Preparing for Mergers and Acquisitions

A Case Study

Realize Your Workforce Potential

Smart ∞ Strategic ∞ Proactive

Prior to one of the largest bank mergers in history, this banking client made two pre-acquisition workforce goals; to measure the competency levels of its workforce for staffing, and to align training with the client's organizational goals. The following successful merger is a testament to the proactive nature of this industry-leading organization.

Business Overview

The bank wanted mergers in its future and was willing to put in the work prior to its anticipated mergers to ensure their success. Knowing the success of the mergers would be secured only with a rigorous examination covering several areas of business practices, the bank's management team set to managing several large-scale, organization-wide changes that laid the groundwork for successful future ventures.

Challenge

The bank sat down and created a list of workforce goals that it believed were necessary to accomplish in order to be adequately prepared for any acquisitions or mergers. Workforce challenges included a lack of knowledge of the current skill base which would create an even bigger challenge when adding more to the talent pool, an undirected training and development department, new technical and standards systems to train on and disperse throughout the organization and no relevant competency models.

As one example, the bank knew the workforce as a whole was not using some of its systems at a desired efficiency level, but didn't want to waste training time and resources on those already competent with the systems.

Solution

With the eventual addition of new talent in mind, the bank wanted to know what competencies and at what levels it had, as

well as what was needed to move forward. To begin the process, Avilar's Director of Competency Management sat down with his team of consultants and the bank and created a process to accomplish these goals. It was determined that the bank's need to tie training to business goals could be met by creating assessments catered to these business goals and producing Individual Development Plans (IDPs) so each employee could bring their competency levels up in the most efficient manner.

With the help of Avilar consultants, the bank's existing competency dictionary was adjusted and the competencies were weighed based on the importance of those competencies in accomplishing the bank's organizational goals. Before the assessments were distributed, Avilar worked with the bank to determine their best strategy for deploying these assessments to the workforce.

A necessary, but often forgotten, step in the competency management process is ensuring the employees see assessments as beneficial to their own development and standing so they will assess accurately. Once the competency models were finalized, assessments were performed by employees. After the assessments were completed, the bank had a tremendous amount of data available such as the top skill gaps throughout the company, department competency comparisons, individual competency levels, and the ability to compare the direction of training with the current competencies of the workforce.

Results

The bank was able to look at the reports and reorganize its training. It targeted its training to the areas with the greatest skill gaps and created IDPs for employees, ensuring that individuals only spent time on training they needed.

One training area that experienced a dramatic increase in efficiency was on systems training. Because of previous mergers and the normal turnover all organizations experience, the bank's employees were across the board in their familiarity with and ability to use the organization's systems. Using skill gap reports, the bank was able to pinpoint training needs and only train those with the least competence of the systems. Because of the realigned training in this and other areas, the bank narrowed many of its essential skill gaps in a short amount of time.

With an efficient system for measuring competencies and directed training in place, the bank felt ready to initiate one of

the largest bank mergers in history. The merger required tremendous amounts of consolidation and reorganization and the bank felt confident with these tasks knowing that it knew which competency areas were covered and which were lacking.

With the complete knowledge of what skills were in place and which were necessary for continued success, the bank was able to assess new employees and integrate the right people into the right positions. It was able to also bring new employees up to speed in varying areas with competency-directed training. The merger was a success and the bank found itself in an even stronger position after the merger took place. The ease and success of a multi-billion dollar merge was largely attributed to the bank proactively addressing its organization's competency levels.

About Avilar

Avilar, Inc. – The Competency Company™ – provides web-based competency management and learning solutions for the corporate, government, and non-profit sectors. With its Smart, Strategic, and Proactive solutions, Avilar offers a competency-based approach to workforce development to help organizations build a competency framework that will support efforts in training, performance management, career planning, succession planning, and recruiting.

Avilar, a pioneer in the eLearning marketplace, was formed in 1997. The flagship WebMentor® product line, originally introduced in 1998, includes a complete suite of affordable, easy-to-use, and full-featured competency development and management tools. Avilar is the recipient of the Excellence in E-Learning for Customer Satisfaction award from Brandon Hall and E-Learning Magazine, and was cited by Training Magazine as a top "Price-to-Value" provider.

Contact Avilar

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