**Abolish Performance Appraisals Rationale**

Definition of performance appraisal: “The practice of performance appraisal is a mandated process in which, for a specified period of time, all or a group of employees’ work performance, behaviors, or traits are individually rated, judged, or described by a person other than the rated employee and the results are kept by the organization.”

Commonly cited functions of appraisal

1. Improvement.

2. Coaching and guidance

3. Feedback and communication

4. Compensation

5. Staffing Decisions and professional Development

6. Termination and Legal Documentation

p. 22-23 chart of underlying assumptions

Conventional Assumption: One appraisal process can effectively serve several functions at the same time. This assumption is a key contributor to the dismal track record of appraisals. The purpose is confusing and ambiguous to raters and rates.

Alternative assumption: The multiple purposes of appraisal can be better achieved by separate processes.

Assumption: Where do I stand? i.e. People want to know and need to know where they stand, and appraisals tell people where they stand. This smacks of paternalism and a disempowered workforce. (practiced by both men and women).

Alternative assumption: People want to clearly understand and access the knowledge and information that influences decisions about their pay, promotion, status, and future.

Conventional assumption: The organization and the supervisor are responsible for individual employee’s morale, performance and development.

Alternative assumption: As healthy adults, people need to be responsible for their own morale, performance, and development, with and without support from the organization.

“What do we do when we feel we are out of control? Often we hold onto familiar things, what worked in the past, or so it seemed. The performance appraisal allures us with its illusion of control, the illusion that we are tangibly taking action to ensure order, accountability, desired outcomes, and improvement in an unpredictable world. Appraisal gives us documentation of people being encouraged to improve. This feels good because, by holding conversations about improvement and filling out forms, we believe we are making people accountable and getting improvement. This alluring but false impression has enabled appraisal to survive amid managers’ sincere attempts to apply a new philosophy. “

New thinking

* “An organization, because it is a system, cannot be significantly improved by focusing on individuals.
* The choices of commitment and responsibility must be left to individuals if they are to be meaningful and effective.
* Less structure and control over the individual employee often will result in greater motivation and productivity.
* Employees cannot be motivated to perform their best, but conditions of openness and trust can unleash intrinsic motivation, spirit, and heart-felt commitment to organization goals.
* Focus on improving the overall “system” of the organization yields better results than trying to get employees to improve their individual performance.
* Organizations can survive and grow only if they are freely evolving systems, where variation, differentiation, and diversity are valued as pathways to innovation and improvement.”

Conventional assumption: “Improving individuals’ performance improves organizational performance. “

Alternative assumptions: “Improving systems and processes improves the performance of the organization. Individual improvement initiatives are most effective when they are combined with serious efforts toward improving the work climate, systems, and processes.”