



Talent Management Strategy

The Talent Proposition

At Abt Associates, we believe our success is achieved through a diverse, skilled and engaged workforce. You are that talented workforce. Whether you are new to the company or have been here for years, you came here to contribute, to grow and to build an exciting career. As part of that, we know that you would like enhanced career development. In response, we are implementing a comprehensive Talent Management Strategy. Our goal is to create a holistic approach to talent management by identifying the “competencies” and “benchmarks” that correspond to success in every role in the company—regardless of level or function. We are also designing the “systems” to capture, track and analyze talent development activity in the company. The Talent Management Strategy establishes a framework for Abt and its employees that “connects the dots” between our recruitment, professional development, performance evaluation and succession planning—all with a common understanding and language for success.

While we continue to hire for technical competence, we must help employees gain the knowledge and skills to perform more effectively in their current roles—and to take on more complex responsibilities in the future; therefore, it is essential that employees, through a variety of sources, continuously develop.

At its most basic level, this means our employees must:

- Get up-to-speed quickly and engaged early in the work of Abt
- Know what is expected of them and how to be successful
- Receive timely feedback on their performance and coaching on their development
- Be informed of opportunities to grow professionally and advance their careers at Abt

Well-defined success profiles will be our mechanism for assigning specific “competencies” and “benchmarks” needed for success in a given role. Career roadmaps will be our mechanism for identifying how an employee needs to develop in order to move into specific roles in the organization. Over the next year, we will work with employees and supervisors to create success profiles and career roadmaps for key positions at Abt.

Components of Talent Management

Three components serve as the foundation for Abt’s Talent Management Strategy: **Competencies, Systems and Benchmarks**. These components work in synergy with each other—maximizing the potential for success at every level. This ensures consistency of expectations of “successful

performance” in any given role and indicates if the employee is performing above or below expectations in his/her current role. The three components are defined as follows:

Competencies

Competencies do not just describe the knowledge, skills and abilities our employees should exhibit in a specific role; they also provide clarity on the *expectations that leadership places* on the role. Abt recently made a significant investment with the purchase of the Lominger Competency Library. Lominger is an internationally- recognized leadership development tool known for its research-based competencies and development remedies. These competencies are used by thousands of highly successful organizations; with few exceptions, demonstration of these competencies leads to job success. Abt is using Lominger as the architecture for its Talent Management Strategy. Both employees and supervisors will have access to the full library of competencies and development remedies.

Systems

A number of programs and systems will serve as vehicles in support of the Talent Management Strategy.

- **ATLAS** – The ATLAS system contains a number of “modules” that employees need to manage and track their development. Some are currently available and others will become available over the next few months. ATLAS modules include:
 - Goals (Performance Goals) – Goals houses performance goals.
 - PREP (Performance Review Evaluation Plan) - PREP houses results in an employee’s current role and is a requirement of all employees. PREP creates the opportunity for developmental feedback tied to the current state of the employee’s performance.
 - Learning (Learning Management System/LMS) - The LMS facilitates employees’ enrollment in and completion of the instructor-led and eLearning courses offered by the company.
 - Career Development Planning (CDP Goals) - CDP houses the Lominger competencies and development goals that employees enter in the system. They can use CDP to track their development in their current role, and obtain specific instruction on how to develop skills for the next role.
 - Recruiting/Careers - Careers displays current job openings and descriptions. These two modules, along with the Employee Information module, also strengthen the company’s focus on internal mobility. The system has search mechanisms that allow HR and management to tap into available talent without having to physically post an opening.
 - Employee Information - Employee Information is a powerful career management tool. Here, in the Career Profile, employees capture their achievements and career aspirations along with work, leadership and project experiences, areas of expertise, education, certifications, mobility potential and skills—all in one place.
 - Succession – This module captures department and division succession plans for critical roles at Abt. It also houses development plans for associated individuals.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks not only identify the technical skills employees should demonstrate and experiences employees should seek at each stage of their development, benchmarks also identify the developmental work assignments employees should have at each stage of their development. By achieving these benchmarks and by taking advantage of the role-based training programs the company offers, employees will ensure they gain the skills and practical experiences necessary for success in their current role and for promotion to the next role. Referenced earlier, job descriptions and career roadmaps will also serve to support the movement into key positions at Abt.

Internal Mobility – The goal of this program is to leverage the inherent capabilities of Abt to attract, retain and develop top talent. The program will offer selected employees the opportunity to take part in cross-company work assignments and development opportunities. We believe the net effect of this will be to increase the agility of our workforce as Abt responds to rapid change in the market. This program will go live in FY16.

Achieving the Strategy

In the coming year, we will work to integrate the three components of our strategy—**Competencies, Systems,** and **Benchmarks**—to promote career planning and opportunities for development at Abt. Employees will work with their supervisors and HR to define competencies and expectations for their roles. They will work together to monitor and track performance (PREP), and career goals (CDP). They will work together to create areas of opportunity to meet both employees' need for development and the company's need for capacity building. The Talent Management Strategy directly links employees' careers and Abt's success; it keeps the organization aligned and true to its mission.

Abt will continue to monitor the environment and invest smartly in our workforce, paying attention to which programs and initiatives bring the highest return-on-our-investment. It is the objective of the Talent Management Strategy to deliver what our employees need to develop and grow—as they, in turn, lead Abt into a future full of growth and opportunity.