

Tesco - Brief

How training and development supports business growth

Introduction

Tesco is Britain's largest retailer. It has over 2,200 stores in the UK. It is also the world's third largest grocery retailer. Tesco started by selling just groceries but now it sells many other products. It has grown through acquisition. It provides more retail services as consumer needs change. As Tesco has grown, so has its workforce. Tesco now employs 280,000 staff in the UK and over 460,000 worldwide. To serve bigger markets it needs well-trained staff. It knows that better staff knowledge, skills and job satisfaction are all vital to its further growth.

Identifying training needs

Tesco's growth means it needs the right people, in the right place, at the right time. Many factors affect this workforce planning:

- New stores require staff to learn the needs of new customers.
- In-store and non-store based posts require different skills.
- Staff with a range of skills are more productive and flexible.

Tesco measures the abilities of its employees to check it has the correct skills for the future. Staff can apply for training after performance reviews and career discussions. The Tesco Leadership Framework focuses on three key themes. These are Customer Focus, Working with Others, and Own Behaviour. This Framework helps to spot staff who could be the 'best leaders of the future'. Employees identify if there are gaps in their skills or knowledge by using planning tools. These gaps are logged. Line managers then decide how to fill them through training or development.

Training

Training is when knowledge and skills are improved so a person can carry out a task. Staff benefit from training as:

- they feel more a part of the business
- they become better at their job so can meet customers' needs better
- they become more effective with new skills.



Tesco has a flexible approach to training. It focuses on each employee's needs as well as the business' needs. It offers on-the-job training such as:

- shadowing a person doing a job
- coaching trainees through problems
- experienced staff acting as mentors
- job rotation or secondment. Staff take a job for a time in a different area.

Employees find on-the-job training is relevant and makes them quickly feel part of the team. Managers can also check on progress. Tesco offers off-the-job training when staff need specific training in new skills.

Development

Development is about helping employees grow and extend what they can do. Tesco employees assess their own skills to give them a focus for their development. Tesco's Options programme provides a long-term route for development. For instance, it offers leadership workshops.

The benefits of training and development

A business needs to evaluate if its investment in training is producing improvements. One method to assess the benefits is by setting SMART objectives. This makes it easier to measure improvement after training. Tesco also uses 360-degree appraisal. This means everyone who has contact with the employee gives their view of their performance.

Conclusion

Good training and development of its employees is essential for Tesco to continue to grow. Tesco uses the same approach with both existing and new staff. This ensures its people have the right skills to provide a strong base to support future growth of the business.

