in terms of getting market recruitment for addressing the organization growth requirements, coupled with rising manufacturing costs at a point in time, hastened the need for finding a quick solution; Hence while the above posed a problem, it also provided us an opportunity to explore effective utilisation of resources. Further majority of the employees had completed at least one or more additional qualifications and wanted to be challenged into higher responsibilities!

**Specific Goals and targets:** More than specific numbers of people to be moved, we had initiated this exercise more as a voluntary submission from employees, which turned out to be a great success as the results presented later in the section, were to be believed.

**The process followed for achieving this objective:**

**Communication:** The primary level of communication was with the Union representatives. It was important that this initiative had the whole hearted cooperation as well as support from the Union. Hence over varied sessions and interactions in a transparent manner this was fully achieved, and they were extremely supportive of the process

Communication with Internal stakeholders for acceptance of Internal shop floor employees into positions / roles alien to them – Across the organization , one of the important task was to ensure that this process was effective enough, in the sense that the areas where these employees would be relocated had not only enough challenges, but also growth opportunities as well. Further the businesses were rapidly expanding, and they needed resources that had the passion and loyalty, which this segment of people readily brought to the table

**Communication to the work force:** This was done with a combination of making them understand the current challenges as well as the opportunities that beckoned them for the future. They were also appraised on the challenges the new work environment would bring in. For all of the above it was heartening to note that employees voluntarily agreed to take into stride the newer challenges and the ways to address them, by themselves.

Most importantly it was also clear that the respective supervisors / managers were also willing to look into this positively and move on.

**Detailed Process followed –**

Recruitment requisition form along with the justification for requirement, qualification, Job description, and preferred experiences received.

1. On approval by Head of HR, the HR dept will release an internal advertisement.

Whenever there is a huge functional need, Training department has arranged for conducting weekend training programmes, wherein it has helped prepare the interested employees to understand the competencies required for the new role and to acquire them on a voluntary basis during weekend holidays and after working hours.

1. The eligible employees send in their applications through their department. heads & Unit Personnel Executives.
2. Employees meeting the eligibility criteria are called for a Written Test through HOD.
3. Qualified candidates are called for interview through HOD.

[Weightages given for various attributes are:

* + 1. Education (Academic Record) 25%
    2. Written Test 25%
    3. Interview 25%
    4. Past Record 25%

(Supervisors view, attendance, Behavior, productivity & developmental activities like SGAs / CFTs – each will Carry 5 % weightage)

1. Selected employees are elevated to the advertised level.
2. Selected employees undergo specific orientation / Role transition training program to take up the new roles.

Examples of training given include the training in English and Hindi Speaking, Grooming skills, Retail skills, Eyewear related and so on.

We are also preparing the aspirant L level employees on how to face the interview on subject (for the lens manufacturing employees we taught about lens, spectacles etc.)

After short listing, the candidate’s role transition programme has been arranged. External faculties as well as internal leaders impart skills and knowledge to them and of course, equally the unique challenges to be faced by the participant.

1. Selected employees will be put on observation for a period of one year in L level (Staff – Non unionised category)
2. Fixation of salary is based on the last drawn salary prior to elevation.
3. On satisfactory completion of observation period the employee is confirmed in the Elevated level. In case the candidate is not found suitable he / she will be reverted back to the original E level position.

**Eligibility Criteria:**

1. For selection to L2 (Officer) level, one should have completed degree in the specified field.
2. For selection to L3 (Senior Officer) level, one should have completed diploma in the specified field.
3. As on the date of application, the employee should have completed EIGHT years of service.

**Measures / counter measures and follow through**

The process was a smooth affair, since the HOD’s were active participants in the same. Not only the manager from the department where the individual employee originated was involved, the interview panel consisted of the manager from the receiving function as well – IT, Retail, etc apart from HR.

Although initially there was some changes observed in the production areas with the reduction of manpower , t soon picked through continuous multiskilling of existing people , productivity improvement as well as partial/ full automation in some areas.

**Outcome and benefits**

**Benefits of this “E to L” programme:**

* About 550 Employees joined as operators have benefited out of this initiative, got career change due to encouragement for further Education programme.
* This programme has been defined and communicated transparently.
* Further this programme is fully supported by Titan Employees’ Union.
* Starting from 1997 to till last year ( consistently for 13 years) Operatives were given opportunity for movement to across businesses and also to various functions, namely core manufacturing shop floors in all the 4 businesses, Supply Chain, Designs, SAP, HR, Sourcing, Finance, Sales, IT, Retail, New Product Development, Training, Maintenance, projects, MIS, Pantnagar, Lens Lab etc.
* The benefits of this programme for the organization are,

**To Management:**

* Providing career growth for home talent.
* Meeting employees’ aspirations,
* Through this internal mobility retain company culture and values in various businesses in the organization.
* This movement of experienced people to new business bring in synergy for smooth take off and results,
* Achieving employees’ satisfaction and high engagement levels,
* Movement of experienced employees to new locations for new starter businesses and train new comers during course of daily operations.
* Organisation exhibiting care at Individual through this programme and develop employees as well their ability to face business challenges in new roles
* Able to retain 80 % of such talent in the system highly motivated (Operatives to Executives/ Engineers/ Managers)

**Such EMPLOYEES have achieved impetus in their Career:**

* + - New Opportunity to grow within the organization and even Head various operations within the organisation.
    - Ability to show higher performance and contribute in different new fields.
    - Grow Self confidence to meet challenges and become more talented
    - Willing to show high performance and learn new businesses by facing new challenges
    - Employees feel Titan is a great place to work by showing greater amount of engagement
    - Exhibit different frame of personalities and get recognized as important Titanians in retail, which was a new domain for such employees.
    - Employees, who moved through this gateway found opportunities to head other organizations.
    - Employees were able to head show rooms of different retail businesses and become successful and highly competitive.
    - Employees’ Union office bearers who chose to move their career to HR, found positions as HR Head in other companies

**This is a unique programme amongst core manufacturing as well as amongst TATA companies.**

This programme has matured over the last 10 years.

The encouragement provided by the management to all its employees in improving their knowledge and qualification through its formal and informal means has resulted in more 95% of its employees completing their graduation / Diploma programmes in various discipline and more than 30% of them completing their post graduation programmes enabling the organization to provide internal opportunities to more than 650 unionised employees moving up the ladder to supervisory / managerial roles over the years. Most of the movement has been primarily on the retail, services, SCM, HR, Manufacturing, Quality within the division and interdivisional movement.

Based on the organizational requirement and also meet the growing aspirations of these employee groups , the company has tied up with Sikkim Manipal University and is sponsoring these employee groups for an MBA program . The first batch is currently on.

Some of the results of this program have been as follows

Number of people moved across divisions since the beginning of this process

Reduction in manpower in the manufacturing and therefore cost reduction

Career growth of these people i.e. no of people who got at least one promotion after becoming E to L, a sample is given in table below

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **MOVEMENT OF E TO L ACROSS LEVELS** | | | | | | |
| **Year** | **L3** | **L4** | **L5** | **L6** | **L7** | **TOTAL** |
| **1998** |  |  |  | 2 |  | 2 |
| **1999** |  | 1 | 11 |  | 1 | 13 |
| **2000** |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **2001** | 2 | 32 | 18 | 1 |  | 53 |
| **2002** |  | 5 | 6 |  |  | 11 |
| **2003** | 1 | 28 | 3 |  |  | 32 |
| **2004** |  | 15 | 1 |  |  | 16 |
| **2005** |  | 5 |  |  |  | 5 |
| **2006** | 2 | 12 |  |  |  | 14 |
| **2007** | 23 | 1 |  |  |  | 24 |
| **2008** | 11 |  |  |  |  | 11 |
| **2009** | 1 |  |  |  |  | 1 |
| **Grand Total** | **40** | **99** | **39** | **3** | **1** | **182** |

Other outcomes can be shared during site visit

**Follow up:** Over the past many years continuous follow up with this program and the relevant employees is being done. Special meetings to addresses grievances if any, and special development needs etc are being constantly monitored and met by the HR team. The MBA program introduction was one of them

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT – THE TITAN TALENT MANAGEMENT PROGRAM**

**PERIOD OF THE PROGRAM – ONGOING SINCE PAST 4 years**

**BACK GROUND AND OBJECTIVE:**

The Talent management process at Titan Industries is a process meant for developing high potential resources in the organization, which can be groomed into future leaders of the organization. The program helps to identify, develop and retain the best leadership talent within the organization and ensures that the organization has a continuous supply of high potential individuals in the critical job, at the right time. The focus is to recognize high performance, address the aspirations of the talent and high potential and provide opportunities for career growth, which will help them in taking leadership roles in future.

Talent management process ensures bench strength of talent available for critical positions in the organization. The best talent in the organization is groomed by providing cross-functional exposure and developing the behavioral skills by means of various developmental initiatives to succeed to higher positions of responsibility.

**Understanding the problem /need:**

The need for having a talent management process was felt due to scarcity of talent in the industry and a need for retaining high potential talent within the company. The traditional process in the company had a lot of subjectivity involved in the identification of high potential resource. There was a need to develop a structured talent management process to bring in objectivity and transparency around the identification and development of talent, so that the end-objective is achieved.

**Problem Definition:**

* Need to build a strong leadership pipeline across the organization.
* Identify key talent at mid-management positions and groom them to provide for future leadership positions.
* Retain high potential talent within the company.

**Goals and Targets:** The need for enabling filling up of key positions with internal resources as well as the career growth for high potential in itself presented key challenges goals and targets to be achieved. Hence the definition and approach to this process, as seen in further paragraphs led to a series of outcomes towards the above objective.

**Analysis and process followed:** This was clearly defined into three stages

1. Talent Acquisition
2. Talent Identification and
3. Managing Talent portfolio

A brief of each is given below

**Talent acquisition**

The objective of talent acquisition is to attract best talent available in the market with high leadership skills and general management skills by creating a strong brand identity. Talent is acquired from recognized institutes and is also induced laterally into the organization. There are various entries – points for talent in to the company – MT, GET, TAS, Retail Trainees etc.

* TAS (Tata Administrative Services) :Fresher entry-level : Management Trainees, which the Tata Group recruits from premier institutes and assigns them to the respective organizations
* MT (Management Trainees): Fresher entry-level: Management trainees recruited from best B schools by Titan Industries and assigned to respective roles.
* GET (Graduate Engineer Trainee): Fresher entry-level: Graduate trainees recruited from various engineering colleges by Titan Industries for the Technical/Manufacturing assignments.
* Retail trainees : From specialist retail institutes
* Laterals (Experienced professionals): Through this entry scheme the organization recruits professionals who have relevant job experience in the required role / function.

Once the talent is acquired, for the next 2-3 yrs undergoes the respective entry-level development program. For e.g. an MT is put under MT program and GET under the GET program, TAS under Group TAS program and balance under the standard employee development modules based on the needs identified from the Performance Management System. On completion of respective program objectives and depending on the hierarchy / experience in the organization, one is eligible to enter two key talent management programmes – the Corporate Resource program and Functional Resources program.

**Talent Identification**

To enter in either of the Talent management programs, one has to satisfy the entry criteria. There are two filters which are applied to any individual who is eligible to enter the talent management program – Performance Filter and Potential Filter.

Eligibility: Employees of Titan Industries Ltd, who are in the mid- management positions (L6 to L9) with minimum of 1-2 yr experience in the company and recommended by Business Unit Heads.

* Performance Filter: This filter looks for the consistency of high performance of an employee in a given role for a minimum of 2-3 continuous years.
* Potential Filter: The consistent high performers are sent to assessment centre, which helps to identify leadership potential.

The assessment center classifies leadership potential into 4 bands. The first and the second band are taken in as corporate resources that are identified to have potential to move cross-functionally. The 4th band is classified as functional specialist, who is indentified to move within their function in leadership roles.

The 3rd band is discussed and debated amongst the top management (TMC: Titan Management Council), which calibrates them into functional resources and corporate resource based on their collective wisdom and consensus. The following figure depicts the process of calibrating corporate and functional resources

**Managing Talent portfolio**

Post Assessment centre and TMC discussions, two talent pools emerge

* Corporate Resources – These are high potential resources that can move cross functionally within the organization and can be groomed for leadership positions.
* Functional Resources – These are specialist who can move vertically and laterally within the function and can be groomed to become functional experts.

For each of the talent pools a **PPM** (People planning meetings) is carried with the following objectives:

* Career Plan (Immediate to 3 yrs and beyond 5 yrs)
* Development Recommendations

**PPM (People Planning Meeting) Process**

Personal planning meetings are the systematic discussions held for each talent pool member in order to plan the development path and future course of action.

For Corporate Resources : A panel comprising of MD, COOs, Head HR, selected TMC members, BU head and peer BU heads discuss each individual separately and chalk out the career move and development plan for the individual. (Direct reporting manager is called as and when required)

For Functional Resource: A panel comprising of divisional COO, HR Head, BU Head, and Department Manager discuss each individual separately and chalk out development plan for the individual in order to make him/her a functional specialist.

The In-company PPM process has three basic components: Input – Process - Output

**Input**

The objective is to have the personal profile of the individual. This data serves as the input for the PPM process. An Individual Development Plan is filled for each individual comprising of

* Person’s personal details—educational qualification, career history, earlier performance in the company, executive education etc.
* Immediate superiors view or judgment on leadership competencies
* Individual’s aspirations
* Key question (of importance while deciding the career path)
* Development recommendations from the immediate superior and BU head

**Process**

The entire report of an individual is circulated to the respective panel members with details of AC output.

The respective panel discusses each individual separately and chalks out the career move and development plan. The panel of sr. mgmt members with their collective wisdom debates and decides the best course of action that can be designed in order to groom the CR/FR to leadership positions.

**Output**

The minutes of meeting are documented and reproduced in form of Individual Action plan.

The IAP forms the basis for the future direction or subsequent actions or steps taken for the individual. The two clear outcome of the PPM process are

1. Career Plan – Next moves for the individual within next 2-3yrs and beyond 5 yrs
2. Development recommendations

Career Plan:

The corporate resources are put on immediate cross-functional movement and career growth, in line with their aspirations and organizational requirements. Each corporate resource that has spent around 3 years in the current role is required to move cross-functionally. The corporate resources are given first preference whenever there is a requirement for a critical position. They are also given first preference for position released through internal mobility.

The corporate resource who have not spent considerable amount of time in the current role are given on-the-job exposures by means of attaching them to a CFT, projects etc.

**Personalised Development Plan:**

The various reports that provide input for identifying capability gaps are

* Assessment centre feedback
* PPM feedback (IAP)
* 360 degree feedback
* One to one discussion with the individual

The development plans are broken down into – Relationship based, educational and on-the job experiences

The various leadership development initiatives are designed for the talent pool. Leading leadership development organizations like Franklin Covey, Ken Blanchard, TMTC and B-Schools like Alliance, Symbiosis, IIM-B, are engaged to develop relevant modules for the talent pool. Apart from this special subscriptions to various forums are obtained for the talent pool members. The top and senior management support the relationship based programs as mentors and coaches for CR and FR.

Apart from the Leadership development modules, the talent pool members are also given personalized focus where-ever required, through special courses, training etc.

**Effects and outcomes, and uniqueness**

**Key differentiators**

* Unique blend of objective and subjective assessment techniques to identify talent. Use of Assessment center to bring objectivity to the process, while also acknowledging the collective wisdom and experience of the top management to classify talent in respective categories.
* Democratizing the process: Immediately after the talent is identified into respective categories, a formal letter from MD is sent to each talent pool member informing him / her of the category he/she belongs and providing a rationale behind such decision. The AC feedback is also attached with the MD’s letter.
* Immediate recognition to talent identified as future leadership pool: A 10% CTC jump, immediately as the talent is identified.
* Collating a detailed profile (IDP) for each individual in terms of career history, performance over years, superior’s assessment of leadership skills, key questions which might of importance while deciding next steps and key development recommendations from immediate superior and Business Unit head.
* PPM process: People Planning Meetings to chalk out the detailed next steps for developing the corporate resources by using collective wisdom of top management. PPM being anchored by the respective Business Unit Heads.
* Involvement of top / senior management throughout the process by devoting ample man days round the year to discuss each talent individually. Each PPM meeting consists of a panel including - the MD, all COOs, peer BU Heads, HR head and respective
* Identifying and documenting the aspiration of each CR. Structuring the entire development plan around the future aspiration of the corporate resource
* Cross – functional movement: Identifying the next move (2yrs & 5 yrs below) and moving talent accordingly. Over 75% talents have been successfully moved cross-functionally.
* Documenting the post discussion minutes for each talent and circulating the same.
* Personalised Individual Action Plan.

**Benefits realized**

* Objectivity built in the process helped in acceptance of the high potential pool across the organization.
* Democratization of the talent management process helped in maintaining transparency across the Company
* 75% CR either moved or given additional responsibility, for the first time ever, across businesses and functions
* Enhanced acceptance of inter-divisional/functional movements
* A significant shift in organizational culture ….differentiation based on leadership potential has been accepted as a norm
* Increased focus on high performance
* Most (> 90%) of the critical positions filled internally
* Retention is 98% as on date
* Powerful engagement established between senior mgmt & CRs , due to one-to-one interventions (Mentoring, Coaching , counseling)

Results pertaining to the Talent Management are provided in the TBEM application

**Follow up:**

The program has helped to fill most of the critical positions in the company, internally. As a futuristic benefit of the program, all key positions in the company have a succession plan and key talents are being groomed accordingly.

The Titan Talent Management process is acknowledged as one of the best in the Tata Group Companies. The success of the program has warranted its extension to the other employee categories to include the junior management.

Currently the next wave of the Talent Management program, starting with a redesign of the Development centers with a globally renowned group in the field of Leadership development is under way, and the cycle is expected to repeat all over, with contemporary updates.

We would also in the long term be looking at extending a similar approach to next level of management.