Organisational development through holistic human resources development with the Deutsche Angestellten-Krankenkasse

In response to radical change processes in the field of statutory health insurances the DAK faces the challenge of reorganising internal processes. Especially in a non-producing business this has crucial implications for the employees and calls for an appropriate preparation of managers for upcoming changes. To meet this demand DAK entrusted meta | five with the design of a process that explicitly aligns to the corporate strategy.

For this purpose meta | five closely cooperated with the HRD department. The main objectives of the process are to familiarise managers with future change processes and to enable them to autonomously assume responsibility for long-term corporate success.

The background

The health care fund as well as the increased competition among statutory health insurance companies implies new requirements for the DAK and especially for its employees. The transformation from a public institution to a competition-oriented company calls for a new understanding of the employees' role - **from administrator to creator.**

A central factor in such a transformation is that managers guide and promote the change processes. It is obvious that support has to be provided for managers in order to enable them to gain the respective commitment. In the business division (BD) "IT-Services" this need became acute in the course of a reorganisation. Additionally, the results of an employee survey suggested general room for improvement regarding leadership competencies.

Infobox

The Group (at time of project)

The statutory health insurance DAK – Unternehmen Leben – is an autonomously administrated public institution and was founded 1774. As a modern health service provider the DAK operates more than 870 service offices across Germany and counts about 4,7 million members, six million insurants and 14.000 employees.

The objective

Active involvement of managers in the change process and use of the full scope of action; Extension of the flexibility and drive for innovation in the company; Enhancement of the market-orientation.

The approach

Initiation of common learning processes by closely interlinking different development measures across various hierarchy levels, based on a differentiated analysis of individual and super-ordinate strengths and development areas.

The benefit

Enhancement of managers' personal responsibility for their own development as well as the responsibility of respective line managers for supporting their direct reports' development. As a result sustainable performance improvement across the organisation and long-term establishment of an open feedback culture.

According to a **holistic approach** that tackles causes instead of symptoms, an HRD concept was designed that aligns to objectives of the DAK and increases alignment within the organisation. The main focus was to identify the factors with the greatest leverage effects in order to tackle these with specific measures.

The process

The purpose of the concept was to create a process (fig. 1) that has sustainable effects and fosters an autonomous identification of fields of action among managers.

fig. 1

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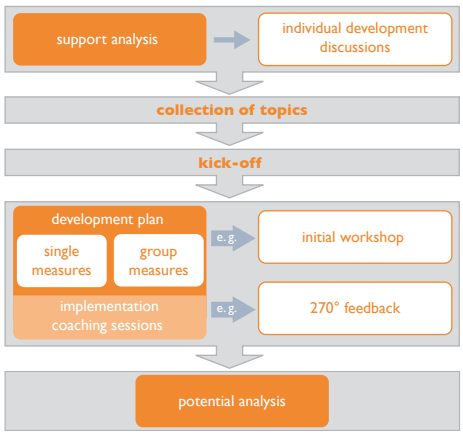
The pilot project in the BD IT-Services

As a first step, core requirements for managers were derived based on the DAK mission statement. Future relevant competencies as well as the perspectives of parties involved in the project were considered. These requirements were then translated into behavioural examples. Doing so, practical relevance was increased, measurability was facilitated and content was made as transparent as possible.

The following procedure (fig.2) was initiated gradually, following the hierarchy level (top down) – from business division heads (BDH) to department heads (DH) to team leaders (TL). This procedure permitted a close involvement of the respective line managers. Thus, on the one hand managers were trained in fostering their direct reports' development. On the other hand open communication was stimulated and feedback culture was initiated. These two factors provide a basis for each person's individual development.

In order to establish a starting point for further development, the current situation was analysed. For this purpose support-analyses that complied with the Assessment Center-method were conducted. Here, managers from the BD IT-Services could correlate their behaviour in situations that are critical for success with future requirements. Members of the observer team in this procedure were the respective line managers, external experts, employees from the HRD department, equality commissioners and representatives of the staff council. By integrating all observations, a multi-perspective profile of each manager was generated. The resulting extensive insights regarding strengths and development areas of each participant were documented and served as a basis for the following development discussions. These were primarily conducted by the respective line manager with involvement of an employee of the HRD department. Binding development goals as well as measures to achieve these were discussed. Here, personal objectives as well as requirements of the business division were taken into account. The specifically designed qualification programme "Human resources development as

fig. 2



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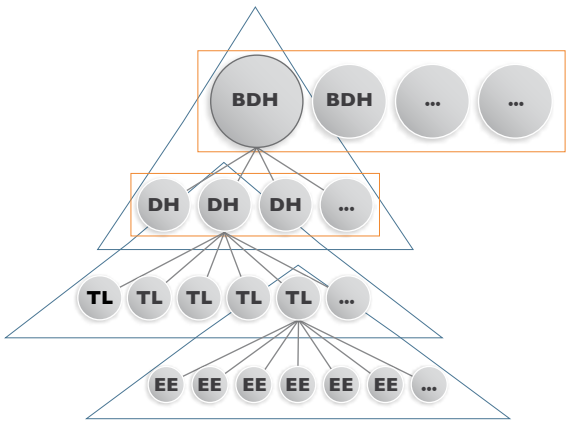
managerial responsibility" provided support for the line managers in conducting these conversations in a constructive way. The above programme intensively prepared the managers for relating the support-analysis results with day-to-day observations, providing feedback and defining relevant follow-up actions jointly with their direct reports.

The individual profiles that resulted from the support-analysis were translated into summaries for different leadership circles (fig.3). These divison- or department-wide profiles were used within the respective leadership circles to discuss possible improvements regarding internal processes. The understanding of the close connection between micro and macro levels and its importance for the company was emphasised. Thus, dialogue within the leadership circles was enhanced and team learning was fostered.

fig. 3



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Additionally to the overall evaluation, individually defined development goals and measures were gathered centrally in order to utilize synergies optimally. A number of input workshops was initiated and explicitly tailored to the managers' current needs. The participation complied with individually defined development goals that were set before and was voluntary. Respectively, the seminar's content mainly based on the participants' needs and experiences. Thus, a direct relation to day-to-day work was ensured and the applicability of the workshop content was guaranteed. Further, off-the-job workshops and coaching sessions supported the learning transfer. Personal responsibility was fostered as support in applying the workshop content was generally offered but had to be asked for specifically. Hence, the programme's sustainability was significantly increased as it approached the individual needs of each participant.

In the coaching sessions concerning implementation, ways to deal with learned content in day-to-day work were discussed. A crucial aspect here were intra-organisational interdependencies that have an impact on the single participants in varying degrees.
After the input workshops and the implementation phase were completed, the current situation was evaluated once more. In a first step a 270° feedback was conducted. The content was mainly determined by the requirements that were stated on basis of the mission statement and were already used for the support-analyses. The precise question items were derived from the DAK competency profiles. This approach made it possible that the 270° feedback optimally supported the whole process regarding different core issues.

The feedback results provided information about the application of learned content in day-to-day work. With regards to the employee survey that was conducted before the process, improvements could be stated. By inviting relevant working partners within the DAK (line managers, colleagues and direct reports) to provide feedback, the mutual dialogue was enhanced further. Additionally, the alignment of the process to other central processes in the company as well as its objectives was highlighted again. Afterwards, a development analysis was conducted. This assessment resembled the support analysis and also made use of the Assessment Center-method. Thus, the results could be compared directly to the support analysis' results and offer detailed insight in an expansion of the behavioural repertoire. The integration of the results of the development analysis and the 270° feedback

served as a basis for new feedback discussions. Hence, observations from the development analysis could be compared to direct observations from relevant working partners in day-to-day work. This offered every manager the chance to become acquainted with their effect on others and to reflect to what extent their self-concept resembles the way others perceive them.

On the one hand the process was evaluated this way. On the other hand further support in advancing the own qualification was given to the managers of the business division IT-Services.

Junior Managers

Additionally to the development process for established managers of the business division IT-Services a programme for junior managers (JMP) was initiated in order to sustainably ensure a consistent, future-oriented leadership culture. (You can find further information on this topic in our case study "promotion of young talents".)

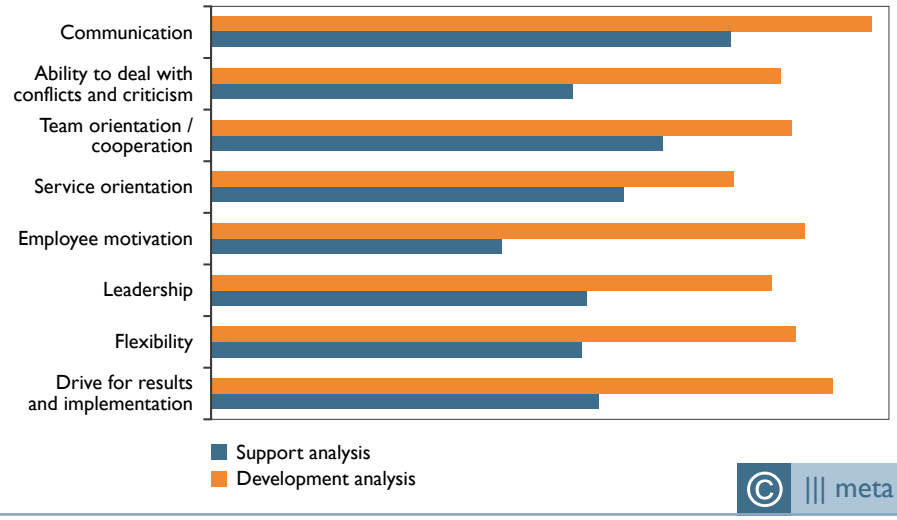
In this course established managers assumed an important role and were substantially responsible for the JMP-participants' development on-the-job, e. g. by providing sound feedback concerning work performance. This responsibility was also demanded bottom-up and thereby had immediate effects on the cooperation within working groups and divisions.

Results

The evaluation shows an increase of 0.8 scale points on average in the development analysis' results in comparison to the support analysis (fig. 4). This resembles a relative increase by 51 %.
The improvements are significant for all but one criterion. This means that a random effect can be excluded by a probability of 97 %.

The 270° feedback shows an agreement between 75 % and 85 % across all criteria (fig. 5). This result demonstrates, in comparison with the initial survey, a considerably increased satisfaction among working partners regarding the IT-Services managers' working behaviour.

fig. 4



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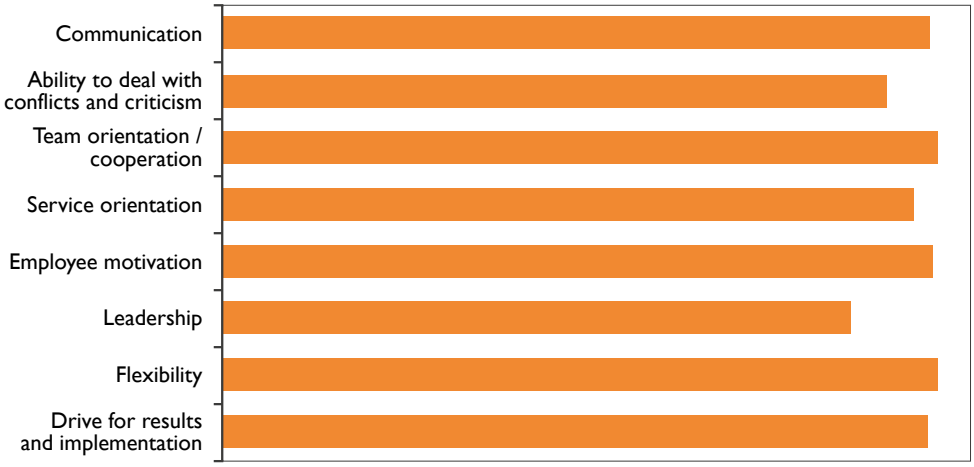
Consequences

Since the human resource development concept for managers from the BD IT-Services was initiated, changes in the environment of the DAK progressed and materialised. The systemically oriented and individually tailored development process enabled the business division to face these challenges as a whole and to solve potential problems autonomously.

fig. 5



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The claim "From administrator to creator" comes to life by continuously enhancing each manager's – and thereby also each employee's – autonomous responsibility for tackling changes proactively.

The demand-oriented conception of the process as well as its success encouraged the DAK to continue the project with meta | five. In this course the process in the BD IT-Services serves as a "lighthouse-project" for rolling out respective processes for all central corporate functions of the DAK.

Infobox

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About us:

meta | five is a business consultancy with a team consisting of psychologists, economists and IT-experts.
Our service portfolio ranges from the development and realisation of strategies and processes to the design and implementation of tools for personnel diagnostics and development to analyses of "soft" factors of success and aspects of organisational development. We always execute these tasks taking into account our customers concrete objectives and framework conditions. All trainers and consultants from meta | five have extensive experience from various projects for customers from diverse business areas.