A global leader in office solutions technology, Ricoh markets to Australian companies and government both directly and through a well-established dealer network in every state. The company, with its head office in Sydney, has 800 staff members in six Australian states.

RICOH
imagine. change.

mariner7
BRING OUT THE BEST

The challenge

Ricoh Australia was seeking a forward-looking performance management programme. It had to combine and significantly improve on the company's 15-year-old performance appraisal system and its more recent performance planning system. Although these had been upgraded and expanded over the years, they were cumbersome, paper-based and had limited features - and the performance appraisal system relied heavily on staff recalling the past year's activities and results. What's more, it only included half the staff.

As Ricoh Australia's Human Resources Manager says: "We realised that our performance appraisal was yesterday's system – you got to the end of the year and then looked backwards."

The company had clearly-identified needs: on-line, easy to roll out, flexible, integrated with the company's business plan, inclusive of every staff member in the organisation – these were to be key features of the new system.

The challenge was to find the right way forward.

So, after consultation with management- including discussions with Ricoh's IT team about developing the new system in-house - Ricoh took their 'wish-list' to the market and, on the recommendation of a Ricoh New Zealand manager familiar with Talent Manager, approached Mariner7.

The solution

"When Mariner7 initially demonstrated their Talent Manager Programme to us, we knew their off-the-shelf performance management programme would easily slot into the company. It mirrored 90 per cent of our existing performance planning paper system – plus it had added features," said the HR Manager.

Ricoh had found the answer: Talent Manager met all of its needs and more. Now it was time for training and implementation.

Ricoh opted to introduce Talent Manager to its staff in three stages, from the top down, over a period of 18 months. By the end of the first year, 260 staff were on the system, using its features as an everyday tool and highly enthusiastic about its benefits.

From the outset, Ricoh staff members were trained to set and record their KRAs and KPIs in the programme - some are mandatory, others are set and agreed on by employee and manager. As well, they were trained to use Talent Manager's scorecard feature which allows them to make notes about actions as they occur.

The Human Resources Team is confident this feature, together with staff members being able to rate their own performance, empowers Ricoh's staff and encourages in them a sense of 'ownership' of the programme.

It also provides every staff member with a tool to measure – on a daily basis - their performance against agreed criteria, and has completely eliminated the old system of recalling activities at annual performance reviews. And, for Ricoh's staff on incentives, the system automatically computes bonuses, eliminating disputes at bonus time.

In the words of an HR team member: "We were expecting it to be a huge challenge to change the staff's mindset from a backward-looking to a forward-looking approach, but people accepted it readily. There were just a couple of managers at the outset who were not convinced about the programme but once they were actually on the system they came on board. People quickly saw that the balanced scorecard approach of the programme ties performance measurement into salary review in an objective way. It is a much clearer process and not subjective."

The results

The HR Manager's praise for Talent Manager is unqualified: "The way the system keeps developing is stunning". Now, all staff are on the programme, each with clear KRAs and KPIs.

The HR team's commitment and enthusiasm for Talent Manager has been a key factor in the system meeting Ricoh's needs, along with vision and drive exhibited by Ricoh's Managing Director Les Richardson.

As well as providing Les with a platform on which to set his own KPIs before rolling them out to General Managers, the programme gives him a wealth of relevant, current information. He can now look easily into the heart of the organisation and see, for instance, what percentage of staff are reaching their specific KPIs, which people or teams are above or below their targets, and who the company should invest in as future leaders.

> Mariner7's Talent Manager is a very powerful performance management tool that is extremely user friendly and easy to learn from a user point of view. It has provided us with a platform for fair, objective performance measurement against an agreed set of criteria and measurements that can successfully link to other areas, such as remuneration.

And what do the staff say?

There is widespread agreement that it is far more objective and forward-looking than the old system, and was easy to use right from the start. Managers are particularly pleased that the new user-driven programme requires significantly less administration for them.

Today at Ricoh Australia, Talent Manager is an everyday tool.

The surprises

Did the programme come up with any surprises for Ricoh? The answer was a resounding yes!

The reason for such a positive response is the benefits that the HR team, and every other member of staff, are experiencing from the 'library' of job templates now in the programme.

The Ricoh HR team has designed 35 job templates, each with its own set of mandatory KRAs and KPIs. These templates cover 75% of the roles within the company.

Ricoh knew this was a feature of Talent Manager from the outset, but the company had not completely foreseen its huge benefits. "We have been able to set a national set of goals for the roles. Every branch office has the same template for a specific role, and every person in that role nationwide knows what they should be doing," a member of the Human Resources team says.

The templates also greatly reduce the time staff spend developing their individual KPIs and KRAs, and coupled with the balanced scorecard, they provide a level playing field for talent spotting, reviewing performances and salaries, and determining bonuses.

Further developments

Ricoh's system continues to grow since they first implemented Mariner7:

A personal development planning module allows each person to create their own plan and complete specific development activities which have been agreed with their manager. A library of competency development plans for specific job roles can be downloaded, edited and used to plan career paths. Reporting has been created to identify all development activities that have not been completed by their target dates.

A third party feedback module makes it easy to request, obtain and consider feedback from anyone inside or outside the company. Library or custom written questionnaires can be used.

A system for identifying and tracking key talent has been created which is viewable by high level administrators only.

In short...

There is no doubt that Mariner7's Talent Manager met the challenge and exceeded all of Ricoh Australia's expectations. Ricoh's Human Resources manager sums up...

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"We have had fantastic service from Mariner7. The support and assistance they provide in growing the system to meet our needs is exceptional."