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Talamantez, Jonathon L. *Perceived Effectiveness of the Career Growth & Development Toolkit*

Abstract

With employee development become increasingly important for organizations, more and more organizations are investing in talent development solutions including career advancement opportunities. Company XYZ made a significant financial investment in the toolkit and to continue to invest in the CareerDriver, which allows employees control of their career growth and development.

A challenge facing the Career Growth & Development department is the need to measure the employees' use of the toolkit and their perception its effectiveness in supporting their career development. By not having the data to evaluate the success of the CareerDriver, the CG&D department may have difficulty in leveraging the potential of the CareerDriver to help employees move their career forward. Based on the results, recommendations were made to help the organization ensure the CareerDriver provides employees with effective career development.

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Chapter I: Introduction

With over 60 years of experience, Company XYZ has been one of industry leaders offering human resource (HR) solutions to businesses of all size. Although founded in the United States, Company XYZ serves more than 100 countries and its name is known and recognized across the globe. Although one of the first to pioneer their products and services, Company XYZ was faced with growing competition. Company XYZ's competition were providing the same services but did it cheaper and faster. Corporate Vice President of Global Product and Technology for Company XYZ saw that the organization was losing its competitive edge and knew something had to change.

The organization began eliminating duplicate efforts, streamlining systems and processes, and began investing in newer technology. In addition to the changes, Company XYZ knew that to give its clients the best service out there, they would need attract and retain the best employees. Engagement surveys and exit interview data for the organization, showed that their employees craved professional development. To stay competitive and attract the talent needed to pioneer this innovation, the organization shifted to a people-centered organization, otherwise known as a people process culture (Black & La Venture, 2017). When an organization is designed to focus on its people rather than numbers, then their employees become their greatest assets. This cultural transformation is founded on the ideas that all people are important and makes individual growth and development a higher priority for the organization (Black & La Venture, 2017). Employee training and development falls under the organization's HR function, but didn't seem to fit existing positions within the company.

A new position known as the Senior Director of Career Growth and Development (CG&D) was created in 2015, with a mission to financially invest in their associates and equip

them with the skills and tools to drive their career and professional development. The department strengthened its talent improvement efforts and launched a variety of trainings, initiatives and toolkits. One of these toolkits, the “CareerDriver,” was created to allow employees control of their career growth and development regardless of their tenure within the organization. The CareerDriver allowed employees to select from four options:

1. *New in Your Role*- for those who just accepted a new position within the company.
2. *Developing in Your Role*- for those seeking development in current role.
3. *Preparing for Your Next Role*- for those who would like to prepare for the next step.
4. *Exploring Career Options*- for those who are interested in exploring another department.

Once an employee selected an option they are offered a variety of resources including, templates for goal setting, worksheets to help assist with a development plan, trainings on soft skills and/or leadership skills, links to internal and external development resources and conversation prompts to have with their direct manager. The CareerDriver was designed to be accessed by employees to increase retention, grow their career and offer job progression throughout the organization.

Statement of the Problem

Originally developed in March 2013, the updated CareerDriver used in this study was released in August 2017. Company XYZ made a significant financial investment in the toolkit and to continue to invest in the CareerDriver, the CG&D department needs to know if it is effective. A challenge facing the CG&D department is the need to measure the employees’ use of the toolkit and their perception its effectiveness in supporting their career development. By not having the data to evaluate the success of the CareerDriver, the CG&D department may have

difficulty in leveraging the potential of the CareerDriver to help employees move their career forward.

Purpose of the Study

The CareerDriver was Company XYZ's solution to combat the lack of employee-driven development. A study showed that one of the top reasons an employee leaves an organization is lack of professional growth (TINYpulse, 2015). The question this study attempts to answer is:

Do the current employees of the El Paso, TX facility at Company XZY, believe the CareerDriver toolset has been effective in helping them move forward in their careers?

To help gain a deeper perspective in answering the research question, the following six sub-questions were used to guide this study is:

1. Are employees at Company XYZ aware of the CareerDriver tool set
2. How useful do the employees perceive the CareerDriver tool set has been at helping them adjust to their new role
3. How useful do the employees perceive the CareerDriver tool set has been at helping them develop in their current role
4. How useful do the employees perceive the CareerDriver tool set has been at helping them prepare for their next role
5. How useful do the employees perceive the CareerDriver tool set has been at helping explore different career paths
6. What are the perceived barriers hindering or preventing employees from using the CareerDriver tool set

The data collected in this study will allow the organization to first present evidence supporting the promotion and use of the CareerDriver for future investment at newly constructed

sites. Second, provide insight to the barriers preventing success of the CareerDriver at existing location and opportunities for improvement. Finally, the data could show Company XYZ the need to expand or eliminate this solution company-wide altogether.

Assumptions of the Study

In place of historical performance data related to the use of the CareerDriver toolset by Company XYZ employees, for the purpose of this study it has been assumed that employee perceptions of the CareerDriver are true representations of the effectiveness of these tools in developing and advancing employee careers.

Chapter II: Literature Review

A study showed that one of the top reasons an employee leaves an organization is lack of professional growth (TINYpulse, 2015). The CareerDriver was Company XYZ's solution to combat the lack of professional growth of its employees by providing employee-driven development. This chapter will review literature business technology advancements, the importance of employee retention and how employee growth and development is critical to a strong organizational culture. This literature is to establish importance, to Company XYZ, of understanding the employees' perceptions of the effectiveness of the CareerDriver toolset.

Impact of Business Technology Advancements on Employee Retention

The practices of how businesses operate have continuously transformed over the centuries. Operation models, business plans, marketing strategies, communication modalities and human resource practices are just a few of the many changes companies have made over time. The rapid evolution of business technologies has led to the development of organizational transparency websites like Indeed and Glassdoor. These websites provide candidates with the pros and cons of working for specific organization (Patel, 2017). Information about pay, benefits, work environment, and quality of leadership are readily available at the touch of a button.

While these websites are beneficial to candidates, they also provide organizations with some valuable information as well. Since these newly developed web pages allow for users to leave anonymous feedback, critiques and comments which give organizational leaders additional data outside of their internal resources, to help drive business decisions (Baek, 2016; Patel, 2017). This data can be leveraged to influence or change company practices, policies and procedures like recruiting, retention, compensation and culture (Bersin, Collins, Mallon, Moir,

and Straub, 2016). With the new technology out there, HR data collection procedures have shifted. “More and more data, including external data, will become accessible over time and HR must be up to the challenge of capitalizing on them” (Baek, 2016, p. 12). To positively influence these review sites, leadership teams have people dedicated to monitor the unidentified feedback to make recommendations for change. This is a significant because now that people outside of the organization have insight to business practices, recruitment and retention strategies had to change. Job seekers are more likely to join an organization if other people say so (Patel, 2017). This type of transparency into an organization’s leadership, culture, and business practices was not possible before the evolution of technology which directly impacts employee retention.

Technological globalization, the multigenerational workforce, growth of competing start-up companies, new innovative practices and research contributions have completely transformed and will continuously change the world of businesses. Failing to adapt with the times can endanger company success. Some companies that lost their competitive edge due to the failure to innovate and meet the demands of the market. Newman (2010) presented several examples of companies failing to adjust to technology including:

- In 2010 (as cited in Satell 2014), due to an innovative business model based on available technology, Blockbuster, a brick and mortar movie rental service, had to shut down hundreds of stores because it lost customers to Netflix, a company offering the consumers videos through mail and on-demand streaming.
- In 2003, Motorola saw great success with their top-selling cellular phone, Razr. However the company rapidly lost consumers over the following years to their competitors Apple and Samsung because they did not focus on smartphones.

- In the early 2000s (as cited in Steinlage, 2018), Sony was once an industry leader for years, but failed to move from hardware to software and as a result was unable to keep up with competitors like LG, Samsung and Apple.

Over time, businesses have continuously found innovative ways of doing things. With each invention building off another, the surge of technological improvements has not slowed down to this very day. Banathy's historical view of societal evolution (Laszlo, 2001) illustrates the decrease in duration of each stage due to the technological advancements made by civilization (see Table 1).

Table 1

Historical View of Societal Evolutions (as cited in Laszlo, 2001, p.10)

Stage One	Stage Two	Stage Three	Stage Four
Hunting Gathering	Agricultural Society	Industrial Society	Post-Industrial Society
Half Million Years	Ten Thousand Years	Five Hundred Years	Fifty Years
Speech	Writing	Print	Electronic
Wandering Tribes	Communities	States	Regional/Global
Survival Technology	Fabricating Technology	Machine Technology	Intellectual Technology

With technology advancing and the competition in the global economy increasing, it became more increasingly important for organizations to increase their employee's knowledge, skills and attributes (Aguinis & Kraiger 2009; Laszlo, 2001). With changing technology and the development of innovative business models, organization need to invest in the learning and growth of their workers. By not doing so, they put their success at risk and could fail like Blockbuster, Motorola, and Sony did.

Leaders in today's organizations now have to figure out the best ways to identify, reward, and motivate top agile talent while supporting the constant need to learn. To atrophy is to lose in the market. As professionals, we also play a role in ensuring we can ride the digital wave while helping our companies succeed. Neither the company nor the employee can stand still. We must both evolve to stay competitive and fulfill our dreams (Wadors, 2016).

Acquiring this new knowledge is done through some form of training. According to Training magazine's 2017 Training Industry Report, training expenditures increased by 32.5 % to \$90.6 billion (Training, 2017). Training expenditures include: training budgets, technology spending, staff salaries, payroll staff assigned to training functions, external vendors, consultants, including all products and services (Training, 2017). With more and more research published around human resource development topics like organizational culture, leadership and people-centered values, it is not surprising to see businesses increasing their budget for employee training and development (Bersin, 2014; Hinkin & Tracey, 2010; Sheridan, 1992, Tower Watson, 2012, 2014). Organizations who invest in employee development not only attract and retain talent, but also have been proven to outperform organizations who do not (Black & La Venture, 2015, 2017). Conversely, organizations jeopardize their success and survival by failing to invest in their employees (Bassi & McMurrer, 2007).

Technology has forever and will continue to change the ways businesses operate. As previously discussed, technology has influenced employee retention strategies. Additionally, these advancements have led to a more competitive market. Equipping employees with new knowledge and skills leads to innovation and new ideas which are needed for organizations to keep their competitive advantage. Employees who innovate must not only be technically

capable, but they must have the open environment to learn and share what they've learned with others (Bersin, 2013).

Importance of Employee Retention

A business that is unable to retain employees will have a more challenging time achieving organizational success. One strategy used to attract and drive employee retention is the creation and use of employee development solutions. One study analyzed 3,452 firms representing all major industries and measured the positive impact of effective human resource practices (Huselid, 1995). Such practices include investment of human capital, which resulted positively for organizations by lowering employee turnover, and greater productivity and financial performance (Gallup, 2015; Huselid, 1995).

Financial importance of employee retention. Research has shown that employees leave their jobs for a variety of reasons which increases employee turnover. The data shows that when turnover rate increases, the cost hit the organization financially (Bersin, 2013; Samuel & Chipunza, 2009; Schwartz, 2012; Son, 2016). While the initial investment of a new employee can be costly to the organization, Babcock (2004) states that Fortune 500 companies can lose an estimate of over \$30 billion a year. Employee retention strategies financially benefit the company over time which means it is critical for organizations to keep the workers that are hired to prevent monetary loss.

Intellectual importance of employee retention. In addition to costs, retaining employees is important for business to keep their competent employees because they play a critical role in the innovation and competitive edge of an organization. Dalkir defined knowledge management (as cited by Grey, 1996) as, “collaborative and integrated approach to the creation, capture, organization, access and use of an enterprise’s intellectual assets” (p. 5).

When a new employee joins the organization, they are put through training either formal or informal. During this training period, employees gain new knowledge, skills and attributes about the company, customers, systems, processes and policies. Over the years as more knowledge is obtained, expertise grows, and the company leverages this knowledge which creates promotional opportunities for internal employees.

When an employee terminates their relationship with their employer, they take their knowledge and expertise with them. While some knowledge retention strategies have been used by companies through internal portals and documents, the experience gained through hands-on applications can be lost with the employee (Desouza & Awazu, 2003; Son, 2016).

Competitive importance of employee retention. In addition to the cost, failing to retain workers can also impact the quality of service delivered to customers (Bersin, 2013; Samuel & Chipunza, 2009; Son, 2016). If employee turnover is high, the focus shifts from developing job proficiency to upskilling new hires which can have even greater impacts on organizations depending on the complexity of the job (Hinkin & Tracey, 2010). Turnover then directly impacts the company's need to stay innovative. Steve Jobs, founder of Apple, stated, "Innovation has nothing to do with how many R&D dollars you have... It's about the people you have, how you're led, and how much you get it" (Kirkpatrick, 1998). Companies may not be able to prevent employees from leaving the organization with valuable knowledge, but their attraction and retention tactics could prevent their employees from leaving from their company to another. Since "career advancement" is listed as a one of the top employee attractors, organizations should stay competitive, innovative and ensure their career advancement solutions are effectively working (Tower Watson, 2014, 2012).

Effect of Organizational Culture on Employee Retention

The changing world is pushing the global market to be more competitive. It is no secret that hiring managers want the best talent for their organization and this development has led to some creative ways to attract and retain talent. As mentioned earlier, transparency websites have given people outside of the business insight to an organization. This insight has made organizational culture a driving factor for talent attraction and retention.

How organizational values shape organizational culture. Employee-treasured organizational values can be challenging to instill in a company's daily operations. However, when organizational values are properly aligned with an employee's personal value system, then behavior exhibited by the employee is aligned with the organization's expectations (Black & La Venture, 2015). Failing to establish organization values that are important to their staff such as personal or professional development, can lead to unsatisfied workers which will create a poor organizational culture.

How leadership shapes organizational culture. The number one influence on organizational culture and thus organizational values, is leadership which in turn can impact job satisfaction (Black & La Venture 2015; SHRM, 2018; Tsai, 2011). Those at the top of the organization are the ones who are responsible for developing, defining and implementing the mission, vision and the core values of the business. If the organizational leadership does not establish this it will in turn affect the perception of prospective employees and directly impact employee retention (Turban & Greening, 1997).

Job satisfaction has been linked to organizational leadership's behavior (Pfeffer & Veiga, 1999; Tsai, 2011). Leadership styles that inspire and motivate are far more successful than those that use power and intimidation. Transparency, communication, and trust between leaders and

employees are necessary to a healthy and prosperous culture (Black & La Venture, 2015). If employees have the leadership with people-centered values they can trust, then not only is can a high-performing organization be achieved, but employees will be more likely to stay with the company that they feel part of (Bersin, 2014; Black & La Venture, 2015, 2017; Pfeffer & Veiga, 1999; Tsai, 2011).

How employee development shapes organizational culture. Organizational culture has a variety of components which consist of shared values, mutual understandings, and patterns of beliefs and expectations of behaviors (Tsai, 2011). An individual's feelings and/or perception towards an organization's culture can be the deciding factor for potential employees to choose one organization over the other (Black & La Venture, 2015; Hinkin and Tracey, 2010; Tower Watson, 2014). One of the biggest drivers to attract and retain talent is an employer's ability to offer learning and development and career advancement opportunities to their workers (Bersin, 2014; Black & La Venture, 2015; Tower Watson, 2012, 2014). These opportunities can range from tuition reimbursement programs, to personal development trainings, industry credentialing and include career education opportunities. With these types of development opportunities available to employees they are more likely to happily remain with their organization, thus shaping a strong organizational culture (Bersin, 2014; Black & La Venture, 2015, 2017; Tsai, 2011).

Summary of the Review of the Literature

In summary, career growth and development are important to employees and vital to organizations. Technology advancements have created a more competitive job market, which means companies need to offer what job applicants value, and one of the things which employees is career growth and development opportunities. Retaining workers is not only a knowledge

management strategy, but helps organizations save on recruiting and training costs. Finally, employee development is a foundational principle when it comes to strong organizational culture. High-performance organizations invest the appropriate time and resources to ensure the success of their employees which in turn benefits the organization (Black & La Venture, 2015).

Chapter III: Design Methodology

Company XYZ's CareerDriver is a career development initiative that has not proven or disproven its worth and impact. The challenge facing the CG&D department, was the need to measure the employees' use and their perceptions of the effectiveness of the CareerDriver. The purpose of this study was to examine employee perceptions at Company XYZ's El Paso, Texas facility as an indicator of the effectiveness of the CareerDriver toolset in the employee-driven career development.

Methodology

This study was designed as a descriptive, observational, and qualitative study. Prior to collecting the subjects' perceptions regarding the CareerDriver toolset, permission was granted by Company XYZ prior to conduct the study at their El Paso, facility. The research protocol was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) at the University of Wisconsin-Stout (UW Stout) (See Appendix A).

Subject Selection and Description

Company XYZ currently has five major hubs located in different geographical regions of the United States. The Texas site was selected due to its large size and its seniority over the other locations.

Survey participants. All El Paso employees including management were invited to participate in the CareerDriver survey. A total of 1,939 individuals were sent the invitation via email which contained the link to the survey, 121 out of the 1,939 participated in the survey. Once the individual clicked on the survey link provided, an implied consent form was presented prior to beginning the survey and acknowledgement of participation and consent had to be accepted before proceeding to the survey questions.

Leadership focus group participants. Additional data was collected from a select group of those with direct reports excluding job titles “Director” and above. Nine Managers were invited to participate in the leadership focus group via email. Of the nine, four accepted the invitation at which point, a signed consent form was emailed to the leaders prior to conducting the focus group. Once the signed consent was emailed back with the individual’s signature acknowledging participation and consent, they were emailed a separate Outlook calendar invite containing the WebEx conference credentials.

Instrumentation

Two data collection instruments were used to gather information for this research. The first used was a survey that was emailed to all associates of the El Paso, Texas location (see Appendix B). The second instrument used to gather leadership feedback was a focus group discussion conducted by the Senior Director of Career Growth & Development (see Appendix C) via WebEx conferencing.

Survey Data Collection Procedures

The survey was sent to the organization’s Texas site Outlook email distribution list. All participants were blind carbon copied to ensure no identifying information could be linked through the email. The email contained the invitation to participate in the study and the survey link that presented the implied consent for prior to the survey questions. The survey response time window was open for two weeks total. The survey link was created by SurveyMonkey, an online survey development cloud-based software. Data retrieved from the survey is stored on the SurveyMonkey website that can only be accessed by the researcher through a personal password.

Focus Group Data Collection Procedures

The identified leadership participants were sent a WebEx invitation via Outlook email. The WebEx conference call was selected to enable the participants to join the focus group remotely. In the invitation was a brief description of the study, time dedication requirements, and consent to anonymously participate in the focus group.

Using an open-ended interview questions (see Appendix C) to guide the discussion, the Senior Director of CG&D facilitated the focus group conversation. Informed-consent procedures were explained at the beginning of the meeting. The focus group discussion was recorded in WebEx with the permission of the participants. To ensure anonymity the use of “they” or “their” as the first person singular pronoun has been chosen to further protect the identity of participants. Each participant was assigned a number; e.g. Participant #1, Participant #2 etc.

Data Analysis

Data collected is housed within the SurveyMonkey website. This data can be retrieved and analyzed directly from the website. Answers received from participants were statistically examined using SurveyMonkey’s analysis tools to results and exported into Excel for further investigation. The qualitative questions from the focus group were reported by looking for trends and patterns in the responses provided by the leadership.

Limitations

Limitations identified in this study include:

1. *Sample Size*- 121 out of 1,939 associates participated in the survey. Four out of nine Managers participated in the focus group. While the data received can still be analyzed, a larger sample size would be required to more accurately draw conclusions.

2. *Self-Reported Data*- The information collected from the participants of the survey and the focus group were self-reported. It is assumed that the information given by the participants is a true and accurate reflection of their perceptions and use of the CareerDriver.
3. *Survey Fatigue*- This survey was sent right after the organization's Annual Employee Engagement Survey, during which time weekly survey reminders were sent to all associates. Associates could be exhausted of taking additional surveys that could be seen as "less important."

Summary

With the limitations mentioned above, participation in the survey and the leadership focus group were lower than expected. However, there appears to be a theme between the survey data and the information received from the managers in the focus group that gave valuable information to develop recommendations and offer suggestions for further research.

Chapter IV: Results

The question this study attempts to answer the current employees of the El Paso, TX facility at Company XZY, believe the CareerDriver toolset has been effective in helping them move forward in their careers. The results collected from this study are preliminary, but will provide Company XYZ's CG&D department with the associate's impression of the CareerDriver. This chapter reviews the demographic information of the participants and item analysis relating to the study.

Survey Participant Demographics

The estimated population of the participants invited to participate in the survey was 1,939 employees. This population surveyed included all positions and job titles, including Directors and above, within the El Paso, Texas location of Company XYZ. Of the 1,939 employees invited, 121 responses were received for an approximate 6.2% response rate.

Table 2 reflects participant's responses about their tenure with Company XYZ.

Table 2

How Long Have You Been Employed with Company XYZ?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
0-2 Years	26	21.5%
2-5 Years	38	31.4%
5-10 Years	27	22.3%
10+ Years	29	24.0%
No Response	1	0.8%

Focus Group Participant Demographics

Nine Managers from a variety of business units (BU's) were invited to participate in the leadership focus group via email. Of the nine, four accepted the invitation to the focus group study. The focus group contained an Implementation Manager, an Operations Manager, and a Client Services Manager; all of whom are male. In addition to the three males, there was a female Accounts Receivable Manager present.

Item Analysis

As previously mentioned in the limitations section, participation in the survey and the leadership focus group were lower than expected. However, there appears to be a theme between the survey data and the information received from the managers in the focus group.

The survey collected 121 responses. Before associates were asked about their impression of the CareerDriver resources, Table 3 shows the responses given when employees were asked if they were aware of the toolkit itself.

Table 3

Have You Heard of the Career Growth & Development Tool Known as the CareerDriver?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	109	90.1%
No	11	9.1%
No Response	1	0.8%

CareerDriver toolkit analysis. Over 90% of the participants surveyed have heard of the CareerDriver. To investigate further, the survey questions around the toolkit resources were qualitatively analyzed and was grouped into positive, negative and neutral impressions. Positive impressions included the response choices, strongly agree and agree. Negative impressions

included disagree and strongly disagree. Neutral impressions included never used/ heard of this.

Table 4 reflects the survey questions containing the associates' impressions of the resources within the CareerDriver toolkit.

Table 4

Survey Questions 3 through 14

Question	Positive	Negative	Neutral	No Response
NEW IN MY ROLE: The New In My Role worksheet helped me to establish a strong foundation for my career at Company XYZ.	24.0%	5.6%	53.0%	17.4%
NEW IN MY ROLE: The New In My Role section of CareerDriver gave me valuable guidance on creating an impactful Individual Development Plan.	24.0%	7.4%	51.2%	17.4%
NEW IN MY ROLE: The New In My Role section of CareerDriver gave me valuable guidance on establishing an effective mentoring relationship.	22.3%	7.4%	52.9%	17.4%
DEVELOPING IN MY ROLE: The Developing In My Role worksheet helped me to establish a strong foundation for my career at Company XYZ.	19.8%	8.3%	50.4%	21.5%
DEVELOPING IN MY ROLE: The Personal Branding worksheet gave me valuable guidance on establishing an impactful personal brand.	20.6%	5.0%	52.9%	21.5%
DEVELOPING IN MY ROLE: The Networking worksheet gave me valuable guidance on building impactful relationships.	19.8%	5.8%	52.9%	21.5%

EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS: The Navigate Your Journey worksheet helped me to determine potential next steps for my career.	22.3%	8.3%	45.4%	24.0%
EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS: The Exploring Career Options section of CareerDriver gave me valuable information on other BU's.	27.3%	6.6%	42.1%	24.0%
EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS: The Exploring Career Options section of CareerDriver gave me valuable information on identifying potential roles/areas of the company I may be interested in pursuing.	24.8%	9.9%	41.3%	24.0%
PREPARING FOR MY NEXT ROLE: The Skill Gap Analysis worksheet helped me to assess my skills and determine areas of possible improvement.	18.2%	5.0%	52.0%	24.8%
PREPARING FOR MY NEXT ROLE: The Preparing For My Next Role section of CareerDriver gave me valuable guidance on interviewing skills.	21.4%	5.0%	48.8%	24.8%
PREPARING FOR MY NEXT ROLE: The Preparing For My Next Role section of CareerDriver gave me valuable guidance on resume writing skills.	19.9%	4.1%	51.2%	24.8%

Table 3 showed that the participants are aware of the CareerDriver toolkit, however Table 4 revealed that many participants are not aware of the materials within the toolkit itself. Over 50% of the associates surveyed have not heard/used any of the resources within the *New In My Role* section of the CareerDriver which are designed to help associates discuss expectations establish goals, and determine the critical relationships to aid their development. When asked about their perceptions of the tools within the *Developing In My Role* section of the

CareerDriver, over 50% of associates reported that they have not heard/used the resources to help assess their current performance, develop their personal brand and grow their professional network. Additionally, 40% of associates have not heard/used the resources within the *Exploring Career Options* section which contain items to help them explore other roles, different BU's and to prepare for career moves. Finally, when asked about the resources focused on developing skills such interviewing and resume writing, around 50% of the associates again, reported have not heard/used the tools in the *Preparing For My Next Role* section of the CareerDriver.

Of those who reported knowing about the materials within each section of the CareerDriver, overall positive impressions outweighed the negative impressions. A range of 18.2% to 27.3% of the participants agreed that the CareerDriver has benefited their career development in some way. The data also shows that 4.1% to 9.9% who disagreed that these resources helped with their career development.

Perceived CareerDriver barriers. Figure 1 shows the associates perceived barriers preventing use of the tools and resources within the CareerDriver. Open text was manually analyzed and categorized based on the reason given. Participants were asked to select all that apply, giving a number of responses received totaled at 198.

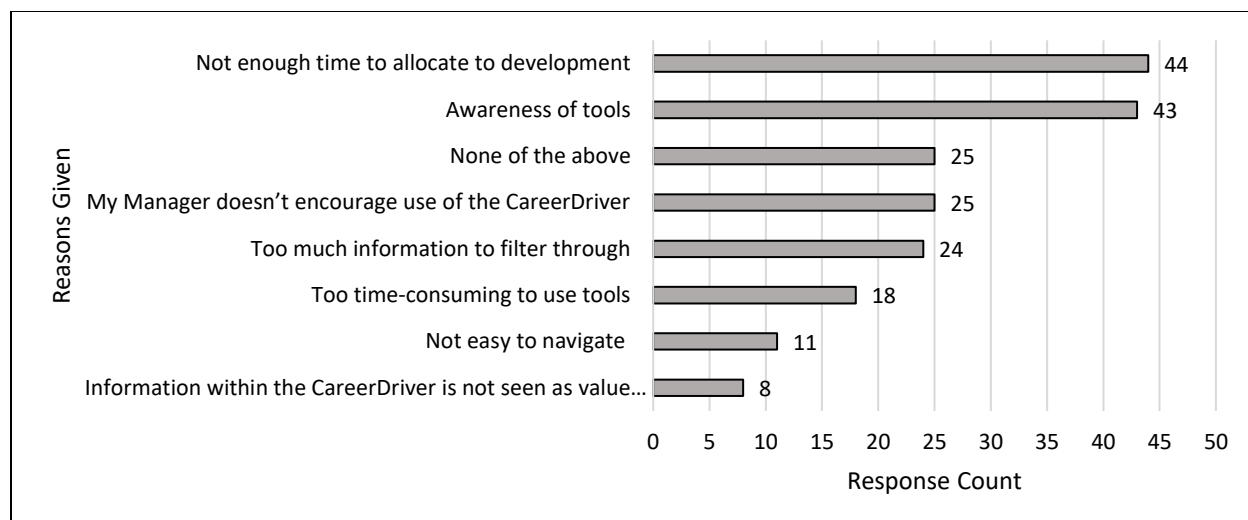


Figure 1. Perceived barriers associates reported that prevent use of the CareerDriver.

Time was the top barrier listed. Employees surveyed stated that there is not enough time dedicated to their career development, which prevents them from using the CG&D's CareerDriver toolkit. The second top barrier given was awareness around the tools. This awareness barrier was corroborated with the survey data explained earlier in this report.

CareerDriver suggestions. In addition to identifying barriers, the employees were asked to offer their suggestions to the CG&D team about how the team can better equip them for their career progression. 32 employees responded in an open-text format. The suggestions were manually reviewed and categorized as depicted in Figure 2.

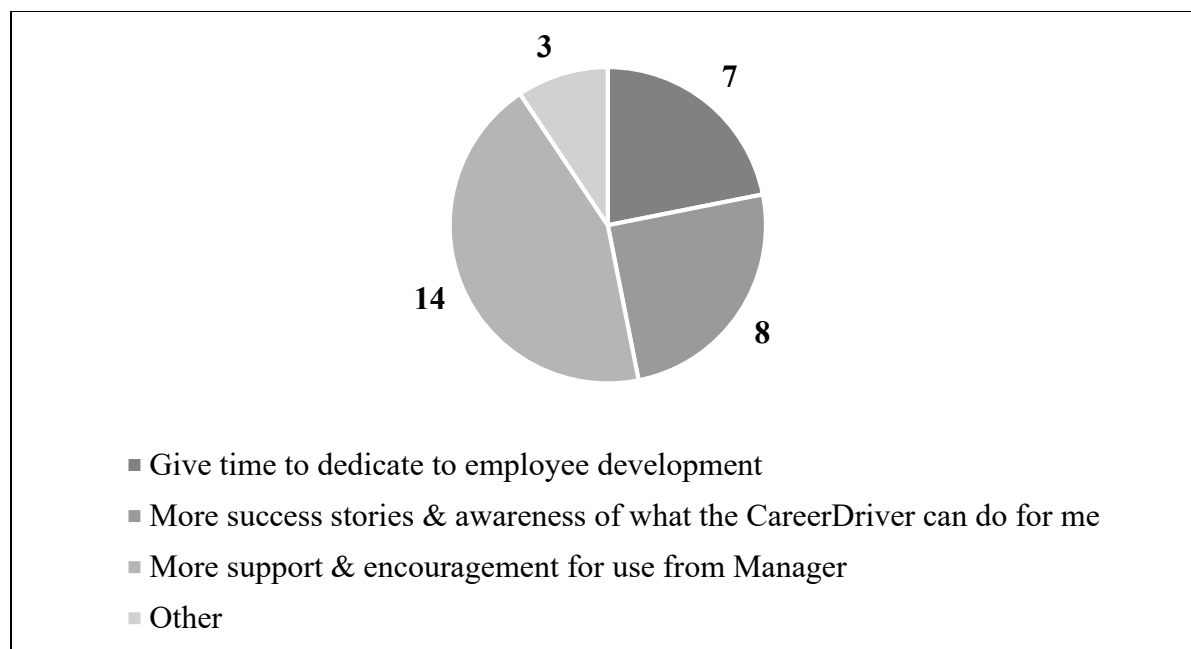


Figure 2. Suggestions associates reported that will aid the CG&D team in helping with their career progression.

In the open-text responses, employees explained the challenges of time dedicated to their development versus time spent on the needs of the needs of the business. Employees suggested the organization dedicate time for employees to focus on their career growth. Another suggestion given, was more awareness around what the CareerDriver can do for them. One worker stated, “Show employees the effectiveness of this tool. i.e. of 300 associates, 32 grew as a result of this. Let employees see the impact this can make.” The top suggestion given was employees asking for more support and encouragement from Management. Employees felt the CareerDriver isn’t something publicized by their direct Managers. One respondent stated, “Encourage management to allow associates time to participate and work on developing for their next role using self-service tools.” Similar statements were made by 13 other employees.

CareerDriver net promotor score (NPS). The last question survey participants were asked was centered on employees giving the CareerDriver toolkit a net promotor score.

Employees were asked on a scale 1 to 10, how likely is it that they would recommend the CareerDriver to a friend or colleague. That rating is then used to calculate the NPS score which ranges from -100 to 100. Table 5 illustrates the NPS score calculated from the 101 participants that responded to this survey question.

Table 5

How Likely is it That You Would Recommend the CareerDriver to a Friend or Colleague?

Detractor (0-6)	Passives (7-8)	Promoters (9-10)	Net Promotor Score
60% (61)	28% (28)	12% (12)	-49

60% of associates reported that they would not recommend the CareerDriver to others. 28% surveyed reported a rating of 7 or 8, which means they are not actively promoting or actively detracting use of the CareerDriver. 12% of associates strongly support the CareerDriver enough to actively promote the use to others. With an NPS score of -49 it is a strong indicator that employees are not satisfied with the CareerDriver toolkit.

Focus group data analysis. Analysis of focus group interview transcripts revealed some key findings about the Manager’s use and perception of the CareerDriver toolkit. These findings include how frequent Managers access the CareerDriver, how Managers leverage the resources within the CareerDriver for the career development of their direct reports, and the perceived barriers preventing the use of the CareerDriver. Quotes from the leadership focus group discussions are integrated into this report to provide the reader with a greater understanding of the major themes discovered regarding the CareerDriver

The call began with asking the participants about their familiarity of the CareerDriver and where to access it. All participants stated that they were introduced to the CareerDriver during New Associate Networking and Onboarding (NANO). Participant #1 stated, “I know about it

[CareerDriver], and know how to get there in the associate Portal.” The other three participants agreed with this statement.

When questions about the successfulness of the resources within the CareerDriver, all participants stated that while they are aware of the CareerDriver, they are unfamiliar with the resources. Participant #2 stated, “The CareerDriver was covered here in El Paso at a quarterly manager meeting, and is introduced during NANO, but honestly... none of my associates have asked me about the CareerDriver.” When further questions by the CG&D Director about their personal use of the CareerDriver, Participant #2 replied, “I have gone through it, but I can’t say I honestly used it.” Again, the other three Participants agreed that they are not familiar with any of the resources within the CareerDriver, and agreed that they do not use the CareerDriver to help develop the careers of their direct reports.

With all four participants unfamiliar with the resources within the CareerDriver, interview questions #2, #3, #4, #6, and #8 were skipped (see Appendix C). The next question asked was question #5, “describe the challenges in using the CareerDriver in the development of your direct reports.” All managers unanimously agreed that time was their greatest barrier. Participant #4 mentioned that they could make time to explore more of the CareerDriver, but finding the right time to do so is challenging. The other participants chimed in stating that they also do not have time to look at the development tools available within the CareerDriver.

The call concluded with question #7, “what suggestions for improvement do you have to make the CareerDriver more effective?” Participant #4 explained how the lack of advertising success stories may be a contributing factor to preventing use to which all managers agreed. Participant #1 proceeded to explain how the CareerDriver did not produce what they were looking for and that if the CareerDriver was more direct to produce specific resources when

searched, such as a checklist on how to become a manager, then it might be more effective.

The CG&D Director then asked if the managers were aware that an e-learning on how to use the CareerDriver was available to them. All participants stated that they were unaware such a training existed.

Summary of Results

The results collected in chapter 4 show that almost all of the participants of the focus group and survey, at Company XYZ are aware of the CareerDriver. The data showed that while many are not aware of the resources within the CareerDriver, those that are aware provided positive responses. The negative comments were few. Chapter 5 will provide discussion, recommendations and offer suggestions for further research.

Chapter V: Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation

The purpose of this study was to examine employee perceptions at Company XYZ's El Paso, Texas facility as an indicator of the effectiveness of the CareerDriver toolset in the employee-driven career development initiative. This chapter reviews the conclusions and recommendations relating to the study.

Discussion

One of the biggest drivers to attract and retain talent is an employer's ability to offer learning and development and career advancement opportunities to their workers (Bersin, 2014; Black & La Venture, 2015; Tower Watson, 2012, 2014). Company XYZ developed the CareerDriver to allow employees control of their career growth and development regardless of their tenure within the organization. Over 90% of the participants surveyed and 100% of the focus group participants have heard of the CareerDriver making awareness of the tool, not an issue. The resources within the CareerDriver however, are unknown.

For Company XYZ to combat the lack of career development within the organization, the solution has to be leveraged to be effective. With about 50% of associates reporting that they have never heard/used most of the resources within the toolkit, creating more unused or under-utilized materials would be costly and potentially wasted effort. While the survey response was lower than expected, a clear theme has emerged. Associates are not using the materials created to meet employee needs for career growth. Failing to satisfy these needs of employees can result in turnover, a decrease in an organization's competitive edge, and impact organizational culture (Bersin, 2014; Black & La Venture, 2015; Tower Watson, 2012, 2014).

Conclusions

With an NPS score of -49 and 60% of associates reporting that they would not recommend the CareerDriver to others, it is a strong indicator that employees are not satisfied with the CareerDriver, making the toolkit ineffective. The top reasons the CareerDriver were reported as ineffective are time to dedicate to exploration and use of the CareerDriver, awareness of the resources within the toolkit, and the lack of management support of use of the CareerDriver.

Lack of time to use and explore the CareerDriver. Employees and managers both reported that there is a lack of time to dedicate towards career development. Employees feel resistance from their managers when looking to work on professional development. Managers reported that balancing the operational needs with the business supersede the time to spend exploring and using the CareerDriver. One manager stated, “Yes, there is time to explore the CareerDriver, but when is the right time? There are always more calls waiting and clients come first.”

Lack of awareness of the resources within the toolkit. As mentioned, time is a big factor on whether or not associates are able to discover the career development resources within the CareerDriver. During the investigation, it was reported that there are no success stories around any of the resources within the CareerDriver. Without the right marketing and advertising of the career development tools, the toolkit will continue being under-utilized.

Lack of management support of use of the CareerDriver. Managers reported similar reasons as associates for not using the CareerDriver which are time and awareness. With the no time to discover the resources it is not surprising they are not championing for use of the toolkit. In addition, the managers also mentioned that they themselves do not use the CareerDriver.

Managers are not personally using the CareerDriver and thus don't use it for the development of their associates.

Recommendations

After comparing the literature review with the results of the research, the following recommendations have been made:

1. Integrate talent development strategies with the daily operations of the business. If employee development is a value of the organization, then the business must create the work environment that allows managers and employees the time to dedicate to their development without feeling conflicted between operational goals and talent development goals.
2. Pilot each career development tool prior to deployment to the organization. Piloting the resources created will provide two things. The first thing it will provide is the data to show success of the solution. Without measuring the success of the resources, the CG&D team won't know if they are providing employees with the career development they are asking for, which will give the team the opportunity to re-design something more effective. The second thing piloting resources will do is provide success stories to the organization during the marketing and deployment of the new resource. By doing this, the team will be able to raise awareness and show the value of using the resource.

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Appendix A: Copy of IRB Approval Letter



Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
152 Vocational Rehabilitation

University of Wisconsin-Stout
P.O. Box 790
Menomonie, WI 54751-0790
Phone: 715-232-1126

May 8, 2018

Jonathon Talamantez
MS Training and Human Resource and Development
University of Wisconsin-Stout

RE: **Perceived Effectiveness of the Career Growth & Development Toolkit**

Dear Jonathon,

The IRB has determined your project, "*Perceived Effectiveness of the Career Growth & Development Toolkit*", is **Exempt** from review by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects. The project is exempt under **Category # 2** of the Federal Exempt Guidelines. Your project is exempt for 5 years from **May 8, 2018**. If a renewal is needed, it is to be submitted at least 10 working days prior to the approvals end date. Should you need to make modifications to your protocol, [please complete the modification form](#).

Informed Consent: All UW-Stout faculty, staff, and students conducting human subjects' research under an approved "exempt" category are still ethically bound to follow the basic ethical principles of the Belmont Report: 1) respect for persons; 2) beneficence; and 3) justice. These three principles are best reflected in the practice of obtaining informed consent from participants.

If you are doing any research in which you are paying human subjects to participate, a specific payment procedure must be followed. Instructions and form for the payment procedure can be found at <http://www.uwstout.edu/rs/paymentofhumanresearchsubjects.cfm>

If you have questions, please contact the IRB office at 715-232-1126, or buchanane@uwstout.edu, and your question will be directed to the appropriate person. I wish you well in completing your study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Elizabeth Buchanan".

Elizabeth Buchanan
Interim Director, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs; Human Subjects Protections Administrator,
UW-Stout Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research

CC: Richard Herling

Appendix B: Copy of Associate Survey Questions

1. How long have you been employed with Company XYZ:
 - a. 0-2 Years
 - b. 2-5 Years
 - c. 5-10 Years
 - d. 10 + Years

2. Have you heard of the Career Growth & Development tool known as **CareerDriver**:
 - a. Yes
 - b. No [Skip to Question 17]

3. NEW IN MY ROLE: The New In My Role worksheet helped me to establish a strong foundation for my career at Company XYZ:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

4. NEW IN MY ROLE: The New In My Role section of **CareerDriver** gave me valuable guidance on creating an impactful Individual Development Plan:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

5. NEW IN MY ROLE: The New In My Role section of **CareerDriver** gave me valuable guidance on establishing an effective mentoring relationship:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

6. DEVELOPING IN MY ROLE: The Developing In My Role worksheet helped me to establish a strong foundation for my career at Company XYZ:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

7. DEVELOPING IN MY ROLE: The Personal Branding worksheet gave me valuable guidance on establishing an impactful personal brand:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

8. DEVELOPING IN MY ROLE: The Networking worksheet gave me valuable guidance on building impactful relationships:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

9. EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS: The Navigate Your Journey worksheet helped me to determine potential next steps for my career:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

10. EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS: The Exploring Career Options section of **CareerDriver** gave me valuable information on other business units:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

11. EXPLORING CAREER OPTIONS: The Exploring Career Options section of **CareerDriver** gave me valuable information on identifying potential roles/areas of the company I may be interested in pursuing:
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Disagree
 - d. Strongly Disagree
 - e. Never Used/Heard of this

12. PREPARING FOR MY NEXT ROLE: The Skill Gap Analysis worksheet helped me to assess my skills and determine areas of possible improvement:
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Never Used/Heard of this
13. PREPARING FOR MY NEXT ROLE: The Preparing For My Next Role section of **CareerDriver** gave me valuable guidance on interviewing skills:
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Never Used/Heard of this
14. PREPARING FOR MY NEXT ROLE: The Preparing For My Next Role section of **CareerDriver** gave me valuable guidance on resume writing skills:
- Strongly Agree
 - Agree
 - Disagree
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Never Used/Heard of this
15. What barriers (if any) are preventing you from using the tools and resources within the **CareerDriver** (Select all that apply)?
- Awareness of tools
 - Too time-consuming to use tools
 - Not enough time to allocate to development
 - Too much information to filter through
 - Not easy to navigate
 - Information within the **CareerDriver** is not seen as value added
 - My Manager doesn't encourage use of the **CareerDriver**
 - None of the above
 - Other: Please Explain
16. How likely are you to recommend the **CareerDriver** to a colleague?
(0 – highly unlikely – 10 – highly likely)
17. What suggestions do you have for the Career Growth & Development team to better equip you for your career progression here at Company XYZ?

Appendix C: Copy of Leadership Focus Group Questions

1. How familiar are you with the tools and resources within the **CareerDriver**?
 - Could you explain how to access the **CareerDriver**?
 - Who showed you how to use the **Career Driver**?
2. How valuable would you say the tools and resources within the **CareerDriver** are?
 - What specific tools or resources do you like? Why?
 - What tools and resources do you dislike? Why?
3. Explain how the **CareerDriver** has helped you personally for your own growth and development?
 - What barriers if any, prevented you from using all the tools and resources within the **Career Driver**?
4. Describe the success in using the **CareerDriver** in the development of your direct reports?
 - Any success stories of a mentor, goals, promotion, development plan or personal development?
5. Describe the challenges in using the **CareerDriver** in the development of your direct reports?
6. Describe for me the feedback received from your direct reports regarding the value or use of the **CareerDriver**?
7. What suggestions for improvement do you have to make the **CareerDriver** more effective?
8. How likely are you to recommend the **CareerDriver** to a colleague?
(0 – highly unlikely – 10 – highly likely)