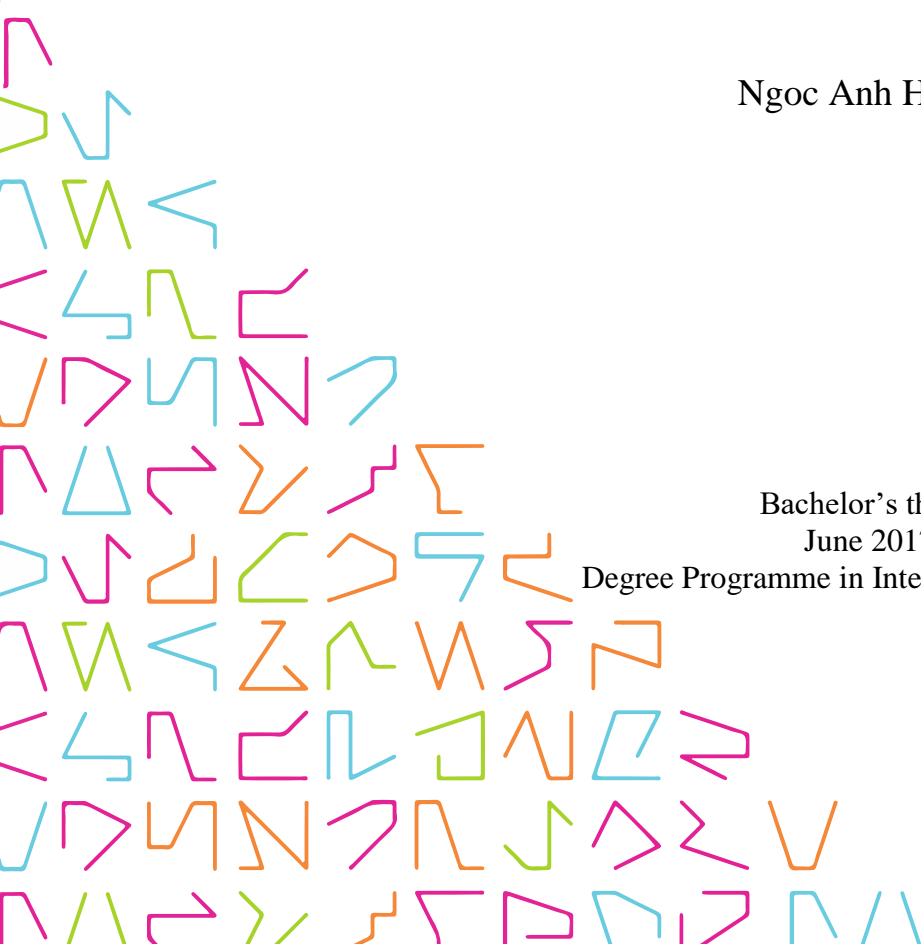


**DESIGNING TEACHER PERFORMANCE MAN-
AGEMENT SYSTEM
International School X**

Ngoc Anh Hoang

Bachelor's thesis
June 2017

Degree Programme in International Business



ABSTRACT

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Designing Teacher Performance Management System
International School X

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Nowadays, with the increasing diversity and competition in the business world, the pressure has been growing rapidly for business organizations, requiring them to keep seeking for methods to improve their effectiveness and efficiency. Hence, the study of performance management as one of the solutions for this problem has become a major topic in recent years.

The objective of this study was to build an integrated process of performance management for teachers at International school X, the commissioner of this thesis. The process aimed at improving the teachers' performance by linking their personal objectives and action plans to the objectives of the organization. The development driven system also focused on the teachers' personal development, which helps improving the quality of teachers and teaching for the school.

A mixed methods approach was used for the main research of this thesis, both qualitative and quantitative elements were included. The results from talks and discussions with the CEO and the principal came in the form of qualitative data, presenting their opinions regarding the performance management system. A student poll was delivered in order to collect students' feeling towards assessing their own teachers, which provides quantitative data. A combination of the two approaches was used in the teacher survey to figure out what were the short-comings of the current performance management tasks and what were relevant for the new system.

The study successfully resulted in a complete performance management system, which best suited the school and its teachers. A template timeline of the process for an academic year was also provided in this thesis. Some solutions were given to deal with the difficulties and the possible risks for the implementation of the system.

The implementation of the system was delayed for some preparations to be made; some findings from this study may not be relevant later on. However, this study will work as the basis for any future execution of the performance management plan for the school.

Key words: performance, management, system, process, individual, employee

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1	Background.....	7
1.2	Thesis objectives and purposes.....	8
1.3	Research questions.....	9
1.4	Thesis scope.....	9
1.5	Research methodology.....	10
1.5.1	Research methods.....	10
1.5.2	Data collection.....	11
1.5.3	Data analysis.....	12
1.6	Limitation and thesis structure.....	12
1.7	Reliability and validity.....	13
2	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK.....	15
2.1	Performance management.....	15
2.1.1	A brief history of performance management.....	15
2.1.2	The definition of performance management.....	16
2.1.3	The objectives and purposes of performance management.....	18
2.1.4	Model of performance management process.....	19
2.2	Balanced Scorecard.....	23
2.2.1	The Evolution of the Balanced Scorecard.....	23
2.2.2	The Balanced Scorecard perspectives.....	25
2.2.3	Strategy map.....	27
2.3	Performance planning and agreements.....	28
2.3.1	Role definition.....	28
2.3.2	Objectives.....	29
2.3.3	Performance measures.....	30
2.3.4	Performance and development plan.....	30
2.4	Executing and monitoring performance.....	31
2.5	Performance assessment methods.....	33
2.6	Performance review.....	33
2.6.1	Self-assessment.....	33
2.6.2	The formal review meeting(s).....	34
2.7	Reward.....	34
2.7.1	Financial rewards.....	35
2.7.2	Non-financial rewards.....	35
2.8	360-degree feedback.....	36
2.9	Impacts of culture on performance management.....	38

2.9.1	Power Distance.....	39
2.9.2	Individualism versus Collectivism.....	39
2.9.3	Masculinity versus Femininity.....	40
2.9.4	Uncertainty Avoidance.....	41
2.10	Difficulties implementing a performance management system	41
3	CASE COMPANY – INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL X	43
3.1	Case company in brief	43
3.2	Vision and mission.....	43
3.3	Managing performance at International school X	44
3.3.1	Faculty structure.....	45
3.3.2	Description	46
4	RESEARCH RESULTS	48
4.1	Interviews with the principal and CEO.....	48
4.2	Teacher survey.....	50
4.2.1	Limitations of the current performance management tasks	50
4.2.2	Opinions about the new performance management system.....	53
4.3	Poll for students	57
5	DESIGNING THE TEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL X.....	58
5.1	Communicating the organizational strategy and strategic objectives – Strategy map	59
5.2	Defining roles	61
5.3	Performance and development planning.....	61
5.3.1	Initial plannings.....	61
5.3.2	Adjustments of the initial plans.....	63
5.4	Delivering and monitoring performance.....	63
5.4.1	Allocation of responsibilities	63
5.4.2	Proposals for development and training activities/projects	64
5.5	Performance review and reward	67
5.5.1	Self-assessment	67
5.5.2	Formal review meetings.....	68
5.5.3	Additional sources of feedbacks and evaluation	68
5.5.4	Reward	69
5.6	Other recommendations	70
5.6.1	Performance management for new recruits.....	70
5.6.2	Process timeline	70
5.6.3	Tackling the challenges.....	71
5.6.4	Risks and risk management.....	73
6	CONCLUSION	75

REFERENCES.....	77
APPENDICES	81
Appendix 1. Current individual planning form for teachers	81
Appendix 2. Self-assessment form for teachers	82
Appendix 3. Teacher survey.....	84
Appendix 4. Poll for students	86
Appendix 5. Role profile - Preschool teacher	87
Appendix 6. Role profile - Primary school (main/homeroom) teacher.....	88
Appendix 7. Role profile - Middle/High school teacher	89
Appendix 8. New performance and development planning form for teachers.....	90
Appendix 9. Performance review form for teachers	92
Appendix 10. Rating scale instructions	94

ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

ACT	American College Testing
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
GDP	Gross domestic product
HR	Human Resource
HRM	Human Resource Management
ICAEW	Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales
ISS	International School Service
TPP	Trans-Pacific Partnership
WTO	World Trade Organization

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, as a result of the economic development, the standard of living in Vietnam has risen significantly. The amount of money that parents are willing to pay for their children's education has increased accordingly. In addition, the traditional education system in Vietnam had long been considered too burdensome and old-fashioned for the new generation. The rising demand for a more appropriate education led to the establishment of some new school models in Vietnam, among which, international school model has been the most anticipated. International schools are schools that adopt a different national/international curriculum from that of the host country. The competition in the education industry has never been fiercer, requiring institutions to continuously improve their effectiveness and quality of teaching in order to take the lead in this competition.

There are a variety of strategies that schools can choose to implement in order to strengthen their competitiveness in this competition. Facilitating work effectiveness by managing employees' performance is one of the popular choices. This thesis will examine the theory of performance management and translate them into practice by designing teacher performance management system for International school X.

1.1 Background

Most business people must have at least once heard of this aphorism "People are your greatest asset". The similar statement can easily be found on the websites of different organizations; however, there is still much controversy whether it is true. In their article on Harvard Business Review, Anthony and Mark (2011) proved that great people can even become one's greatest liability with the scandals from Enron, Lehman Brothers, AIG and more as examples, where the organizations were ruined by "their people". The two believed that human cannot itself become the greatest asset, but having great people and, at the same time, knowing how to empower them make the organization invincible. This is what human resource management is responsible for: managing "people".

Even though the importance of human resource management has been recognized worldwide, in Vietnam, many companies, especially small and medium size companies, consider the investment in human capital as a waste of time and money. Vietnamese enterprises need to recognize the significance of human capital in order to survive the economic integration, shared by Ms. Trinh Tieu Yen, General Director of Talentnet Corporation, an HR consulting firm in Vietnam (Minh Tri 2016).

International school X is founded by an American entrepreneur, who understands very well the importance of “people” in a business. However, only until this year, the 6th year in operations, when the school is big enough in size and financially stable, can he think about a complete management reform for the school. Implementing a teacher performance management system is one of the first steps conducted to tackle the current weaknesses in the school’s management.

1.2 Thesis objectives and purposes

The main objective of the thesis is to design a comprehensive performance management system for the teachers in International school X. The objective is to be reached by looking back at the school’s current methods of managing teachers’ performance to figure out the short-comings in the process and to rebuild it in a way that works the best for the school and its teachers.

The thesis is created with the purpose of creating and implementing a system that allows International school X’s management to effectively monitor the quality of teaching at the school. The teachers’ personal objectives are linked to the school’s objectives, giving more specific guidance for the teachers on their jobs. Moreover, through this system, the teachers will be able to promptly realize weaknesses in their performance including attitude, teaching methods, academic ability, etc., allowing immediate improvement. The new system is expected to play an important role in encouraging teachers to proactively learn from each other and to continuously develop their own competencies.

1.3 Research questions

The main question to be answered within the scope of this thesis is:

“How to build an effective teacher performance management system for International school X?”

In order to answer the main research questions, the following sub-questions will be considered first:

- What is teacher performance management? Why is it important to the school?
- What are Balanced Scorecard and Strategy Map? What are their roles in individual performance management?
- How many steps are there in the performance management process? What are they? How to effectively organize the process for the school?
- What are the difficulties of implementing the system?
- What are the risks of implementing a performance management system?

1.4 Thesis scope

The urgent need of the organization is to focus on the quality of teaching since this is the main factor that attracts new students and persuades the returning students for the school. Therefore, even though about half of International school X's employees are administrative staff, the scope of this thesis is limited to teacher performance management system. However, if the plan works well for the teachers and once the system is stable enough, an expansion will be considered.

This project of designing a teacher performance management system is only a part of a bigger project on improving the organizational performance management for the school, which centres on the use of Balanced Scorecard. Moreover, Balanced Scorecard also plays an important role in improving the individual performance of the teachers at International School X. However, the in-depth study of Balanced Scorecard will be a strain on this topic. Therefore, the mention of Balanced Scorecard in this thesis will be only on introduction level.

1.5 Research methodology

1.5.1 Research methods

According to Kumar (2014, 14–18), regarding the “mode of enquiry”, there are three possible approaches to a research question, which are: quantitative approach, qualitative approach and mixed methods approach. The choice of an approach among them depends on the nature of the research question.

- Quantitative approach emphasizes the use of structured and predetermined tools such as poll, survey or questionnaire in order to explore a phenomenon (Kumar 2014, 16). The information is gathered and analysed as numerical data and the findings can be generalized across a group of people. Quantitative research seeks to determine the extent of a phenomenon (“what”, “when”, “where” questions).
- Qualitative approach promotes the use of an “open, flexible and unstructured approach” to explore personal feelings, perceptions or experience towards a phenomenon (Ibid). It collects and communicates the data in a descriptive and narrative manner and the results cannot be generalised. Qualitative research aims to study the nature of a phenomenon (“how” and “why” questions).
- Mixed methods approach is the method using both quantitative and qualitative approach to seek answers to one research question. It combines the strengths of the two approaches to make the best out of the research problem. The emergence of mixed methods as a separate research approach has only been accepted in recent years. Before that, it referred to the use of multiple methods in a research.

Mixed methods approach was used in order to collect all information needed for the formation of the teacher performance management system at International School X:

- Qualitative approach using small talks and discussions with the CEO and the principal to collect their attitudes towards and opinions about the implementation of performance management system.

- A questionnaire using both qualitative and quantitative questions was produced to gather the teacher's thoughts about the current performance management tasks and their preference for the new performance management system.
- A poll - quantitative approach was used to analyse the Middle and High school's students' reactions towards evaluating their own teachers.

1.5.2 Data collection

Data can be collected from the two main sources: primary sources (primary data) and secondary sources (secondary data). The definitions of them are as follows:

- Primary data is the original data collected for the first time for the specific purpose of a study (Shah & Jha 2009, 4). It can become secondary data (if relevant) for other studies by other author(s).
- Secondary data is not original data, which is collected from a published or unpublished work from other people or groups, usually served another purpose (Shah & Jha 2009, 5). It may be secondary data for other people, but it is the primary data for its original author(s).

This thesis uses both primary and secondary data as the basis for the formation of teacher performance management system of International school X. The information collected using the methods mentioned in 1.5.1 are primary data. Internal secondary data was collected throughout the period when the author was working in International school X including the human resource processes for the teachers at school X; the information about the school and its students; vision, missions and strategy of the school. The external secondary data for literature review came mostly from reliable sources including books and articles in journals.

1.5.3 Data analysis

The results from the poll and questionnaire were collected in paper form and computerized using Microsoft Excel. The data was arranged, quantified and analysed using the same program. Different charts and table were created to visualize the results. A detailed analysis of the results will be presented in subchapter 4.2 and 4.3.

The qualitative data generated from the talks and discussion with the CEO and the principal will be summarized in subchapter 4.1.

1.6 Limitation and thesis structure

Even though this thesis has been carefully prepared, there are still some limitations. Firstly, even though it was mentioned in Thesis scope (1.4) that teacher performance management is only a part of the project to improve the overall management of International school X, which focuses on the use of Balanced Scorecard, this research was actually carried out before the implementation of Balanced Scorecard. Therefore, the brief description of the strategy map in subchapter 5.1 is the temporary work by the author. The map is created based on real information; however, because of the lack of understanding of the topic in practice, it might be lacking in some ways. Another limitation is that the model (chapter 5) is designed based on the condition of International school X at the end of school year 2015-2016. However, it is also mentioned at the end of this thesis, in order to make the performance management system more effective, some preparations need to be made in advance. The implementation plan has to be delayed until the next school year for these preparations. For example, the school has promoted the current dean to become principal of primary education and recruited a principal for secondary education. Moreover, some on-the-job and off-the-job training regarding the performance management process have been provided during school year 2016-2017. Therefore, until the next academic year, when the process is officially implemented, the condition will probably be different and amendments to the process should be made accordingly. The author is not working at school X now, so she cannot update enough information for the amendments in this thesis to be made.

The thesis begins with an introduction on the education condition in Vietnam as the reason for this study. The first chapter also includes the background information of the study; the objectives and purpose of this thesis; the list of research questions; thesis scope; research methodology; limitation, structure, reliability and validity of the study. Chapter 2 of the thesis explains the theoretical framework for this study focusing performance management: concept, model - steps in a performance management process; the impact of culture on performance management and the typical challenges in implementation of a performance management system. The next chapter (chapter 3) briefly describes International school X (case company), its vision and mission, and its current performance management tasks. Chapter 4 shows an analysis of the research results collected through the interviews with CEO and principal, the teacher survey and the student poll. The above chapters work as the basis for the fifth chapter, where the complete model of performance management for International school X is described in details and key recommendations are made. The last chapter of this thesis summarizes the important points from the thesis.

1.7 Reliability and validity

Results of this research depend very much on the preference/opinions of the people involved. Therefore, it is only reliable at the time of the research. The answers may change if there are changes or improvements in the school's condition and processes, which affect people's thoughts on performance management, for example the appropriate trainings are provided, the size of the school becomes bigger, etc.

- The questionnaire for teachers is not anonymous. Even though it was promised that the names would be kept highly confidential, some of the answers might not be reliable as people may not have answered truly to what they really have in minds. However, because the origins and roles of the teachers is a need for the study, many of the teachers' identity cannot be hidden anyway. Therefore, the study accepted this risk. In practice, the results of the research (subchapter 4.2) have proved that many of the teachers must have chosen to not to lie in their responses.

- The off-line student poll was carried out anonymously without the appearance of the teachers. In addition, the action of giving evaluation for the teachers was described in a fun way. Therefore, most of the student must have replied with their true feeling.
- The talks and discussions with the CEO and the principal were generated when the author was working at International school X. The important notes were carefully recorded for the use of this thesis.

Both internal and external secondary data was obtained from credible sources. Especially, internal data came from documents and practical work processes of International school X without the interference of any personal thoughts from the author.

This thesis aims at creating a model of teacher performance management that best suits the condition and the preference of people at International school X. The research has chosen the most valid methods to gather the data needed for this study and the model has been designed accordingly.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Performance management can be explained in many different ways, but in essence, it is all about improving performance. It can be assessed from each and every organizational perspective including strategy, organizational behaviour, operations management, economics and accounting, and HRM. (Hutchinson 2013, 1.)

Conceptually, there are three levels of performance management regarding an organization. They are the organizational level, the process level and the individual level. Each level can be viewed separately; however, a solid understanding of the three levels and how they are linked together is essential for the success of performance management. (Bussin 2013, 2–7.) The “individual” component of performance management is the focus of this thesis. Therefore, mention of the term “performance management” in the remaining parts of this thesis refers to “employee performance management”.

This chapter of the thesis examines different aspects of performance management including the history of performance management, the definition of the term, the objectives and purposes of a performance management system, the performance management cycle and the possible difficulties of implementing a performance management system. A brief study about the Balanced Scorecard, as a communication tool to deliver the corporate objectives and strategies to the employees, is also included.

2.1 Performance management

2.1.1 A brief history of performance management

Performance management was first used as a business term in the 1970s and it only became a widely recognized process in the late 1980s (Armstrong & Baron 1998, 29–30). However, the origin of performance management can be traced back to centuries ago, from the Han Dynasty, 206 BC-220 AD, in China, where merit exams were used to make decisions on selection and promotion (Wiese & Buckley 1998, 234).

Throughout the history, there were a variety of evidences that simpler forms of performance management had been used all around the world, mainly, in order to observe and assess performance. However, none succeeded in creating a definite concept for the task until the establishment of “man-to-man rating system” by Scott in 1914. The man-to-man rating system was momentarily chosen as a tool for officers’ evaluation in US Army (Wiese & Buckley 1998, 235–239; Murphy & Cleveland 1995, 3–8). It was later developed into a graphic rating scale, which is said to be not very useful for providing feedback and lack of future orientation (Ibid).

Performance appraisal system first appeared in the public eye under the name “merit rating” in the 1950s. It is generally defined as a formal system used to review and evaluate the performance of employees. The system consists of one or two meetings annually to review the employees’ past performance (Torrington, Hall & Taylor 2005, 259). According to Foot and Hook (2011, 257), performance appraisal is simply a process where feedbacks are given on employees’ performance.

The major weakness of performance appraisal system is that it only focuses on the past performance, ignoring the future aspect of it. Moreover, Armstrong and Baron (2005, 14) emphasized performance appraisal to be a limited approach as there is no direct involvement of the employees in the process. All that they need to do is to finish their jobs and wait for the top-down assessment from their managers. McGregor (1957) was among the first ones to figure out the weak points of the system. Following that, he initiated a new approach for the system where the focus should be on analysis rather than appraisal, with which, the person being evaluated can become more involved during the process and he/she can, then, use the feedbacks for future development plans. However, his suggestion was completely ignored at the time. It was only until 1972 that performance management appeared as an upgraded form of performance appraisal, following the emergence of “management by objectives” notion (Armstrong 2009, 14–15).

2.1.2 The definition of performance management

Even though the concept of performance management has been explored for many years now, it is not easy to find a precise definition for the term. It is because of the fact that performance management is usually tailor-made for each organization. Despite the pro-

cess aiming at individual performance, it is necessary to take into account the culture and the context of the organization in order to create the most effective system for the targeted organization (Torrington et al. 2005, 262–263). Therefore, the definitions of performance management vary from simple to more sophisticated ones.

One of the more simple definitions of performance management was given by DeNisi (2000, 121). In his study, he described performance management as a range of activities employed by an organization to boost individuals' and teams' performance. The ultimate goal of these activities is to improve organizational effectiveness.

The continuous study of performance management has resulted in more precise definitions of the term. It is nowadays regarded as a strategic and complete management approach that aligns individuals' and teams' goals with those of the organization. For example, Armstrong and Baron (CIPD 2009a) defined performance management as:

“a process which contributes to the effective management of individuals and teams in order to achieve high levels of organizational performance. As such, it establishes shared understandings about what is to be achieved and an approach to leading and developing people which will ensure that it is achieved.”

In addition, Aguinis (2013, 2) emphasized the fact that the process is continuous. It involves a number of repetitive activities including goals setting, on-going observation, coaching and feedback. In performance management, the performance of individuals is directly linked with the goals of the organization; therefore, the contribution of employees to the success of the organization can be clearly recognized.

Since performance management focuses on the performance of individuals, it is usually mistaken as a process executed by the HR Department, which is certainly not true. It is, otherwise, “a shared process between managers, individuals and teams” (Foot & Hook 2011, 250). The process is not meant to discipline employees; it is used to motivate and engage them to improve their performance. Most people prefer having freedom on how they perform their tasks than being watched and controlled. Therefore, it is recommended that the main purpose of the acts from managers including coaching, counselling, giving feedbacks, etc. should be to encourage development (Egan 1995). Moreover, it is necessary to showcase to the employees the collaborative nature of the performance

management system. This requires effective communication among those involved and especially, from the managers (Armstrong 2017, 27).

As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the management of individual performance cannot become successful on its own; there is a need for considering other aspects of the organization as complement to the process, which is shown in the following integration forms, by Armstrong (2003, 468):

- ***Vertical integration:*** the links between individual, team and organizational objectives and core competences.
- ***Functional integration:*** the relationship among different functional strategies of the organization.
- ***HR integration:*** different aspects of HRM must be connected in order to establish a concrete system to manage employees.
- ***Integration of needs:*** the possible integration of the needs of individuals and the organization's.

2.1.3 The objectives and purposes of performance management

The following objectives are modified from Armstrong's studies (1996, 2014):

- Aligning individual objectives to the strategic objectives of the organization
- Improving organizational performance by enhancing individual performance
- Providing adequate supports and resources for personal development
- Building a performance-oriented culture for the organization
- Linking pay to performance

Shields (2007, 24, according to Armstrong 2014, 336) listed four major purposes of performance management system, which are:

- ***Strategic communication:*** Communicating to the employees what they need to do and how well their jobs should be done, improving the communication within the teams and the organization in general.

- ***Relationship building:*** Instead of one or two meetings per year, performance management requires more interactions between managers and employees, which creates opportunities for them to build stronger work relationships.
- ***Employee development:*** The never-ending process of observing performance and giving feedbacks is very beneficial for personal development since they are proudly recognized for their strengths and quickly alerted on their weaknesses. Performance management also focuses on training and development plans for the employees.
- ***Employee evaluation:*** Evaluating employees' performance is undeniably one of the main purposes of performance management. The assessment of individual performances works as a basis for managers' decisions such as: job assignment, promotion, bonuses and other types of reward.

2.1.4 Model of performance management process

Traditionally, the assessment of individual performance and how rewards are allocated accordingly was the centre of focus in most organizations regarding employee performance since reward has always been a great source of motivation for individuals (Torrington et al. 2005, 259). It is undeniable how important motivation is to performance. That was during the peak of performance appraisal. However, the success of performance does not only depend on personal ability and motivation. Nowadays, with the increasing impact of performance planning and organizational supports on the final results, the focus has been extended. This is the foundation of the performance management process.

There has been the same issue with defining the term "performance management" when it comes to designing a performance management process. It is impossible to say that a model of performance management process is universally accepted because of the variations when it comes to different organizations. Many experts have successfully come up with their own version of the performance management process. Even though these models might look different in terms of presentation and even how they are implemented is not similar, the core elements stay the same. Therefore, in order to have a better

understanding on the process of a performance management system, this part of the thesis introduces one of the typical models that clearly display the crucial elements of a performance management system. The model is widely known as “The Performance Management Cycle”, which has been presented by Michael Armstrong in many of his works since the 1990s.

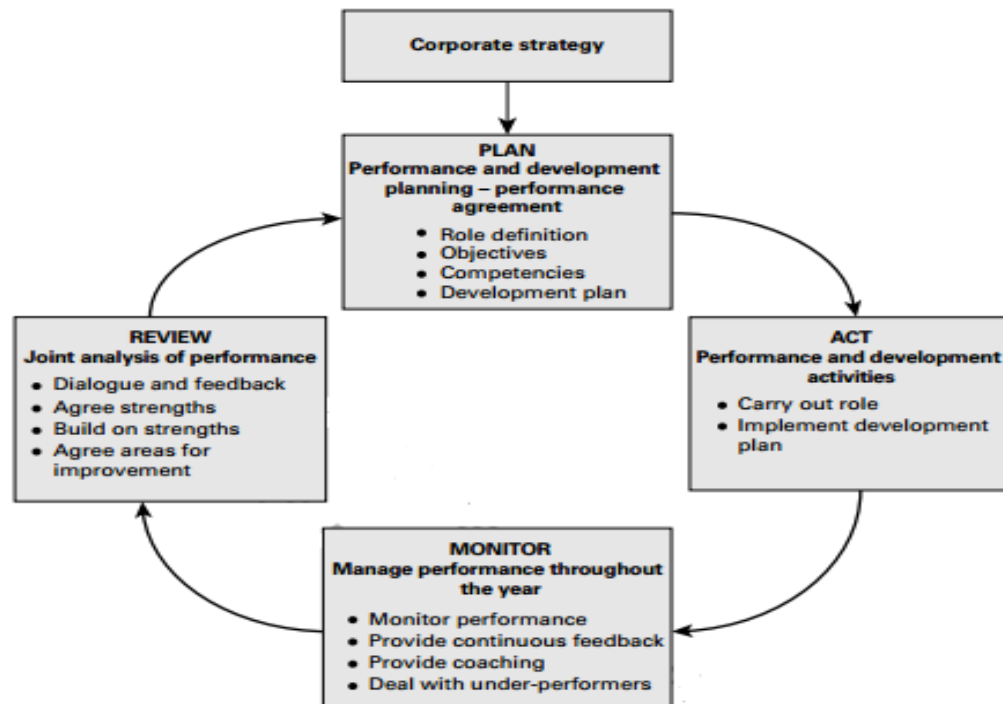


FIGURE 1: The Performance Management Cycle (Armstrong 2017, 23)

The performance management cycle (Figure 1) corresponds with the Plan-Do-Study-Act model by William Deming. The period of the performance management cycles usually covers the whole calendar year or fiscal year depending on the organizations. And as can be seen from Figure 1, there are five steps in the performance management cycle:

- **Corporate strategy:** The first step may look like it does not belong to the cycle; however, it is a very important preparation stage in the process of managing individual performance: how to create, present and communicate the organizational strategy to the employees. “Corporate strategy provides direction and coordination to allow all parts of the corporation to work towards shared aims and objectives” defined by McManners (2014, 2). Since one of the biggest objectives of performance management is to be able to align individual objectives to those of the organization, this phase become vital. One of the most useful tools to do

this job these days is the Balanced Scorecard, which will be discussed separately in subchapter 2.2.

- ***PLAN “Performance and development planning - performance agreement”***: This stage is the official beginning of the performance management cycle, carried out at the beginning of the year. In this phase, the role of each employee and the competencies required for each role are discussed directly with the employees (Armstrong 2014, 336 – 337). It is very necessary for the employees to be aware of how important their job is to the organization and what they may need in order to successfully complete their tasks. Moreover, thanks to the previous phase, the employees are well prepared with the knowledge about the organization’s objectives and strategy. Based on that, the managers and the employees will discuss and come to an agreement on the personal objectives of each employee, how he should perform to meet the objectives and the personal development plan throughout the year (Ibid). More information on what are included in this step will be provided in subchapter 2.3.
- ***ACT “Performance and development activities”***: This phase runs throughout the year; the jobs are executed according to the plans from before. Training and development activities agreed are also provided during the year. (Armstrong 2014, 338.) Moreover, this stage requires the flexibility from both sides to quickly adapt their plans and execution in response to any unexpected situations.
- ***MONITOR “Manage performance throughout the year”***: The next step is monitoring performance. Here, managers are responsible for the continuous observation of the employees’ performance, checking their progress, pointing out inefficiencies and provides supports like feedbacks and coaching if necessary (Ibid). A combined study of the ACT and MONITOR steps will be presented in subchapter 2.4.
- ***REVIEW “Joint analysis of performance”***: This is the last phase of the performance management cycle. It works as an ending for the current year and provides the starting point for the next year. A formal meeting is arranged at the end of the year, again, between the managers and employees in order to discuss the performance throughout the year and giving feedbacks. The meeting also aims at

figuring out the strengths and weaknesses of each employee as a preparation for the future development plan (Ibid). Further details about performance review will be studied in subchapter 2.6.

The sequence of activities in one round of the performance management cycle is shown in Figure 2. The likely outcomes of the activities are also listed in the diagram. The next subchapters (from 2.3 to 2.7) will clarify these relationships.

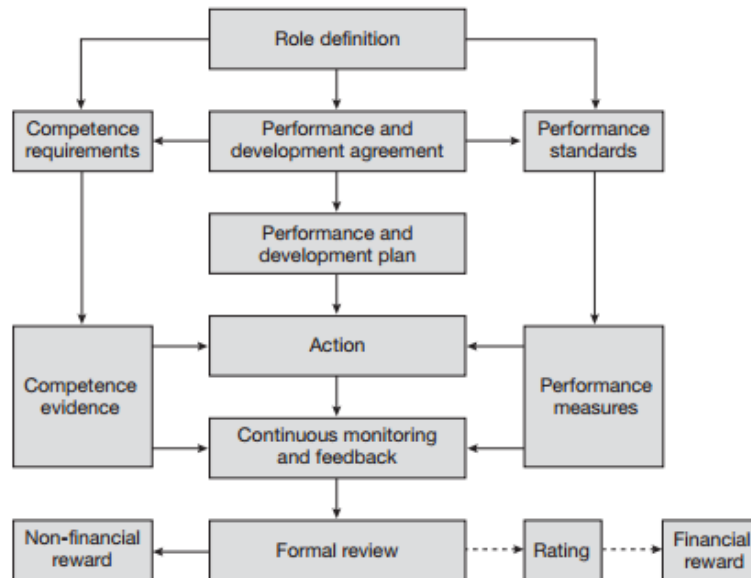


FIGURE 2: The performance management sequence (Armstrong 2006, 17)

One feature of the performance management cycle by Michael Armstrong is that “reward” cannot be seen in the cycle. However, he explained in his book (2014, 348) that recognition from people at work on one’s performance, getting high-quality feedbacks, receiving supports for personal development and career guidance, etc. are the non-financial rewards of performance management. He believed that these rewards are long-lasting and they can bring much greater impact on the organization in comparison with the financial rewards.

In some organizations, the main purpose of the performance management system is to link performance with pay. Therefore, “financial rewards” is included as an important ending of the process. Figure 3 is an example of this type.

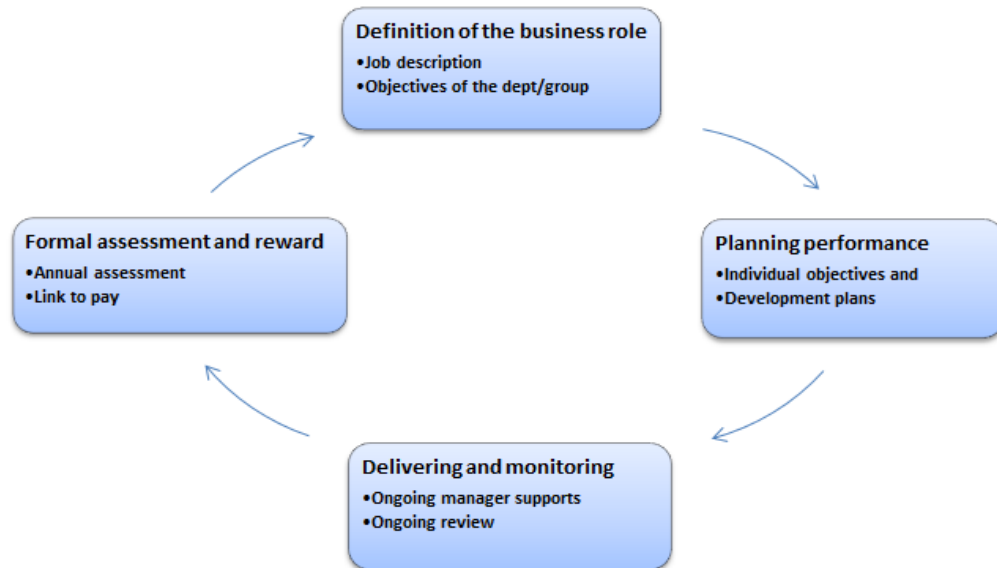


FIGURE 3: Stages of a typical performance management system (Torrington et al. 2005, 263)

2.2 Balanced Scorecard

In 1990s, business experts started to realize that the exclusive use of financial metrics for performance measurement might no longer be suitable in the innovative business environment that global business is heading towards, where the focus of value creation is on intangible assets (Kaplan and Norton 1992). This led to the development of Balanced Scorecard, a completely new tool for performance management, initiated by Robert S. Kaplan, a business professor at Harvard University and David P. Norton, a business theorist and management consultant. The study of Balanced Scorecard has revolutionized all conventional thinking about performance management. Balanced Scorecard Institute (2010) defined Balanced Scorecard as a strategic planning and management system, used to align business activities to the organization's vision and strategy, improve internal and external communications and monitor organizational performance against its strategic objectives.

2.2.1 The Evolution of the Balanced Scorecard

The evolution of the concept of Balanced Scorecard can be divided into three generations (Lawrie & Cobbold 2004):

In the early 1990s, having seen the importance of intangible assets as a source of value creation, Kaplan and Norton started their study on developing a measurement tool that covered both financial and non-financial metrics of performance. As a result, the concept of Balanced Scorecard was introduced in 1992. (Niven 2014, 1). In the Balanced Scorecard, performance measures are grouped into four generic perspectives, representing the strategic focus areas of a modern business: Financial, Customer, Internal Process and Learning and Growth (Kaplan & Norton 1992). Nevertheless, the selection and allocation of appropriate measures into each perspective was still a major concern at this point (Lawrie & Cobbold 2004).

Niven (2005, 16–17) claimed that the second generation (from mid 1990s) had seen a breakthrough in the study of Balanced Scorecard, evolving from a strategic measurement system into a strategic management system, which supported management in the implementation of strategy. The concept of strategic objectives and strategy map were introduced, which was also the key to solve the problem raised in the first generation. Thereby, the starting point of the process is to define strategic objectives of the organization for each of the four perspectives. The performance measures should, then, be determined based on each strategic objective, showing what the organization needs to do well in order to fulfil the objective. Strategy map is created as a tool to link the strategic objectives and show the causality between them (Lawrie & Cobbold 2004). However, the fact that lower levels within the organization had limited understandings of the organization's vision and strategy was an absolute disadvantage in the implementation of Balanced Scorecard as a strategic management system (Ibid).

The third generation of Balanced Scorecard, from early 2000s, emphasizes the use of Balanced Scorecard as a communication tool. This also provides the answer for the main problem existing in the second generation. With the use of strategy map and the Balanced Scorecard, company strategies can be transformed into simple objectives and measures understandable by every employee in the organization, not any more limited to executives. As a result, the employees know what they need to do in order to execute the company's strategies, leading to real results (Niven 2005, 16–17).

Throughout the development of the Balanced Scorecard concept, doubts have been raised whether it is viable in practice. However, continuous researches and experiments

for over 20 years have turned the Balanced Scorecard into one of the best management tools for business and organizations (Darrell & Barbara 2015).

2.2.2 The Balanced Scorecard perspectives

Kaplan and Norton (1996) suggested that we look at the organization from four distinct, yet related, perspectives, which together translate the vision and strategy of the organization.

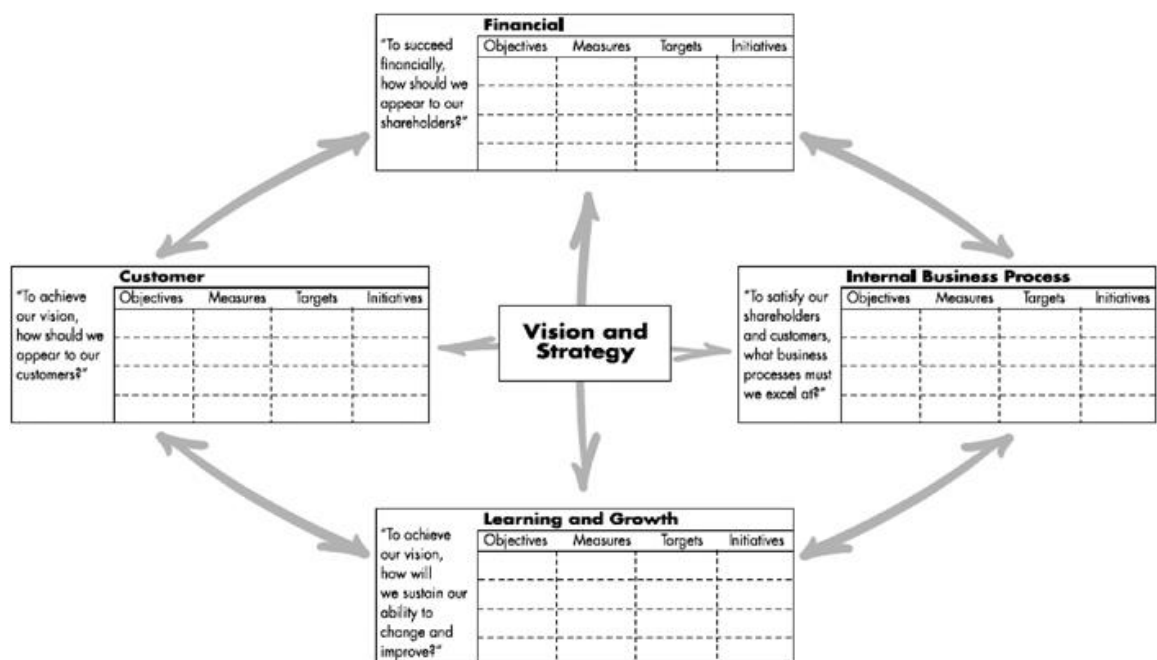


FIGURE 4: Translating Vision and Strategy: Four Perspectives (Kaplan & Norton 1996b)

Financial perspective

Even though, the formation of Balanced Scorecard was a result of the efforts to end the dominance of financial metrics in performance measurement, it cannot be denied that these numbers are still an indispensable part of the Balanced Scorecard. Financial perspective shows the financial objectives of the organization and it represents the contribution of strategy execution towards the improvement in bottom-line results (Kaplan & Norton 1992).

The most commonly used measures of this perspective are return on equity (ROE), return on investment (ROI), revenue, gross margin, and other indicators (Niven 2006, 17).

Customer perspective

Customer Perspective identifies the organization's target customer and market segments in which they compete in order to define the appropriate measures to track related performances (Kaplan & Norton 1996a). According to Niven (2006, 15), the customer perspective in the Balanced Scorecard should be able to answer the three main questions: (1) what are our target groups of customer? (2) What do they expect or demand from us? (3) What would the value proposition for us be in serving them?

The most common measures for this perspective include: customer satisfaction, customer loyalty, and market share (Ibid).

Internal process perspective

Internal process perspective must point out the key processes in the organization's operations that drive value for customers and eventually satisfy its shareholders (Niven 2014, 4–5). It measures the business processes that have the greatest impact on customer satisfaction. Therefore, the processes to be included in this perspective vary, depending on the type of the company. For example, companies offering innovative products, like Apple or Samsung, should focus on the processes related to research and development; while retailers like Walmart must pay attention to their supply chain operations (Ibid).

Learning and Growth perspective

Niven (2006, 16) regarded Learning and Growth perspective as the foundation of Balanced Scorecard as it identifies the infrastructure needed to support the other three perspectives. It includes human capital (employees' know-how, skills and education), information capital (databases and systems) and organizational capital (employee commitment, leadership, teamwork and organizational culture).

The most common measures of this perspective reflects the popular sources of growth such as employees' skills and satisfaction, the availability of information and tools (Ibid).

2.2.3 Strategy map

As mentioned in subchapter 2.2.1, along with strategic objectives, the formation of strategy map is considered a breakthrough in the study of Balanced Scorecard. A strategy map shows the cause and effect relationship between strategic objectives of an organization (Lawrie & Cobbold 2004). Kaplan (2004) described strategy map as a visual representation of an organization's strategy. The way he referred to it as an example of how a picture can be more powerful than a thousand words shows the effectiveness of strategy map as a communication tool. It provides employees with a clear vision of how their own tasks are linked to the organization's objectives and guides them throughout their performance to reach the ultimate goals (Niven 2005, 66–67).

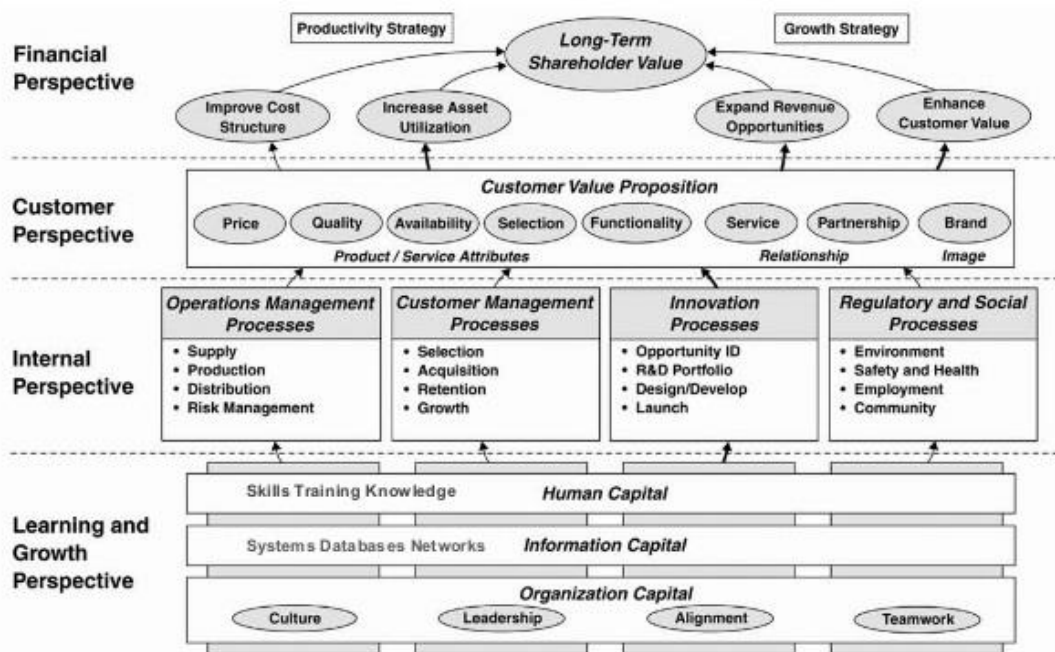


FIGURE 5: Strategy maps: Converting Intangible Assets to Tangible Outcomes (Kaplan and Norton, 2004)

As can be seen from Figure 5, strategy maps show how intangible assets influence an organization's performance by enhancing the most critical resources and processes to

create value for customers and shareholders. However, in order to build strategy maps, companies must explore their objectives from the top down, starting from their financial goals. This is also the link between strategy formation and strategy execution (Kaplan & Norton 2004).

2.3 Performance planning and agreements

The brief idea of performance planning has been explained in subchapter 2.1.4. This subchapter focuses on describing the activities included in this phase of the performance management process.

Performance agreement is the ultimate outcome of the joint efforts between a manager and an employee in the planning phase of the performance management process (Armstrong 2006, 49–50). It includes all the basic ideas about an employee's role in the organization, the personal objectives of each individual, the measures required for later performance assessment and the personal performance and development plans. Performance agreement is the framework for the entire remaining phases of performance management: a guide for executing and monitoring performance, as well as the development activities; and a reference for performance evaluation.

2.3.1 Role definition

The job of defining role for a work position is displayed in the form of a role profile. **Role profile** defines the expected key outcomes of the job; knowledge and skills needed to successfully complete the job and what kind of behaviours are expected of the employee that performs the job (Armstrong 2006, 50). Here are the key components of a role profile in details:

Key result areas:

In stead of focusing too much on the content of the job like in the job description, role description promotes the importance of the outcomes, what is to be achieved from the job (Leatherbarrow & Fletcher 2014, 160). Therefore, the key result areas describe the

expected outcomes that the employee brings to the organization with his/her performance.

Competencies:

Competencies consist of the knowledge, skills and ability that are required from the employee to successfully complete the role. Armstrong (2006, 52–53) stressed on the following 2 types of competencies: technical and behavioral. Knowledge and skills are the technical competencies that one can earn from education or through experiences. Knowledge are the theoretical or practical understandings about or related to the job, while skill is the ability to do something well to a certain extent. Problem-solving, communication, analytic, negotiation, teamwork, etc. are the some examples of job-related skills. Behavioral competencies show one's ability to deal with different situations at work. (Ibid.)

2.3.2 Objectives

An objective, in general, is a specific result that has to be reached. Organizational objectives are what the organization expects to achieve in a period of time. Personal objectives, on the other hand, refer to the job-specific goals of each employee. A good objective must be “SMART”- which are: specific/stretching, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. (Torrington et al. 2005, 264.)

It is extremely important for a performance management system that the individual objectives are aligned with the organizational objectives. However, in many organizations, it is still a bad habit that employees do not have anything to do with the organizational objectives; sometimes, they are not even aware of these objectives. Therefore, there needs to be a process where the objectives within the organizations are integrated. Torrington (2005, 264) called it “an objective-setting cascade” (Figure 6). The cascade is a two-way communication tool which transmits the whole set of objectives top-down from the board level (organizational objectives) to the individual level (personal objectives) and at the same time, it makes sure that the voices of the individuals are heard. The employees are given the opportunity to voice their opinions about

how they believe that they are able to contribute to the fulfilments of these objectives (Armstrong 2006, 57).

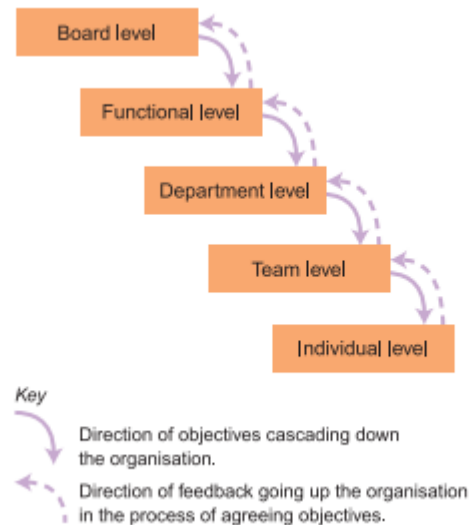


FIGURE 6: An objective-setting cascade (Torrington et al. 2005, 264)

2.3.3 Performance measures

The basic of performance improvement is that one should be able to identify his/her strengths to enhance and weaknesses to overcome. However, those cannot come from nowhere. There must be an agreement between the manager and the employee on the reliable performance measures to assess his/her performance. The focus of performance measures varies according to the types of work and the level of management involved. Performance measures can be based on the results of individual work, comparing the real outcomes to the expected ones. Performance measures can also take the form of competency fulfilment, how one is using his/her knowledge and skills to perform the job and how he/she behaves in his/her job. (Armstrong 2006, 59–65.) It is very important to reach an agreement in the beginning on what type of performance measures will be used later in the process.

2.3.4 Performance and development plan

Even though the individual performance and development plan is personal, it is vital in a performance management system that the plan is created by the employee, yet confirmed and approved by the manager. This is because the execution of the plan requires

a great deal of supporting activities from the manager. The overall plan can clearly be divided into 2 parts: the performance plan and the development plan

- The performance plan shows the employee's direction on what he/she will do to meet the objectives and to improve performance. It also sets the priorities among the tasks and probably among the aspects of each task: what needs more attentions than others. (Armstrong 2006, 65–66.) The employee also needs to list all the supports and guidance from the manager that they may need while executing the plan in this performance plan.
- The development plan carries the set of activities agreed by both sides to develop competencies of the employee in order to enhance individual performance in the current job and at the same time, prepare individuals to take charge of higher-level jobs. The activities are provided based on the needs of each individual. Self-learning, job-related training, mentoring, coaching, etc. are some examples of the development activities. (Ibid.)

2.4 Executing and monitoring performance

The two stages always go together in pair. During the year, the employee performs his/her job as planned. The manager is responsible for ongoing observation and counseling for the performance. The more detailed responsibilities of the two parties during the period of these 2 stages are listed below, based on the study of Aguinis (2013, 48–49).

The employee must:

- commit to do his/her best in order to fulfil his/her job and meet the planned objectives.
- always be positive about the feedbacks he/she receives from the manager.
- keep the communication going on with the manager and proactively ask for supports if needed.
- collect and share the performance data.
- review him/herself regularly to keep track of his/her own performance and prepare for the formal review and feedbacks.

The manager is in charge of:

- observing the performance of the employee on a daily basis so as to keep the performance and the assessment on track; and constantly documenting the assessment.
- updating the employee on any changes within the organization and the job.
- giving feedbacks to the employee on a regular basis if everything goes well and providing immediate feedbacks and advice in case of negative performance.
- providing enough resources and supports that the employee needs for his/her performance and development plan.
- encouraging the employee occasionally to show the employee that the manager is aware of his/her performance and progress.

There are many different types of trainings, as well as development activities that employees and managers must work together during the year in order to enhance the performance. Some popular learning activities are coaching; observing and analysing others; job enrichment; project work; involvement in other work areas; learning from others with similar tasks; action learning; e-learning and guided reading. (Armstrong 2006, 146–147.) Most of the names themselves explain the methods they carry while some do not. Here are some important definitions:

Training is a set or organized activities aiming at providing trainees with information and/or instructions needed to improve their performance or preparing them with enough knowledge, skills and ability to perform a job. (Business Dictionary.)

Coaching is “an interactive process that helps another person improve, learn something, or take performance to the next level” (Payne 2007, 2.) The process is usually one-to-one and executed with the real situations on the job.

Job enrichment is defined by DuBrin (2008, 27) as an approach to redesign a job in order to make it more challenging and appealing to the employees. A successful job enrichment gives the employees a sense of “ownership, responsibility and accountability” for their job and raises their motivation, as well as job satisfaction.

2.5 Performance assessment methods

Even though it is widely agreed that performance management is future-oriented, it is very necessary to include some forms of performance assessment in the system in order to provide a basis for any “future plans”. Armstrong (2006, 103) listed 7 ways to assess performance. They are: overall analysis of performance; written assessment (narrative) of performance; rating; forced distribution; forced ranking; quota system; visual assessment. Each method may suit different companies and serve different purposes. For example, rating is very regularly used in pay driven performance management systems.

At the beginning of performance management, the majority used a rating system to assess performance. However, nowadays, with the increasing supports for McGregor’s approach “performance management should be more about analysing rather than assessing performance”, the use of overall analysis method has become more and more popular. An overall analysis provides both the employee and the manager an overview on the employee’s strengths and weaknesses, so that they know where to enhance and where to improve. The basis for overall analysis of performance is the measures defined in the performance agreement. (Armstrong 2006, 103–104.)

2.6 Performance review

Reviewing performance is the last stage of the performance management cycle where the performance throughout the year is being analysed closely and carefully by both the employee and the manager. There are two typical types of review in most organizations: the self-assessment and the formal review meeting(s).

2.6.1 Self-assessment

The assessment of an employee on his/her own performance is called “self-assessment”. Some people think of self-assessment as a separated action from the employees for personal reference. However, most people refer to it as a preparation stage for the formal review meeting(s). In fact, self-assessment in advance can bring some real benefits to the review meeting(s). It is an opportunity for individuals to take a lead in the evalua-

tion of their own performance, the recognition of their strengths and weaknesses and what they will need for their personal development. Due to that, the performance review meeting(s) will no longer be a one-sided assessment, but a balanced and constructive discussion. (Armstrong 2006, 95–98.)

2.6.2 The formal review meeting(s)

Even though during the year, reviews are constantly given to the employees, it is still very important to organize one or two formal review meetings per year where the performance can be seen as a whole and all the important points about the performance can be summarized. The basic contents of any formal review meetings include:

- An analysis of the performance results in comparison to the expected/planned outcomes: What has been achieved? What has not met the expectation? Why?
- Strengths analysis: What are the strengths of the employee? How to enhance in the future?
- Weaknesses analysis: What are the weaknesses? How to improve later on?

As mentioned above, the meeting is organized in the form of a discussion rather than a one-sided assessment. Feedbacks from the manager are expected to be put in between the conversations to make it more comfortable for the employees (Armstrong 2006). Moreover, feedbacks must be objective and based on the fact. Any personal opinions from the managers should come in the form of suggestions.

In some organizations, the main objective of performance management is to link performance with pay. Therefore, the discussion about pay resulting from performance is another important content of the review meeting(s). (Ibid.)

2.7 Reward

Torrington et al. (2005, 262) stated that there are two types of performance management systems: development driven and pay driven. In development driven systems, employ-

ees are mainly rewarded with non-financial benefits while in the latter, performance is linked with pay and other financial rewards.

2.7.1 Financial rewards

Houldsworth and Jirasinghe (2006, 198–201) listed the financial rewards that can be linked to individual performance as follows:

- **Base salary progression:** respective increase in salary based on individual performance results during the year.
- **Annual performance incentives:** pay given for the achievement of predetermined goals.
- **Annual bonuses:** additional compensation given annually for the overall achievement of performance during the year.
- **Long-term incentives:** reward usually given to, at least, executives level for the achievement of organizational objectives. Long-term incentives can be given in the form of stock, shares or cash depending on each organization.
- **Team awards:** reward given to a team for the performance of the team as a whole.
- **Profit shares/gain sharing:** pay according to the business's accomplishment
- **Recognition awards:** given to individuals with exceptional performance and dedication to the organization.

2.7.2 Non-financial rewards

Armstrong (2006, 151) stated that instead of the financial rewards, performance management is capable of providing different forms of non-financial rewards, which

does not only improve employees' engagement, but also gain their commitment. The non-financial rewards include:

- **Recognition:** Employees are recognized for their achievements and their strengths, usually given in the form of feedbacks. They can also receive help for future development by being pointed out and being supported with the activities for improvements.
- **The provision of opportunities to achieve:** Performance management requires the agreement between manager and employee on the role of the employee and how his/her role can be developed. Therefore, attention needs to be put on role design and job enrichment.
- **Skills development:** Employees are provided with any necessary supports to enhance their skills (coaching, training, etc.)
- **Career planning:** In addition to developing the skills and ability for the current job/position, employees are given the opportunities to discuss with the experienced people on the direction of their future career, which is the best for them and for the organization.
- **Job engagement:** The delegation of individuals' responsibility for their own achievements of goals and objectives, or the job outcomes, etc. engages the employees to perform their job better.
- **Commitment:** By aligning the individual objectives to the organizational objectives, performance management promotes the employees' commitment to the organization and its goals.

2.8 360-degree feedback

360-degree feedback as defined by Ward (1997, 3) is "the systematic collection and feedback of performance data on an individual or group derived from a number of the

stakeholders on their performance.” Multi-rater feedback, multi-sources feedback, all-round feedback, etc. are some other names for 360-degree feedback. (Ibid.)

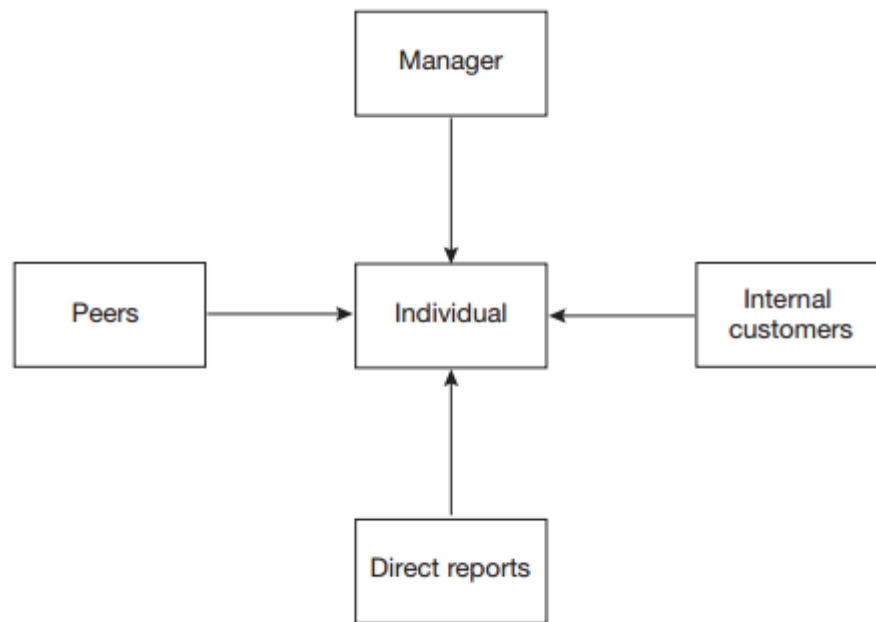


FIGURE 7: 360-degree feedback model (Armstrong 2006, 158)

With 360-degree feedback, an individual is able to receive feedbacks from a range of internal sources including: peers (team members and colleagues from different departments), manager (the one he/she directly reports to); direct reports and internal customers. The range can be extended to some other stakeholders including external customers, clients and suppliers to make it a 540-degree feedback. (Armstrong 2006, 157–158.)

The use of 360-degree feedback can have multiple purposes ranging from personal learning and development to management purpose or pay decision. A survey conducted by Ashridge Management Research Group in 1996 suggested that the majority of users of 360-degree feedback use it for the purpose of personal development (Armstrong 2006, 158-159). The method serves well for this purpose because it allows the person to see him/herself from the eyes of those who directly work with him/her. It is much more objective than how he/she is viewing him/herself, which is very beneficial for the development plan (Torrington et al. 2005, 271).

Questionnaire is the most popular method of data collection for 360-degree feedback. The questionnaire is usually anonymous since objectivity is always more secured when contributors do not have to give their names. (Ibid.)

2.9 Impacts of culture on performance management

Aycan and her fellow professors (2000, according to Reddy 2011) defined **culture** as “common patterns of beliefs, assumptions, values and norms of behavior” from a particular group of people. The size of the group that defines a culture varies; it can be an organization, a community, a country or even group of countries, etc.

Culture has always been an important issue in any kinds of organizations all over the world. Especially, international or multinational companies need to pay extra attention to this aspect since they are involved with people from different countries with possibly very distinct cultures. Moreover, each company has its own organizational culture and the organizational culture can be very different even among companies of the same type in the same country. Taking into account the possible challenges that cultural differences bring to an organization, culture can become a liability to the organization. It may become the barrier to changes, to diversity or to mergers and acquisitions (Reddy 2011).

Therefore, performance management is perceived very differently in different countries and by different people. Performance management originates in the US and the process is initially meant for Western culture. Nowadays, with the increasing trend of globalization, the application of the performance management system has been spreading around the world. It has become a concern whether the original performance management system would fit in with the non-Western culture and how to make that happen (Claus & Briscoe 2009).

Hofstede’s study on cultural dimensions has been the basis for variety of other studies on the impacts of culture, especially in business organizations. In this subchapter, Hofstede’s four original dimensions are examined in order to show how cultures with opposite characteristics from the US culture react to the implementation of performance management system. The information used below is retrieved from The Hofstede Centre Website, which provides many insights into Hofstede’s various studies and research-

es about culture and management. It is used as the basis for the analysis about cultural impact on performance management.

2.9.1 Power Distance

This dimension shows how members of a society react to the unequal distribution of power, representing by a Power Distance Index (PDI).

America scores fairly low (40) in this index, meaning that American people value equality and they are reluctant to accept hierarchy. In US companies, superiors are expected to be accessible and the decisions are made usually after thorough discussions and consultations with all the members.

It is the opposite story for high power distant countries like Malaysia, China, Vietnam, etc. In these countries, people unquestioningly accept hierarchy in organizations. Power is centralised in managers' hands and they are expected to make decisions themselves. Subordinates always listen unconditionally to their bosses. Therefore, implementing a performance management system in these countries will face a lot of difficulties. Superiors are more used to giving orders than having friendly and equal discussions with their juniors.

2.9.2 Individualism versus Collectivism

The score in this dimension reflects the typical degree of interdependence among the members of a society, which defines the self-image of the people in that society as "I" or "We". In business organizations, individualism/collectivism decides whether individual achievements or group identification is prioritized. Countries with a high score in this dimension are categorized as individualist cultures and those with lower score belong to collectivist societies.

For this dimension, the US proves itself to be one of the world's most individualist cultures with a score of 91. In individualist countries, people tend to care for only themselves and their direct family. There, individuals are expected to be able to work inde-

pendently. Any decisions on recruitment or promotion are mainly determined by evidences of personal skills and work accomplishments. Moreover, management is the management of individuals.

In collectivistic countries, people are expected to always take care of each other as a group. Examples of these countries are South Korea, China, Singapore, Vietnam, etc. In such countries, people must work well in teams and put the benefits of the team on top of their personal interests. Work relationships tend to become more personal, which sometimes affects the professionalism at work. Recruitment and promotion decisions are easily affected by personal relationships. Furthermore, the management is centred on the management of groups, which is against the basis of performance management, focusing on individual performance.

2.9.3 Masculinity versus Femininity

Masculinity indicates cultures where the society is driven by competition, where “achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards for success” is highly preferred.

US scores relatively high (62) in this dimension. Most Americans strive for success and they tend to show and talk freely about their achievements. Moreover, they always present a “can-do” attitude, which makes America a very dynamic society.

On the other hand, Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and many other countries are considered feminine societies. In these countries, people value cooperation and modesty. According to them, caring for others and improving the quality of life are the indication of success. Improving performance and career opportunities are not that attractive to these people. Therefore, performance management may be considered unnecessary in feminine countries.

2.9.4 Uncertainty Avoidance

Uncertainty Avoidance refers to the degree of uneasiness that members of a society have towards uncertainty and ambiguity and how they try to avoid these uncertainties. This dimension is represented by Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI).

US scores 46 in UAI, below average; therefore, the country is still considered having low degree of uncertainty avoidance. Innovation and new ideas are welcomed; people are not afraid of trying new things or taking new challenges. Americans also exhibit a relaxed attitude towards rules and principles.

On the other hand, countries like Japan, South Korea, France, etc. have very high rates of uncertainty avoidance. In these countries, the implementation of laws, rules and regulations is very important since people usually feel insecure if things go out of the way. They are reluctant to changes and challenges; therefore, innovation may be resisted. This feature is a big barrier to performance management because people tend to deny setting challenging goals and may not welcome the idea of continuous performance monitoring and abrupt changes of plans and goals.

2.10 Difficulties implementing a performance management system

Besides the difficulties caused by culture, there are many other problems that can arise during the implementation of performance management system. The following problems can be addressed, based on De Waal and Counet's article in *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management* (2008, 368–372):

- There is not enough resources and capacity for the implementation of performance management system. This is a very common issue, especially in small companies, that they do not have the sufficient resources including time, money and even the people to do the job.
- Some companies may “follow the trend” and implement the system so hurriedly that they do not pay attention to their business condition. The ideal condition for the implementation of performance management system is when the company is

in its stable condition, so that the management can focus on setting the foundation for the system.

- Nowadays, performance management is becoming more popular all over the world. However, there is still a lack of understanding on performance management from most people due to lack of training to get them familiar with the system. Therefore, many people are not aware of their roles in the system, leading to ineffective results.

- Lack of commitment from both managers and employees is also a problem in many organizations as they may show no interest in the system.

- Many performance management systems failed because the managers do not have appropriate skills to perform their tasks during the process, especially communication skills. Sometimes, the purpose of the performance management system is wrongly interpreted by the employees due to inappropriate manners from the managers.

- In case of pay driven performance management system, the link between performance and pay must be appropriate and apparent. If not, the employees may lose their interests in the system since they do not see any benefits from it.

- Many organizations underestimate the importance of an overall control for the system. There is usually no particular person responsible for the overall execution of performance management since most assume that performance management is only between a manager and an employee. However, during the implementation of the system, there are many difficulties that need technical supports.

3 CASE COMPANY – INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL X

3.1 Case company in brief

International school X is a 5-year old co-educational college preparatory institution registered in Vietnam, which covers education in English for pre-kindergarten (from age 3) through to grade 12. School X is accredited by AdvancEd since 2015 and is holding membership of College Board, ACT and ISS. By the beginning of school year 2016-2017, it has almost 80 employees, including 42 faculty members and 8 teaching assistants. The other staffs work in different areas such as operations, admissions, accounting, marketing, security and facility management.

International school X's students are international students whose parents are working in Vietnam and a part of Vietnamese students from affordable families. One of the school's commitments to parents is to maintain the proportion of Vietnamese students at maximum 10% in order to provide students a truly international environment. At the beginning of school year 2016-2017, it has almost 400 students from more than 20 different countries around the world.

Even though its tuition fee is considered very expensive for average Vietnamese families, school X is highly recommended with excellent teaching methods, American-based curriculum, various extra-curricular activities and modern facilities. Furthermore, students will be awarded dual diploma from Vietnam and the USA after completing their study. The qualification is equally recognized worldwide.

3.2 Vision and mission

The following information is retrieved from the Guide Book 2016 of International school X:

Vision:

“Our vision is a school of national identity set in an international frame. It breeds students who adhere to a diverse set of values and traditions, as well as provides students with an American education that prepares them to cope up with the challenges of a rapidly changing future.”

Having seen the increasing demand of modern and innovative education in Vietnam, the founders of school X seized this opportunity to bring American education model to this developing country. They focus on continuously improving the quality of teaching in order to nurture future leaders and pioneers with global mind-set. These students will be an important resource for the world’s future development.

Mission:

“We work to prepare students for professional success in the global community. Our unique internationally-focused curriculum equips students to become culturally literate by developing critical thinking and communication skills, as they gain a strong sense of personal and social responsibility.”

As an educational institution, the priority of school X is to educate young people. They do not only provide students with knowledge from the books, but also give them opportunities to experience and learn from real-life activities.

3.3 Managing performance at International school X

Currently, school X does not have a separate HRM department; the overall HR responsibilities belong to the operations manager and the principal. Besides compensation and benefits, which is under operations manager’s duties, other HRM practises such as recruitment, training and development and reviewing performance for the teachers are carried out by the principal.

During its five years until now, school X focused more on high-quality teacher recruitment than managing and improving performance. This might have produced great re-

sults at the beginning; however, gradually, the weaknesses showed. This subchapter gives a brief description of the existing activities that can be defined as components of the teacher performance management process in school X.

3.3.1 Faculty structure

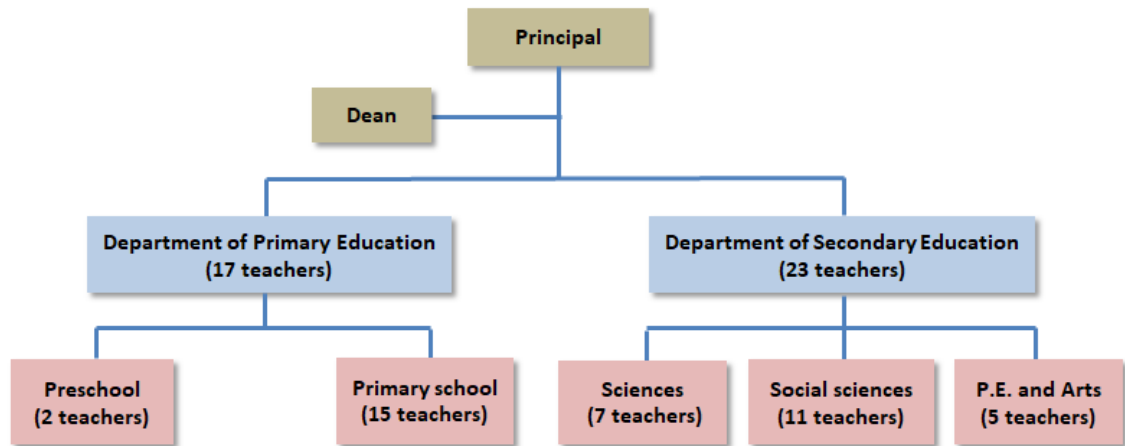


FIGURE 8: Faculty structure in International school X (Beginning of 2016-2017).

Figure 8 illustrates faculty structure in International school X. The principal is the head of the school. Dean is responsible for student discipline and administrative support. Since the school does not have a principal for each level of education, the overall management of the teachers is on the head teacher's hand. The faculty is divided into 2 departments according to the level of education: primary education (pre-kindergarten and kindergarten; primary school, grade 1-5) and secondary education (middle school, grade 6 to 8; and high school, grade 9 to 12). In primary education, there are 2 professional teams: preschool team (pre-kindergarten and kindergarten) and primary school team (grade 1-5). In secondary education department, 3 professional teams are formed according to the main subjects of education: Sciences (Math, Science, Information and Communications Technology), Social sciences (Social studies, Languages, Language arts) and P.E. and Arts (Physical Education, Art, Music).

3.3.2 Description

Induction

The basic idea of induction is to give new teachers a briefing on the working environment, management, colleagues, their responsibility at the school and what is expected of them. They also have to go through some basic training on teaching methods, facility usage, etc. before being assigned to their own classes.

School year opening meetings

At the beginning of an academic year, in August, the principal holds a formal meeting with all teachers. The agenda of the meeting includes:

- Instruction from the Ministry of Education for foreign-invested education institutions for the new school year.
- General assessment on the school's current condition: strengths and weaknesses, past performance (previous academic year), etc.
- The objectives and strategies of the school for the new academic year.
- Assigning the missions for each department and team.

Then, each department/team organizes a meeting to create their own plan and assign individual missions for the teachers. The teachers, then, have to fill in their personal planning form. The form can be found in Appendix 1.

Training and development

Training and development is still one of the major weaknesses of International school X's HRM. Besides the basic training given on induction phase, there are not many training and development opportunities for the teachers at International school X. Language courses, including Vietnamese classes for foreign teachers and English training for Vietnamese teachers, are their only option at the moment.

Performance review

Each teacher's overall performance is observed during the academic year, mainly by the leader of his/her professional team. Performance review is performed twice a year, at the end of each semester. There are 2 types of review: self-assessment and formal performance review meeting.

- Self-assessment: Each teacher is given a form (Appendix 2) to fill in at the end of the semester, which allows them to give their own assessment on what they have achieved, how well they have performed during the semester and what are the weaknesses that need improvements.

- Formal performance review meetings: The formal review meetings are department-based and team-based organized twice a year each, at the end of each semester. The feedbacks are given as group feedbacks by the head of the department/team leaders. Sometimes, individual feedbacks are provided as well, but only in case of very specific feedbacks.

Compensation and benefits

Teachers' salary is determined based on their past experience in the field of education before they join school X. In addition, they are guaranteed a fixed pay rise rate of 15% every year. Besides the basic salary, other benefits for the teachers include:

- Health insurance support.
- Flight and housing allowance for overseas hires.
- Shuttle bus for teachers and staff. (For transportation between school and home).
- Free gym, soccer and baseball field.
- 25% off tuition fee if their children enrol in school X

4 RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter analyses all the important information collected using both quantitative and qualitative research methods including the teacher survey, the interviews with school's principal and CEO and a students' opinion poll.

4.1 Interviews with the principal and CEO

The author did not conduct a formal interview with either the principal or the CEO; the results mentioned in this subchapter are summarized from small talks and discussions with both the principal and the CEO during the project.

On being asked about his expectations on the project, the CEO gave his opinions from two perspectives: business perspective and management perspective. As a businessman, his final aim is obviously profitability. According to him, the school is entering its stable stage at the moment in terms of students and operations. What they really need to do now is to keep improving the quality of the school including facilities, teachers, activities, etc. in order to maintain and further improve the school's reputation to build trust and attract more students for the school. Teacher performance management system is planned to serve this purpose. On the other hand, he also mentioned some expectations he has on the system from management point of view. The CEO believes performance management system is a very important step for school X towards effective management, especially for the management of people. If the system is implemented properly, it will be able to increase not only motivation at work, but also the teachers' job satisfaction. Moreover, he wishes that the system will help to improve the communication within the organization.

The CEO also claimed that it should be advantageous for International school X to establish a teacher performance management system because of the following reasons. The first reason is that the majority of the faculty are from the US and other developed countries, where the culture is just perfect for performance management system. It may take shorter time for them to get used to the system. The remaining teachers who come from developing countries like Vietnam or Pakistan may face more difficulties accept-

ing the system. Fortunately, since most of them have already lived or worked in an international environment before, with proper training and communication, these teachers will be able to adapt well to the new system. Stability is another advantage of International school X. Since it is a 5 year-old school, everything from curriculum and students to facilities, staff, teachers, etc. is in their places. Moreover, the school has successfully developed a good reputation among the international schools in Hanoi. Therefore, it is in a perfect condition for the establishment of performance management system.

According to the principal, despite having the above advantages, International school X will still face a lot of challenges with the new system, the majority of which is about the lack of knowledge about the performance management system and the skills required to make the system a success. He stated that most of the general teachers are more used to such terms as performance evaluation or performance appraisal than they are to the term performance management because performance management is not yet popular in the education industry. Moreover, performance management system strictly requires experience and skills from the managers. However, most of the teachers do not have much experience with this kind of management before, especially the senior teachers (heads of department and team leaders), who are in charge of managing performance for the teachers in their team/department. They are educated to be teachers who teach students knowledge and skills, not to be managers who manage others' performance, while performance management is a field that requires expertise. Therefore, even though they were already trained on this aspect before being assigned the job, their skills are certainly lacking for the new system. Furthermore, with school X's current faculty structure, some team leaders have to be responsible for the performance of too many other teachers, which might overwork them because they also have their own teachings to care about.

Putting all the difficulties aside, the principal and the CEO firmly showed their supports for the implementation of the system. They both promised to do their best to make it work for the school since they believe that in the long-run, the performance management system will help building and maintaining a concrete quality of teaching for International school X. Especially, on being asked about the massive financial investment for the new system, the CEO confirmed that he is willing to make this long-term investment as long as it produces the expected results.

4.2 Teacher survey

As mentioned in subchapter 1.5.1, a survey (Appendix 3) was conducted before the closing of school year 2015-2016 in order to collect the opinions from the teachers at International school X about the current process of managing performance and their expectations on the new performance management system. All members of the faculty, excluding principal and dean, participated in the survey. Therefore, a total of 38 responses were collected (out of 38 teachers at the time of the survey). An analysis of the results is revealed below.

4.2.1 Limitations of the current performance management tasks

The teachers' answers to some of the survey questions have unfolded the weaknesses in International school X's current process of managing performance.

The fact that none of the teachers firmly disagreed to the statement "I know exactly what the school's objectives and strategies are" means that the school's objectives and strategies have been at least somewhat communicated to all the teachers. However, only 2 out of 38 teachers (5.26%) could confidently say that they know clearly all the school objectives and strategies while more than half of them (57.89%) hesitated to confirm that they know or they do not know about those. This shows ineffectiveness in the communication of school's objectives and strategies to the teachers. (Figure 9.)

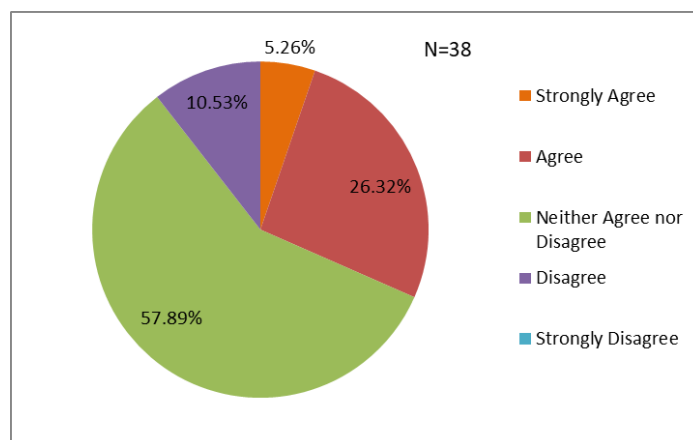


FIGURE 9: Responses to the statement "I know exactly what the school's objectives and strategies are"

According to Figure 10, nearly one third (31.58%) of the teachers agreed (18.42%) or strongly agreed (13.16%) that they did not put much effort in the personal planning form because they knew that basically no one cares about it. Only 13.16% of the teachers confirmed that they have been doing their best with the planning form. This result reflects the reality that the teachers' planning is not well-managed and the importance of planning to the overall performance is not emphasized.

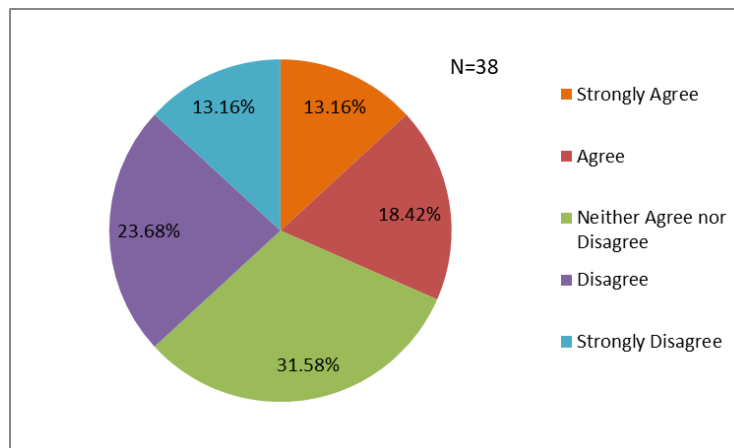


FIGURE 10: Responses to the statement “I tend to fill in my personal plan half-heartedly because it is mainly for documentation”

The chart in Figure 11 shows the levels of satisfaction the teachers feel towards the training and development activities they are currently receiving. None of them agreed that they are provided with enough and relevant training and development opportunities since they are getting no other training than the “language courses”.

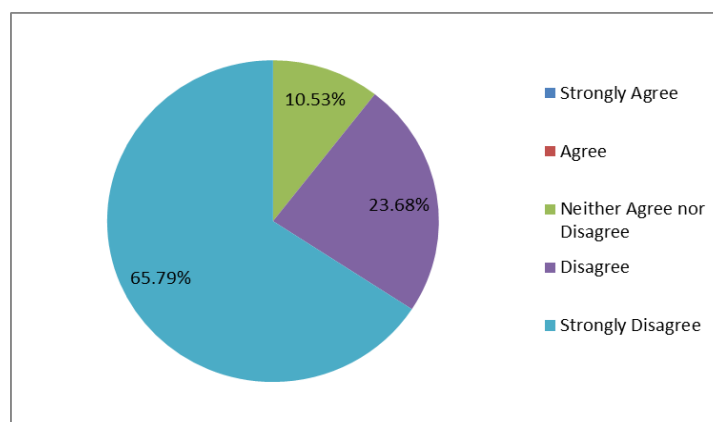


FIGURE 11: Response to the statement “I am satisfied with the current training and development opportunities that the school is providing us, teachers”

All the teachers at International school X chose that they want more personal feedback on their performance. At the moment, the reviews are performed only twice a year at the end of each semester. Moreover, the assessment and feedbacks are basically given in groups, not individually. Therefore, the teachers are unable to receive objective feedbacks from others, preventing them from realizing their personal weaknesses for improvement.

To sum up, here are some limitations of International school X' current performance management:

- The current way of communicating the school's objectives and strategies to the employees are not very effective. The teachers seem to have no interest in knowing about these things; all they care about is how to complete their own teachings.
- The planning phase is not properly performed, which certainly drops the effectiveness of performance.
- Since the school is new and it is still on the way to build reputation and trust, the management team has been focusing more on recruiting high-quality teachers rather than providing training and development activities for them. This does not satisfy the teachers since they see no development opportunities for themselves.
- The lack of personal feedback is also a major problem preventing the improvement of personal performance.

There is, in fact, another weakness that is not included in the survey because the teachers might not notice the problem themselves without any comparisons. Since there are not commonly agreed criteria for performance assessment, each person may have their own standards and methods to assess performance. Therefore, the assessment of individual performance can become ineffective.

4.2.2 Opinions about the new performance management system

Besides the limitations, the survey also delivered some suggestions for the new performance management system according to the teachers' preference.

As can be seen from Figure 12, the teachers are well aware of the qualifications and skills needed for their job since these are clearly available in the job descriptions. However, only about half of the teachers (20/38 teachers) knows all the key result areas of their job, which are briefly mentioned in the job descriptions and during the induction stage. Unfortunately, merely 5 teachers have an in-depth understanding about the behavioural competencies required for the job as they are not well documented. It is important to note that they are the only 5 teachers that have been remaining with the school since the beginning. It is very important for the teachers to really know their role in the organization in order for them to perform well at work. Therefore, there needs to be an effective tool to communicate all the above requirements to the teachers.

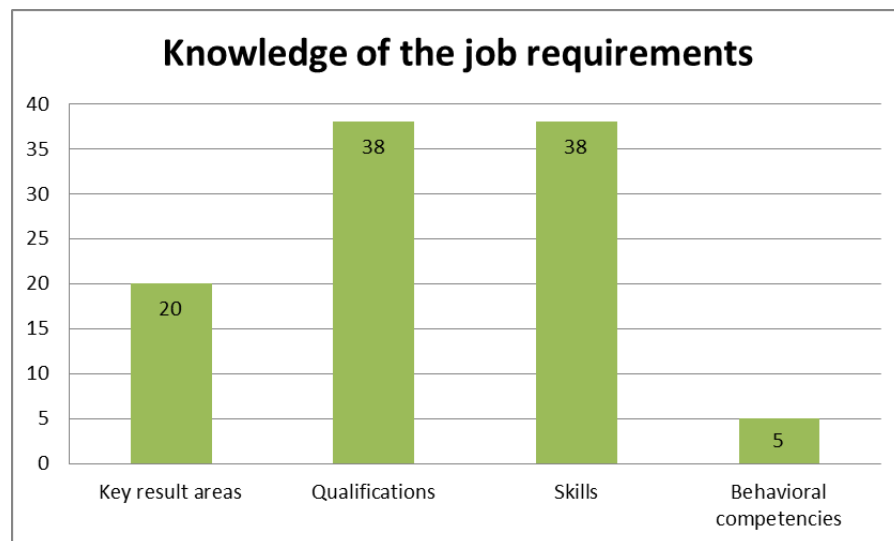


FIGURE 12: Teachers' knowledge about their job requirements

Figure 13 shows that the majority of the teachers at International school X support the idea of discussing their goals and plans with their superiors (65.79% strongly agree and 10.53% agree). Only 2 disagreed with the statement.

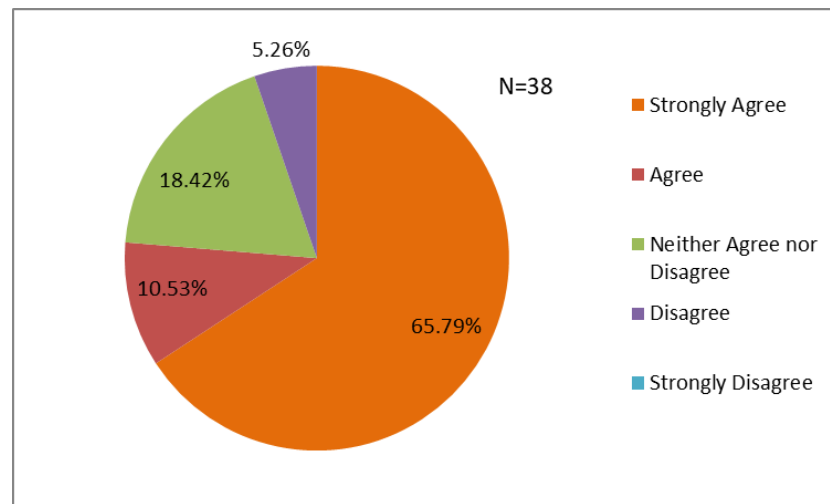


FIGURE 13: Responses to the statement “I feel comfortable and would like to discuss with my superiors about my personal goals and performance and development planning”

Figure 14 shows a strong desire for career development from the teachers at International school X since currently they are not having such opportunities. Only 10.53% (4 teachers) were unsure of their preference. The remaining all agreed (or strongly agree) with the idea.

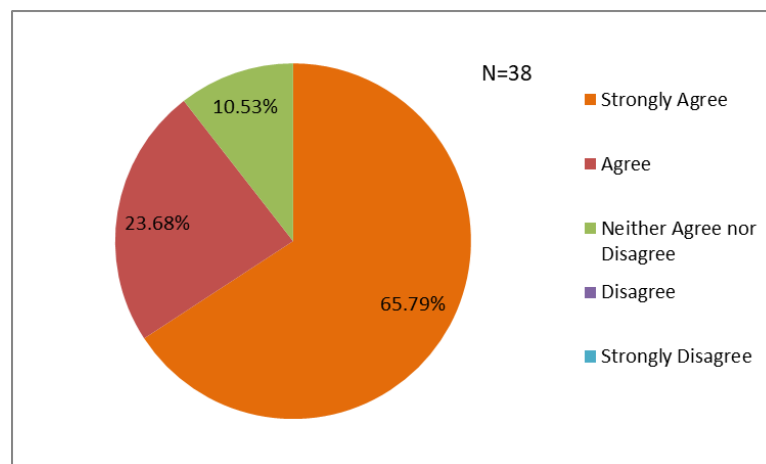


FIGURE 14: Responses to the statement “I would like to discuss my career development with my superiors”

Almost 90% of the teachers (89.47%) are not against the idea of learning more about Vietnamese teaching culture (23.68% strongly agree, 39.47% agree and 26.32% keep a neutral opinion). According to them, by doing that, they would be able to integrate the

good features of Vietnamese teaching culture into their teaching and make it more suitable for the nature of an International school. (Figure 15.)

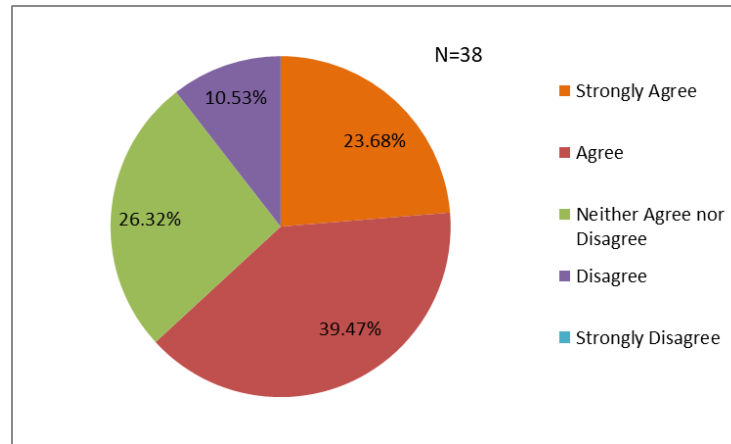


FIGURE 15: Responses to the statement “I would like more opportunities to reach out to the Vietnamese teaching culture through training and development activities”

Figure 16 shows the variety of sources from whom the teachers at International school X want to get performance assessment. The most votes went to superiors with 29/38 teachers who would like their superiors to assess their performance. Other options did not fall much behind with 25 teachers choosing colleagues and self-assessment and 22 choosing students as the assessors. One finding that should be emphasized here is that the majority of preschool and primary school teachers do not think that their students should assess their performance, most probably because they are too young.

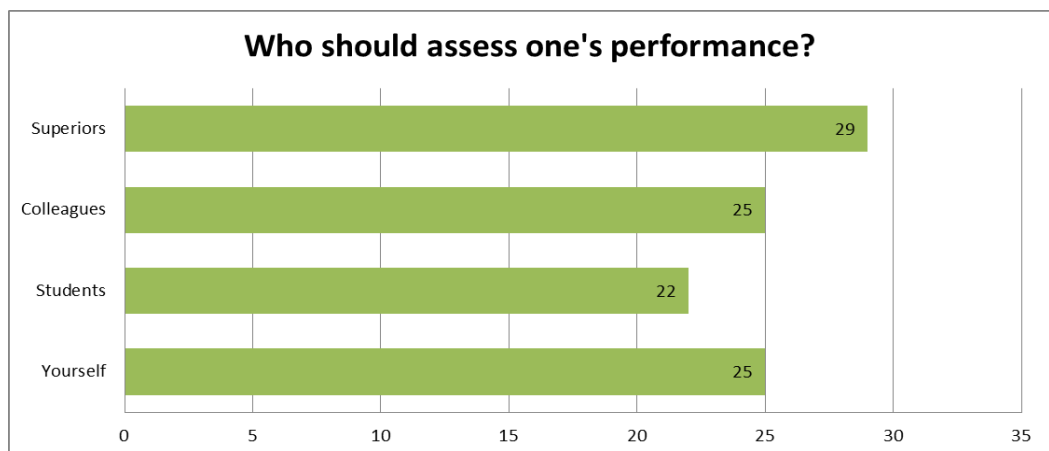


FIGURE 16: Teachers’ choices on the assessors of their performance

Right above half of the teachers (52.63%) prefer to have the personal review meetings twice a year, at the end of each semester. Two teachers chose the option “Others” and note that they would like the meetings to be more regularly than once a month. Both of them are junior teachers, who have been with the school for less than a year; therefore, they may want to learn more from the reviews. (Figure 17.)

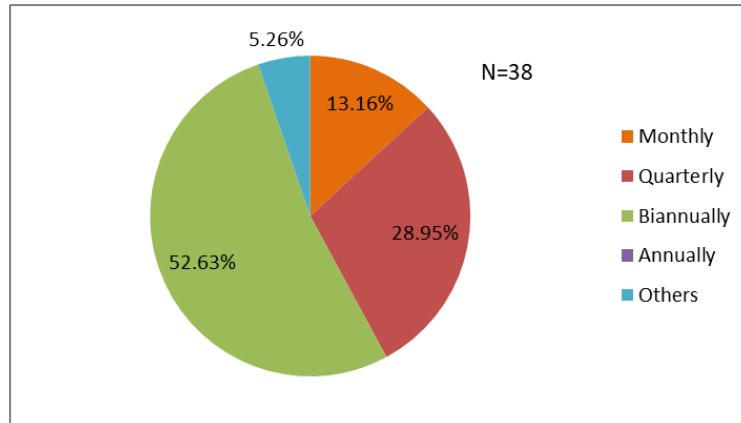


FIGURE 17: Teachers’ opinion on the frequency of the personal review meetings

According to Figure 18, more teachers prefer to give feedbacks anonymously (27/38 teachers) than giving them directly to the person (11/38 teachers). All the 11 teachers that want the feedbacks to be given face-to-face are from the US.

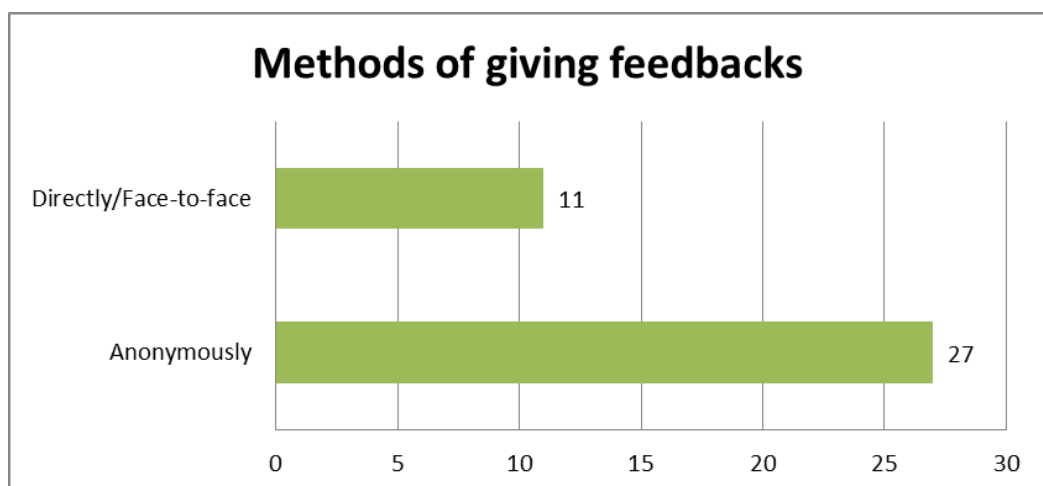


FIGURE 18: Teachers’ choices on the methods of giving feedbacks to colleagues and superiors

100% of the teachers chose development as the drive for the performance management system. They think it is more important for the performance management to enhance their performance than it is to their pay. Moreover, some of the teachers are afraid that in order to balance salary payment for a pay-focused system, it may be possible that performance management will negatively affect their pay.

4.3 Poll for students

At the beginning of school year 2016-2017, an offline poll was presented to both middle and high schools students of International school X in order to collect their reactions towards themselves giving their teachers a score for their performance (Appendix 4). Preschool students and primary school students were not included because of their young ages.

193 middle and high school students (out of school X's 379 students) were asked to choose one of the three options "Very excited", "Do not care" and "Uneasy" as their feeling about being able to give score to their teachers. The result can be seen from Figure 19.

	Middle school students	High school students	Total	Total (%)
Very excited	87	79	166	86.01
Do not care	9	15	24	12.44
Uneasy	0	3	3	1.55
Total			193	100

FIGURE 19: Middle and High school students' answers to the poll

As expected, the majority of students (86.01%) are in favour of the idea as they think it will be fun if they can score their own teachers just like how the teachers always do to them. A total of 24 students from both levels (12.44%) state that they do not really care about the activity, but they do not object to it, either. Only 3 high school students (1.55%), one from Vietnam and two from South Korea, showed anxiety about the idea saying that it does not seem right for them to assess their teachers.

5 DESIGNING THE TEACHER PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM FOR INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL X

Based on the theoretical studies and the research results, a complete teacher performance management model was designed for International school X. An illustration of the model can be seen in Figure 20.

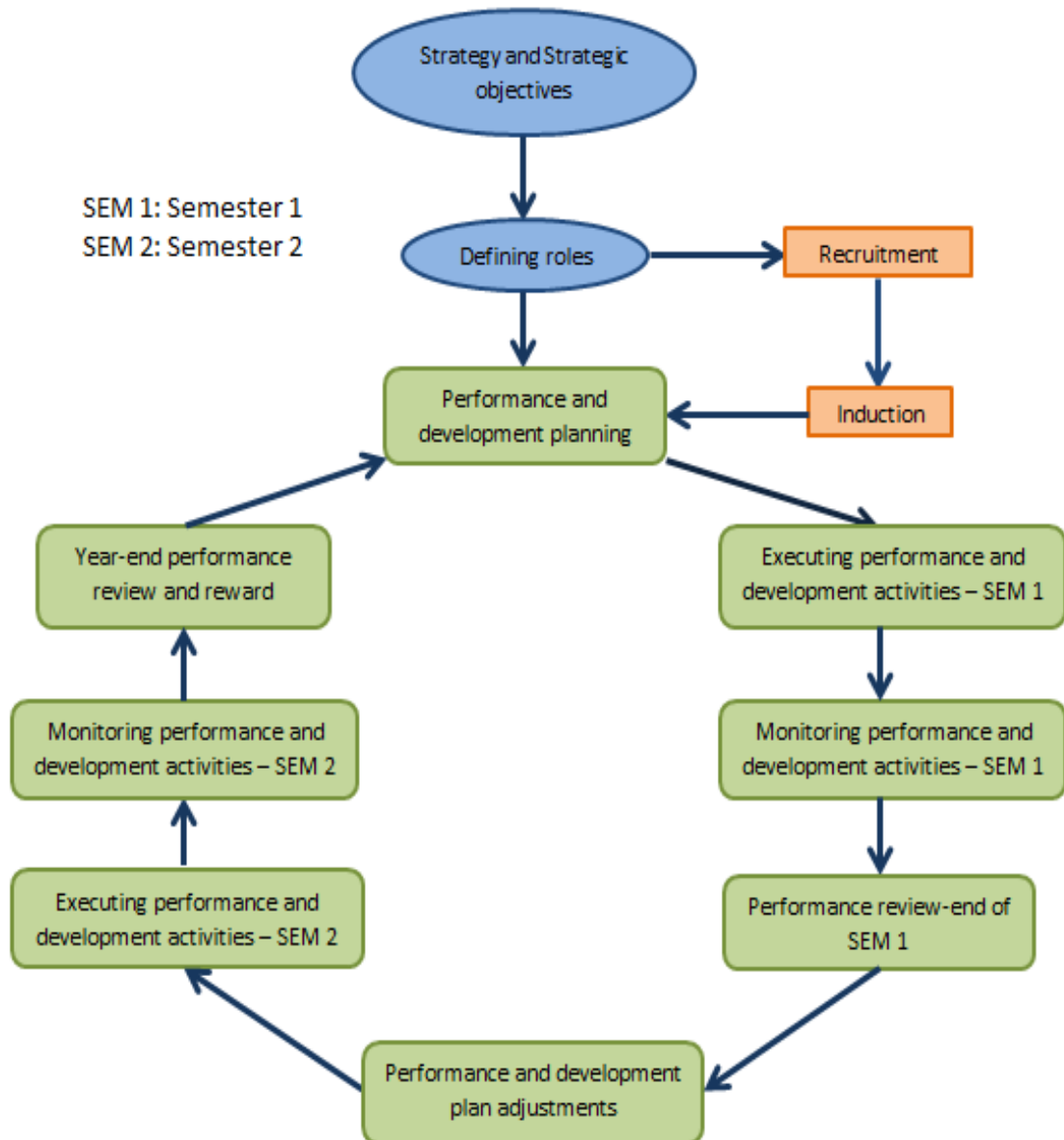


FIGURE 20: Teacher performance management process – International school X

5.1 Communicating the organizational strategy and strategic objectives – Strategy map

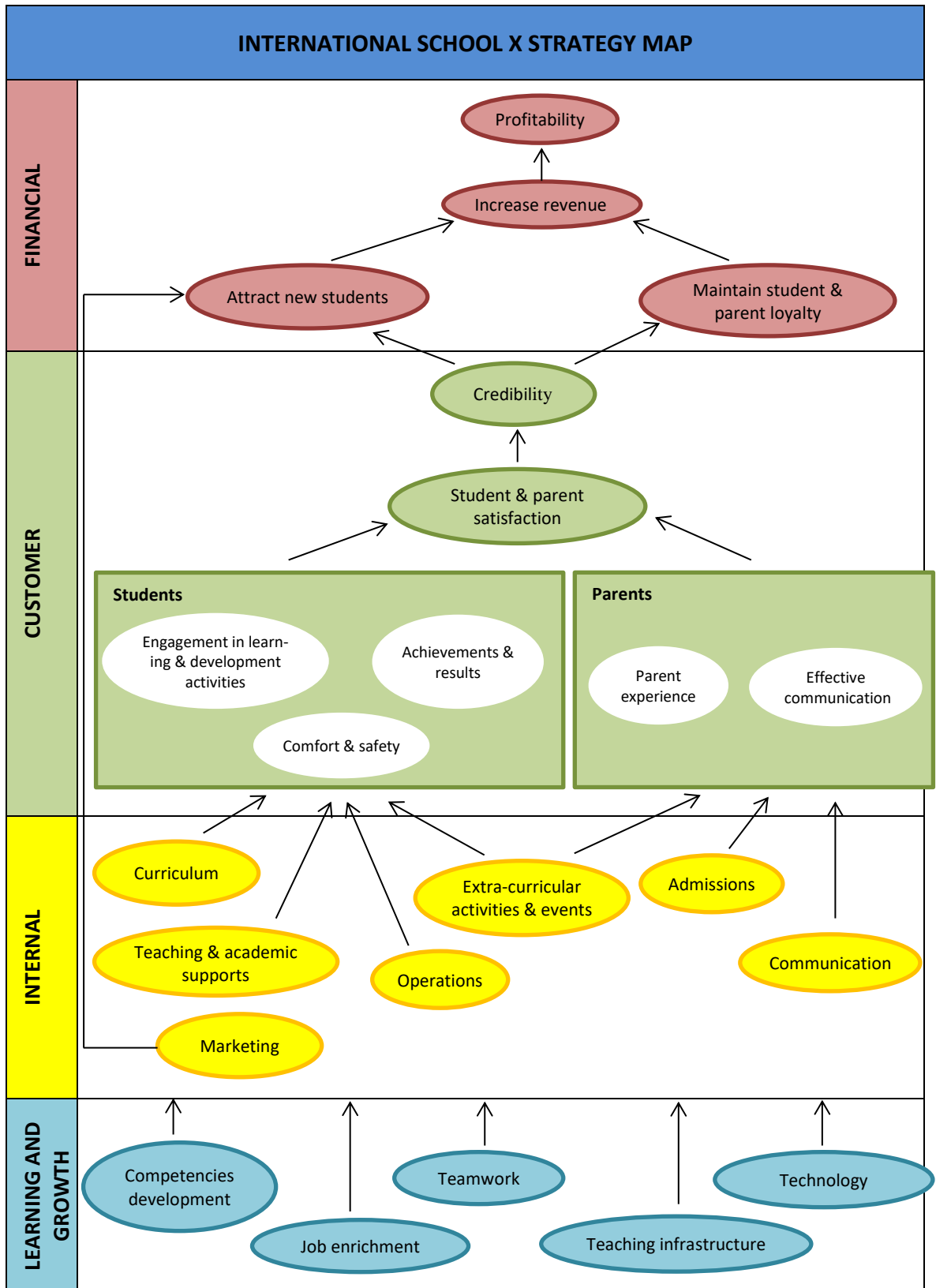


FIGURE 21: International school X strategy map (by author)

The strategy map in figure 21 briefly lists the strategic objectives of school X regarding different perspectives. The overriding objective of the school is, obviously, profitability. The map links the strategic objectives of the school together and shows the cause and effect relationship between them. In order to meet the overriding objective, International school X needs to try the best to create a name in the education industry, through the distinction in their curriculum and activities, the teaching and learning environment, and especially, the achievements and results of their students, etc. Internal perspective and learning and growth perspective reflect how school X plans to achieve these objectives. It is necessary for school X to pay extra attention to enriching their curriculum and extra-curricular activities; strengthening their teaching and academic supports; improving their admissions and operations processes, as well as communication (both internally and externally). Moreover, marketing plays an important role in helping the school to attract more new students. Therefore, employee competencies, team working, job enrichment, teaching infrastructure and technology, and facilities are learning and growth areas for school X.

Looking at the strategy map, the teachers would be able to figure out what they need to do and to focus on in order to contribute to the accomplishment of the school's objectives. Basically, the main responsibilities of the teachers, at any levels of educations, are creating a safe and comfortable environment that facilitate students' learning and development; and providing them with academic and social knowledge and skills through both in-class and out-of-class activities and academic supports. The teachers also need to take care of the communication with parents. Hence, the major focus of learning and growth for the teachers is on competencies development.

In addition to the statements of vision and mission, the strategy map and a more detailed balanced scorecard are to be explained and emphasized to the employees, including the teachers during the school opening meeting. The strategy map can be cascaded down into a specific strategy for the teaching faculty, which shows the "focus and choice" of the faculty itself. There, the teachers are able to take a deeper look on what the schools'/department's strategic objectives are and what are expected of them in order to achieve the objectives.

A more completed strategy map should also show priorities, so which objective should be focused more and which one is less important. However, this map is more of a gen-

eral version and does not include the priority indicators. The detailed measures, specific targets and initiatives for each of the objectives are presented in the balanced scorecard. The balanced scorecard and strategy map can be amended every year following any changes in the school's condition and strategy or the movement of the industry, etc.

5.2 Defining roles

As the organizational strategy and strategic objectives are identified, it becomes clearer what the organization expects from the teachers. Role profiles are created with mutual efforts from the teachers and the head of their department, based on the requirements from the school and their own experience on the job. A role profile clarifies the key results areas and competencies required for each job. Drafts of the generic role profiles for teachers from each level of education are presented in Appendices (Appendix 5 to 7).

However, it cannot be denied that for teachers from the same level of education, but in charge of different grades, classes or subjects, there should be some differences in their roles. Therefore, a customization of the role profile for each teacher is included in the next phase, planning phase (subchapter 5.3.1). The generic role profiles must be regularly updated since it is the basis for the performance and development planning.

5.3 Performance and development planning

5.3.1 Initial plannings

This is the official beginning of the performance management process, which is carried out before the academic year begins in mid-August. At this point of time, all the information about the school's strategy and strategic objectives, as well as, the generic role profile for their position are supposed to be successfully communicated to every teacher. Based on these information, the teacher and his/her supervisor get together and discuss about the teacher's individual plan. Through the discussion, the two need to reach an agreement on the plan. A complete form of individual plan can be found in

Appendix 8. Performance agreement and development plan are the two major components of the individual planning.

Performance agreement

Performance agreement is the result of the discussion about performance planning between the supervisor and the teacher. The performance agreement includes:

- A customization of the role profile: As mentioned in subchapter 5.2, the difference in grades, classes or subjects results in the difference in each teacher's role. Therefore, an amendment of the generic role profile into a more specific one is essential in the performance agreement.
- Personal objectives and action plans: The organizational objectives and personal role profile act as guidance for the creation of personal objectives. The supervisor helps the teacher in defining their personal objectives, which must align with the higher-level objectives. The teacher is able to propose the action plans to achieve the agreed objectives. The action plans reflect what the teacher thinks he/she can do to contribute to the fulfillment of team, department and school's objectives.
- Performance measures: It is also important to reach an agreement in the measures to assess performance in order to make the performance assessment more concrete and reliable. In school X's performance management system, an overall analysis of individual performance is used to assess one's performance. The performance measures are the achievement of personal objectives and expected outcomes, as well as the optimization of competencies in performance. Further details of the measures should be discussed by the teacher and his/her supervisor.

Development plan

The development plan clarifies all the development activities that are ready to be executed during the academic year. Before the meeting, the teacher needs to take a thorough look at the areas that he/she needs improvements, the activities required for devel-

opment and resources needed, etc. During the meeting, he/she has to present the prepared findings to the supervisor. The supervisor, then, decides if the development activities are viable and resources/supports are available within the school's ability. It has to be taken into account that the development areas must be beneficial for the school. The final development plan only includes the activities agreed by both the supervisor and the teacher.

5.3.2 Adjustments of the initial plans

At the end of the first semester in December, the first formal review meeting is performed. The result of the meeting may lead to some changes in the performance and development plans, which requires an adjustment to the initial plans to fit with the remaining semester. Any changes in the school's strategy, objectives or condition can cause changes in the plans. The plans may also be adjusted due to the results of the performance or development activities during the first semester. The updated plans, then, work as the basis for the second semester performance management.

5.4 Delivering and monitoring performance

The two phases of delivering and monitoring performance are executed simultaneously during the school year. However, they are divided into two periods: semester 1 (August-December) and semester 2 (January-May of the following year). The basis for individual performance and development activities and the monitoring of them during the first semester is the performance and development plans. The direction for the 2nd semester's activities will change if there are adjustments to the performance and development plans. If there are no changes in the plans after the first review meeting, the direction will stay the same.

5.4.1 Allocation of responsibilities

During the school year, the teacher is mainly responsible for the management of his/her own performance in order to produce the best results and meet the agreed objectives.

Besides teaching and other assigned activities, the teacher must also commit to do his/her best with the training and development activities as agreed in the development plan. He/she also needs to put an effort in keeping the interaction with the supervisor on-going and effective, especially by keeping the supervisor updated on his/her performance and development progress. In return, the teacher is able to receive feedbacks and suggestions from the more experienced senior, which is very beneficial for his/her performance and personal development. Nevertheless, the teacher has to maintain a positive attitude towards the feedback no matter how harsh they are, as long as they are reasonable. Moreover, the teacher should not wait until the end of the semester/year to do their self-assessment. He/she has to continuously keep his/her performance on watch in order to take immediate actions if necessary. Feedbacks and suggestions from colleagues, students and parents are also great sources for performance enhancement that needs more attentions from each teacher.

Monitoring and supporting the individual performance and development of the teachers are the responsibilities of supervisors. One supervisor is usually responsible for more than one teacher; therefore, the burden on the supervisor's shoulders is very big. The supervisor must, not on a daily basis, but continuously observe and keep track of the individual teacher's performance and very importantly document the pros and cons of the performance. As a result, the supervisor is not only well-prepared for the formal review meetings, but he/she is also able to give timely feedbacks to the teachers. Another responsibility of the supervisor is to provide resources, supports and opportunities for the teachers' personal development as agreed on the development plan. Moreover, the supervisor must keep the teachers under his/her management updated about any changes in the school's strategy or objectives or other conditions that may affect their performance and help them with the adjustments in their personal plans.

5.4.2 Proposals for development and training activities/projects

Training and development activities are vital for any organizations since it is considered the core for long-term development in many organizations. This applies perfectly to the case International school X. The continuous efforts in improving teacher quality are critical to the school's performance in the long run. Some proposals of training and de-

velopment activities that are suitable for the condition of International school X is briefly presented in this subchapter.

Pair/Group learning

Learning from people with the same position can be very beneficial for personal development of individuals since they share the same set of knowledge, skills and ability required to do a particular job and most importantly they know the job well. This project also runs throughout the academic year; each teacher is paired up with another teacher who holds the same position as he/she is. They can be put together in group of 3 if the number of teachers with the same position is an odd number.

The members in the same pair/group have a chance to closely watch the performance of each other. Due to that, they are able to learn many good things and experience from each other. Moreover, with this project, the peer plays the role of a second supervisor, who continuously observes one's performance and providing feedbacks. The feedbacks from peers might be even more on point than those of the real supervisor as they probably have more insights about the particular job. The pairs/groups are also encouraged to work together to improve their teaching methods. A friendly competition for teaching initiatives among the pairs/groups can be established in order to heat up the teamwork spirit. Each pair/group is allowed to present an initiative that they are most satisfied with to the judging panel any time during the academic year. The judges includes: CEO, principal and the heads of the department, total of 4 people. The rewards for this competition are presented at the closing ceremony every year.

Extra-curricular activities

This is a proposed method of job enrichment for the teachers at International school X. At the moment, most of the extra-curricular activities at International school X are sport related and only for students; plus some events such as Halloween, Christmas party, annual charity bazaar. Many of the teachers may not feel their involvement in these activities. Therefore, holding some kinds of contests like singing, arts, sciences, etc. for both students and teachers can better create the "fun" for the teachers' job.

Skills, experience and teaching methods sharing with friend schools

In the last 2 years, school X has been trying to extend its network within the education institutions in Vietnam. The initial targets were other international schools in Hanoi, which follows the same pattern of education with school X. Until the beginning of academic year 2016-2017, school X has successfully seized a friendly relationship with 8 other international schools from different levels of education through mutual activities related to both the study and the extra-curricular activities. Nowadays, realizing the importance of integrating the good sides of Vietnamese teaching culture into their teaching, as well as the demand of teachers for opportunities to get to know about the teaching culture in Vietnam, the school's management has been trying to reach some very prestigious Vietnamese schools in Hanoi and is expecting to befriend with some of them in the near future.

Upon the success of its network expansion, it is recommended for school X to collaborate with the friend schools in organizing some activities/conferences/events for their teachers to share with one another their own stories and experience, their skills and how they adopt the skills, or new teaching methods, etc. Learning from others' experience, either failure or success can be very beneficial for one's personal development.

Training

Training can never be left out of any development plans. There are many different types and areas of training to decide on. However, in fact, the resource that the school can provide is always limited. Therefore, it is vital to figure out what kind of training is more important for the teachers and which is the most beneficial for the organization. The training can be on knowledge, skills or other competencies. It can be on-the-job, off-the-job training or e-learning, etc., anything that is good for both individual and for the school.

Coaching

In the case of International school X, coaching is the specific development activity designed for the junior teachers, especially new recruits, who are new to the school and perhaps, also to the job. Each teacher is assigned to an experienced and skilled coach,

usually his/her supervisor, who will help them get used to the job and develop their competencies to suit the position. The coaching process focuses more on on-the-job training by observing coach's classes or in-class teaching under coach's guidance and observation. The intensive coaching activities last for the first 3 months. After that, the coach will still closely watch the teacher's performance and give regular instructions and feedbacks for him/her to improve his/her performance.

5.5 Performance review and reward

Performance review is performed twice a year, at the end of each semester. This stage consists of self-assessment, formal assessment review meetings and reward. Since school X's performance management system is development driven, reward does not play the vital role. It works more as a source of motivation for performance and development efforts from the teachers. Therefore, it is included in this stage.

5.5.1 Self-assessment

Before the year-end review meeting takes place, the teachers need to complete their self-assessment form, which reflects their own thinking about their individual performance during the year. The self-assessment form will not be changed for the new performance management system (Appendix 2). With that, the teachers are able to assess their own achievements of the personal objectives, as well as their expected work results. There is also an area for the teachers to revise their key learnings during the year. An assessment of the personal strengths and weaknesses is also included, which is the basis for the future development plan. If the teachers regularly take notes of their performance and development progress during the year, the self-assessment will no longer be a burden for them at the end. This form must be submitted to the supervisor before the personal review meeting.

5.5.2 Formal review meetings

The traditional department review/team review meetings at the end of every semester are maintained in this new system. The assessment and feedbacks are given to the team as a whole by the head of the department/team leaders. However, the main focus of this review stage should be the individual review meetings for each teacher. The review at the end of the first semester is more of an opportunity for both parties to formally update the progress of individual performance and development plans, to give and receive feedbacks and to discuss about any necessary adjustments to the original plans at the beginning of the academic year. The year-end performance review, however, focus on the overall assessment and feedbacks about the individual performance and development activities during the year, as well as discussions on the future plans. The contents of the final review meeting are based on the individual review form (Appendix 9) including the supervisor's assessment on the overall performance of the teacher; any available feedbacks from colleagues, students and their parents; the approvals and suggestions from the supervisor on the teacher's future development plan. This is not only the final stage in the performance management process of International school X; it is also considered the starting point for another round of the cycle.

The criteria for performance assessment are the performance measures agreed from the planning phase. Each teacher is going to receive an overall evaluation from the supervisor with one of the 5 levels in the rating scale, which is not primarily meant for reward decisions, but a summary of the teacher's performance for him/her to realize the effectiveness level of their performance and development activities. A detailed instruction on the rating scale is presented in Appendix 10.

5.5.3 Additional sources of feedbacks and evaluation

Besides the feedbacks and evaluation from supervisor, the following sources of feedbacks and evaluation are also available for the teachers of International school X:

- **Colleagues:** Colleagues including other teachers and staff members of the school are encouraged to give constructive feedbacks to each other either

directly or anonymously, especially the peer within mutual learning pair/group as they work the most closely together.

- **Students:**

- Preschool and primary school students will have more simple and fun ways to give share their feelings towards the teachers. For example, for preschool students, each will be given a heart-shaped sticker to stick on the picture of his/her favourite teacher. For primary school students, because of their teaching-studying nature, the homeroom teacher is responsible for all areas of the curriculum. A suggestion for them to evaluate the teachers is to reflect how much they love the teacher into a number from 1 to 10. The average score is the final score for each teacher.
- Middle and high school students are given a chance to score and share their thoughts about their own teachers when the academic year ends. The students can give each of their teachers a score, out of 10. The final score of each teacher is also the average of all the scores given by his/her students. Moreover, the opinions from their students are a great source of feedbacks for the teachers.

- **Parents:** International school X always appreciate comments and feedbacks from students' parents. There has been a specific email address for parents to freely send in their opinions, feedbacks or even complaints about the school in general or the teachers, etc.

Parts of these information are mentioned in the personal review meeting(s).

5.5.4 Reward

Besides the existing compensations and benefits as described in subchapter 3.3.2, the following rewards are added in order to motivate the teachers on their job:

- Reward given to the teachers who successfully coach their students to win or perform outstandingly in a competition or equivalence.
- Prizes for the winner(s) of the contest(s) for teachers including the competition for the best teaching initiative.
- Popularity Award given to the most popular/favourite teacher of each team (voted by students; the one with the highest average point for middle-high school students)
- Bonuses given based on their overall performance during the year.

These rewards do not only generate friendly competition among individuals and teams, but they also bring motivation and excitement for the teachers in doing their job.

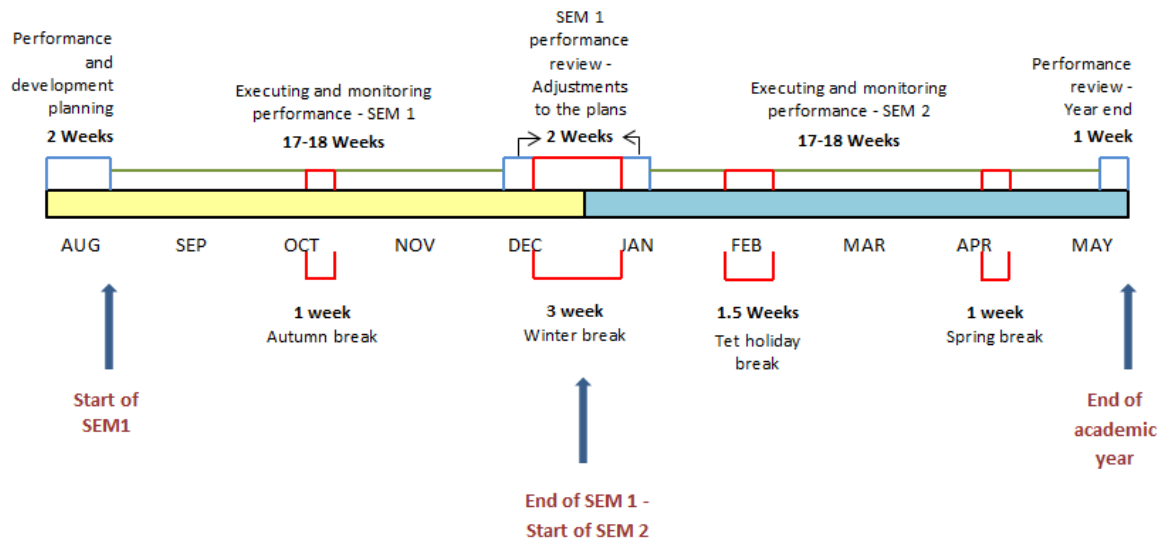
5.6 Other recommendations

5.6.1 Performance management for new recruits

The core performance management activities for the new teachers are generally the same for other teachers. The requirements for their recruitment are defined in the job descriptions, which are the more general version of the role profiles. After being accepted, they have opportunities to get to understand their roles deeper with the help from their supervisor and seniors through discussions, observation and on-the-job trainings (Induction phase). The performance management process is, then, the same for any other teachers.

5.6.2 Process timeline

In this subchapter, the timeline of the performance management process for an academic year will be visualized to make it easier to understand. (Figure 22.)



Notes:

(*) The academic year officially begins in mid-August and ends at the end of May (of the next year)

(**) SEM 1 officially ends on December 31 and SEM 2 officially starts on January 1 (of the next year), but the actual dates depend on the winter break

(***) The duration of the breaks is not included in the week count for the academic year

FIGURE 22: International school X teacher performance management process timeline

Since the starting and closing dates of an academic year can be different each year, the dates on the timeline will be different for different years.

5.6.3 Tackling the challenges

In order to deal with the lack of knowledge and understanding about performance management from the teachers, the only thing that works is to provide them with appropriate training about the system. The training must provide teachers with the explanations of the concept and process of performance management as well as the purpose of the system. It is also important that the detailed instruction must be given on how the process is carried out and what are needed from the teachers in order to successfully complete the process.

Training is also a suggestion to cope with the lack of experience and skills from the supervisors. However, the procedure should not be stopped after preliminary training. The experience and skills that one may need for carrying out the performance management tasks cannot be obtained with theoretical training; these should come from practical involvement. The school can hire/outsouce a professional to be responsible for the

overall management of the system. The person will also work a coach for the supervisors during the process in case they have difficulties doing their tasks.

Last but not least is the problem with the work load for supervisors when the performance management system is implemented, especially later on when the size of the school may be expanded. At the moment, school X does not have a principal for each of the education levels; therefore, the management work for each level lie in the hand of the department head. However, the disadvantage here is that the heads of departments are actually the senior teachers being assigned extra duties. As a result, it should be better for the management of the school if there are separate principals for each level of education, who works under the direct management of the head of the school. They no longer teach students, but take management responsibilities instead. The priority should be internal promotion for the current heads of department if they are qualified enough because they already know the culture and environment of the school well. Otherwise, external recruitment is not a bad option, either. Then, the team leaders are responsible for performance management of their direct reports. The principals are responsible for the overall monitoring of performance management for the teachers under their management and directly managing the performance of the team leaders in their education levels. They can also work as coach for the team leaders' management tasks. The same pattern can be applied if the size of the school may become bigger in the future. Figure 23 shows an example of the levels of management if the size of the school gets bigger in the future.

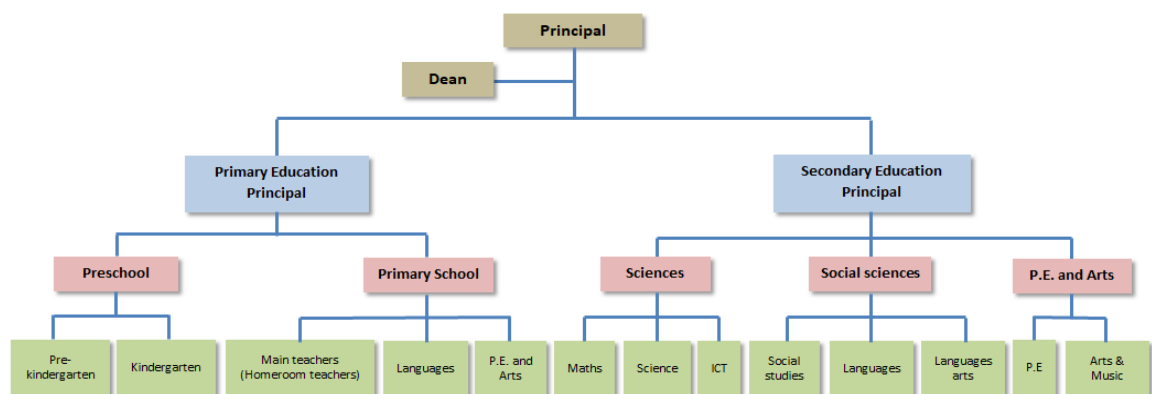


FIGURE 23: Future faculty structure

5.6.4 Risks and risk management

The following risks may occur during the implementation of the performance management process in the case of International school X:

- Even though it cannot be denied that school X is in a very good condition for the implementation of the performance management system, the work cannot be done in a hurry. Taking into account the size of the organization and the lack in management experience and practice, if the process is hurriedly carried out, it will fire back to the organization. The solution is to take time for the preparation including trainings and recruitment/promotion of the important roles. Due to that, people are more aware of the benefits that the new system brings in and they are more prepared with the skills to carry out the whole process effectively.
- Another risk of performance management system is the lack of commitment from both management and teachers. As long as these people are not interested in the system, the implementation of the system will be a complete failure.
 - For the management, performance management means more work to do for them. Even though observing, assessing and consulting the junior teachers' performance are always their duties, it requires even more time and efforts to do these tasks well for good performance management. Therefore, some people might not be happy with it. The solution for this was mentioned in 5.7.2, to tackle the work load problem.
 - For the regular teachers, since the performance management system of school X is development driven, most people will take this as a motivation to keep improving their performance. However, it is possible that some people may show lack or no commitment to the system because they see no concrete reward or punishment for performing well or performing badly. Therefore, the following additional rewards are recommended for the reward system of school X. Moreover, the teachers should be awarded based on the overall results of their performance assessed by the supervisor. People who achieve an "Exceptional"/"Above Expectations" will get a bonus for their great performance. Moreover, it

is recommended to raise the annual increment for the teachers that constantly receive great assessments for their performance (at least 2 consecutive years). However, the number can be deducted if they do not keep up their good performance. Those who are, unfortunately, evaluated with “Below Expectations” and “Unsatisfactory” must receive more or less some punishments (warning or withholding annual increment, as examples), not to threaten them, but to make them aware of the consequences of their ineffective performance in order to boost their spirits for future development. If they continue to show no improvement despite all the supports given, the school should even consider terminating the contract.

- However, the solution for the above risk may lead to a misunderstanding about the purpose of the performance management system. Therefore, the communication is extra important. It is crucial to let the teachers know that development is the one and only drive for this system. The rewards are only forms of motivations produced to encourage them to do their best in their performance and development activities and prevent them from being lazy and reluctant to changes.
- If the process is not carried out properly, it will create fear and anxiety for the teachers. For example, the on-going observation and assessment of performance might seem to the teachers as their performance is being overly watched and controlled, which may result in a lot of pressure for the teachers and affect their performance. Therefore, the skills, especially communication skills, of the supervisors are of vital importance. On-going training and consulting is a must in this case.

6 CONCLUSION

The main objective of the study as defined in the introduction is to create a systematic process to manage performance of the teachers at International school X. The objective has been successfully achieved with a suggestion of the model for teacher performance management at the school, which was discussed fully in chapter 5. The formation of the process was based on both the literature review and the practical research conducted by the author. The literature review covered the theory of performance management and performance management related issues. The main research consisted of a secondary research on the general information about the school (profile; vision, mission and strategy, faculty structure and existing performance management tasks) and a primary research under the form of a questionnaire, a poll and talks/discussions on people's opinion about the new performance management process.

Research findings helped to figure out drawbacks of the current performance management activities for the teachers at International school X and drafted some very important points for the new performance management system. The findings also confirmed the massive supports for teacher performance management system from top management to individual teachers and even the students. The management believe that performance management is a long-term investment, which will produce outstanding results in the future. The teachers are excited about the opportunity for both performance improvement and personal development. Moreover, it was announced by the CEO that the school is reaching its stability, the perfect platform for the implementation of performance management system.

The final model of teacher performance management process for International school X successfully meets the following requirements: acceptable within the ability of the school, fit with the organizational culture and satisfying the reasonable preference from the majority.

The performance management process consists of 4 major actions: planning, executing, monitoring and reviewing performance. Prior to the main process, the key information including corporate strategy and strategic objectives and the generic role profiles for the teachers of each level of education must be carefully communicated to the teachers.

Then, the process starts with performance and development planning for the whole academic year. The performance and development activities are carried out and monitored as planned by both the teacher and the supervisor during the first semester. The teacher's performance is reviewed for the first time at the end of semester 1 and the planning is adjusted accordingly. The same process is, then, repeated for the second semester. The year-end performance review should be more detailed than the mid-term one and a rating is provided for the overall performance during the year. The system is development driven and rewards can only be used to generate motivation.

In conclusion, the performance management system has become more and more importance in today's business world. It does not only create the link between the company's strategic objectives and the employee's day-to-day activities, but it also tightens the relationship between the management and the employees making the communication and the workflow smoother and much more effective. The system also supports the employers in identifying the level of competencies and competency gaps within the organization to create the most appropriate training and development plans. If the performance management system for the commissioning school is implemented properly, it will bring a lot of benefits for both the school and its teachers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Current individual planning form for teachers

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL X

School year: 20xx-20xx

INDIVIDUAL PLANNING FORM

Date: --/--/----

TEACHER INFORMATION			
Name:		Class(es) in charge:	
Professional team/Department:			
PERSONAL OBJECTIVES AND ACTION PLANS			
Personal objectives	Action plans		Notes
DEVELOPMENT PLAN			
Areas for development	Action plans	Target results	Notes

Appendix 2. Self-assessment form for teachers

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL X

School year: 20xx-20xx

SELF-ASSESSMENT FORM

Date: --/--/----

TEACHER INFORMATION	
Name:	Class(es) in charge:
Professional team/Department:	
Supervisor:	Job title:
ACHIEVEMENTS	
Accomplishments of the personal objectives	
Accomplishments of the development targets	
KEY LEARNINGS	

ASSESSMENT OF PERSONAL STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES	
Strengths	Weaknesses
PROPOSALS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT	

Appendix 3. Teacher survey

With this small survey, we are trying to learn more about your opinion on the current processes of managing teachers' performance at our school. There is no right or wrong answer to the survey questions; we are interested in what you think. This survey is for the purpose of building a comprehensive performance management system for all the teachers at International School X. Your answers will be kept strictly confidential. We highly appreciate your honesty and patience with the questions.

1. Name: _____
2. Where are you from? _____
3. Which professional team do you belong to?
 - Primary education - Preschool Secondary education - Sciences
 - Primary education - Primary school Secondary education - Social sciences
 - Do not belong to any Secondary education - P.E. and Arts
4. How long have you worked at International school X? _____
5. Choose the one that best suits your opinion about the following statements:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I know exactly what the school's objectives and strategies are	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I tend to fill in my personal plan half-heartedly because it is mainly for documentation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am satisfied with the current training and development opportunities that the school is providing us, teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like more specific feedbacks given on my personal performance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel comfortable and would like to discuss with my superiors about my personal goals and performance and development planning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to discuss my career development with my superiors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I would like more opportunities to reach out to the Vietnamese teaching culture through training and development activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. I know everything about _____ required for my job. Choose as many as you want.

Key result areas Qualifications Skills Behavioral competencies

7. If a performance management system for the teachers is to be established, which of the two purposes do you prefer? Why?

Development purpose

Pay purpose

Why? _____

8. Who do you think should assess your performance? Choose as many as you wish.

Yourself

Students

Colleagues

Superiors

9. Apart from the current formal review meetings within the department, if you have a chance to receive more personal reviews about your performance from your superiors, how often would you like to get the reviews?

Monthly

Biannually

Quarterly

Annually

Others, please specify: _____

10. If you are to give feedbacks on your colleagues or superiors' performance, which method do you prefer?

Anonymously

Directly/Face-to-face

Thank you for your time!

Appendix 4. Poll for students

You have been receiving scores from your teachers all the time. What do you think about you giving your teachers a score for their performance?

Very excited

Do not care

Uneasy

Appendix 5. Role profile - Preschool teacher

Role title:	Pre-kindergarten teacher
Department/Professional team:	Department of Primary Education/Preschool team
Key result areas:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare children for kindergarten by introducing concepts they will explore further in kindergarten and elementary school • Work with children in groups or one on one, depending on the needs of children and the subject matter • Plan and carry out a curriculum that targets different areas of child development, such as language, motor, and social skills • Organize activities so children can learn about the world, explore interests, and develop talents • Develop schedules and routines to ensure children have enough physical activity, rest, and playtime • Watch for signs of emotional or developmental problems in children and bring problems to the attention of parents • Keep records of the students' progress, routines, and interests, and keep parents informed about their child's development • Maintain a clean and tidy classroom consistent with health and safety standards 	
Need to know:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficient in English • Certification in child CPR and first aid • Familiar with safety and sanitation guidelines for classrooms • Excellent understanding of the principles of child development and preschool educational methods • Have artistic ability and interest 	
Able to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate effectively (both verbally and in writing) and develop a good relationship with parents and colleagues and especially small children • Give simple and clear instruction for small children • Plan lessons and engage young students in in-class activities • Act as mediator between children • Balance between a creative mind and a practical acumen • Work in team, collaborating with the teaching assistant for the planning and execution of in-class and outdoor activities • Adapt to the diversity in an international environment 	
Behavioral competencies:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool-tempered, friendly and reliable • A respect and fondness for children • Be patient while working with small children • Calmly respond to overwhelming and difficult situations • Always prepared with physical and mental stamina 	

Appendix 6. Role profile - Primary school (main/homeroom) teacher

Role title:	Primary school teacher (Main/Homeroom teacher)
Department/Professional team:	Department of Primary Education/Primary school team
Key result areas:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present lessons in a comprehensive manner and use visual/audio means to facilitate learning • Deliver lessons in all areas of primary curriculum (except for P.E., Languages, Music and Arts) • Provide individualized instruction to each student by promoting interactive learning • Create and distribute educational content (notes, summaries, assignments etc.) • Keep up-to-date with changes and developments in the structure of the curriculum • Assess and record students' progress and provide grades and feedback • Maintain a tidy and orderly classroom • Collaborate with other teachers, parents and stakeholders and participate in regular meetings • Plan and execute educational in-class and outdoor activities and events • Observe and understand students' behavior and psyche and report suspicions of neglect, abuse etc. • Develop and enrich professional skills and knowledge by attending seminars, conferences etc. 	
Need to know:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficient in English and Microsoft Office • Certification in child CPR and first aid • Familiar with safety and sanitation guidelines for classrooms • Familiar with electronic tools for teaching • Excellent understanding of the principles of child development and primary educational methods 	
Able to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and present lessons that cater for the needs of the whole ability range within the class • Motivate students with enthusiastic, imaginative presentation • Keep the lessons/progressions on schedule, especially classroom time-management • Give clear and comprehensible explanations and instructions • Act as mediator between children and maintain discipline • Balance between a creative mind and a practical acumen • Work individually and in team • Communicate effectively (both verbally and in writing) and develop a good relationship with parents and colleagues and students • Adapt to the diversity in an international environment 	
Behavioral competencies:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool-tempered, friendly, reliable and unbiased • A respect and fondness for children • Be patient working with small children • Calmly respond to overwhelming and difficult situations • Always prepared with physical and mental stamina • Well-organized and committed • Creative and energetic with a sense of humor • Strong moral values and discipline 	

Appendix 7. Role profile - Middle/High school teacher

Role title:	Secondary/High school teacher
Department/Professional team:	Department of Secondary Education
Key result areas:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and deliver lessons to a range of classes of different ages and abilities • Present lessons in a comprehensive manner and use visual/audio means to facilitate learning • Provide individualized instruction to each student by promoting interactive learning • Create and distribute educational content (notes, summaries, assignments etc.) • Keep up-to-date with changes and developments in the structure of the curriculum • Research new topic areas, maintaining up-to-date subject knowledge, and devise and write new curriculum materials • Prepare students for qualifications and external examinations • Assess and record students' progress and provide grades and feedback • Maintain a tidy and orderly classroom • Collaborate with other teachers, parents and stakeholders and participate in regular meetings • Plan and execute educational in-class and outdoor activities and events • Observe and understand students' behavior and psyche and report suspicions of neglect, abuse etc. • Develop and enrich professional skills and knowledge by attending seminars, conferences etc. 	
Need to know:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proficient in English and Microsoft Office • Certification in child CPR and first aid • Familiar with electronic tools for teaching • Excellent understanding of the principles of child development and secondary educational methods 	
Able to:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan and present lessons that cater for the needs of the whole ability range within the class • Motivate students with enthusiastic, imaginative presentation • Keep the lessons/progressions on schedule, especially classroom time-management • Give clear and comprehensible explanations and instructions • Act as mediator between children and maintain discipline • Balance between a creative mind and a practical acumen • Work individually and in team • Communicate effectively (both verbally and in writing) and develop a good relationship with parents and colleagues and students • Adapt to the diversity in an international environment 	
Behavioral competencies:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cool-tempered, friendly, reliable and unbiased • A respect and fondness for children • Be patient working with small children • Calmly respond to overwhelming and difficult situations • Always prepared with physical and mental stamina • Well-organized and committed • Creative and energetic with a sense of humor • Strong moral values and discipline 	

Appendix 8. New performance and development planning form for teachers

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL X

School year: 20xx-20xx

INDIVIDUAL PLANNING FORM

TEACHER INFORMATION	
Name:	Class(es) in charge:
Professional team/Department:	
Supervisor:	Job title:
PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT	
Key result areas	Competencies required
Personal objectives	Action plans
Performance measures	

DEVELOPMENT PLAN				
Development needs	Action plans	Resources/ Supports requirements	Target results	Time frame for completion
Supervisor signature:				Date: --/--/----
Teacher signature:				Date: --/--/----

Appendix 9. Performance review form for teachers

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL X

School year: 20xx-20xx

INDIVIDUAL PERFORMANCE REVIEW FORM

TEACHER INFORMATION			
Name:		Class(es) in charge:	
Professional team/Department:			
Supervisor:		Job title:	
Latest review date	--/--/----	Today's date	--/--/----
ASSESSMENT OF THE OVERALL PERFORMANCE			
Achievements of personal objectives		Objectives/goals not achieved	
		(leave this blank if every objective/goal is successfully achieved)	
Accomplishments of the expected outcomes			
Areas of excellence within performance (including competencies)			
Areas for improvements			
Overall evaluation (*):			

ADDITIONAL FEEDBACKS (OPTIONAL)		
Colleagues	Parents	Students
SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE DEVELOPMENT		
COMMENTS AND APPROVAL		
Comments by supervisor:		
Supervisor signature:		Date: --/--/----
Comments by teacher:		
Teacher signature:		Date: --/--/----

(*) Rating scale: see more at the rating scale instruction (Appendix 10)

Appendix 10. Rating scale instructions

RATING SCALE

Exceptional: far exceed expectations with high quality performance, meet all personal objectives/goals and either complete a major goal/project or make a special contribution to the faculty/school.

Above expectations: consistently exceed expectations with high quality performance and meet all personal objectives/goals.

Meets expectations: consistently meet expectations with good performance and may exceed expectations at times; the most critical goals/objectives are met.

Below expectations: performance not consistently meets expectations; fail to achieve one or more of the critical goals; a good development plan is needed.

Unsatisfactory: performance consistently below expectations; reasonable progress towards critical goals was not made; significant improvement is needed.