

**New Learning and Talent Management Programs For
Oceaneering International, Inc.**

Written by

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Oceaneering International, Inc. is a global oilfield provider of engineered services and products primarily for the offshore oil and gas industry, with a focus on deepwater applications. Oceaneering's business offerings include remotely operated vehicles, mobile offshore production systems, built-to-order specialty subsea hardware, engineering and project management, subsea intervention and installation services, non-destructive testing and inspections and manned diving. Founded in 1964, Oceaneering has locations in all of the major deep water markets of the world including the U.S., United Kingdom, Norway, Brazil, India, Singapore, Angola and Nigeria. In the year 2000, the company had slightly over 2,000 employees and has now grown to approximately 7,500 globally.

One of the major expansions in the company came from the Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROV) group where employees require specific training to perform their job duties. As a result of the tremendous growth in this division, traditional on-the-job training was simply no longer viable. A comprehensive classroom training (for skills, abilities and technical knowledge) program was in place; however this approach did not meet all of the operational needs. Transferring classroom skills to the offshore operating environment required a different approach, and as employees became more experienced, they required additional training and expertise. Not surprisingly, due to the logistical issues surrounding a global workforce and their

increasing time constraints, routine training and managing of workers worldwide became a major challenge. Without a system to track, view, find and select employees within the organization to fill specific positions as needed or a system to measure, review and fill the knowledge/training gaps in individuals as they moved from one position to another, the company was not as productive and efficient as it could be.

A Global Training Crisis

In the last two years, during the company's strategy meetings, the leadership from the worldwide operations listed training as the top challenge faced by the company. This acknowledgement led Oceaneering, Inc. on a quest for a learning management system that would provide not only global online training but also one capable of supplying highly specific employee data that could be maintained, updated and made easily accessible.

“We had a great training division and a lot of training assets, but it was hard to coordinate training for the employees who were offshore most of the time,” said Frank Klein, Worldwide Competency and Development Manger for the ROV Group. Klein's primary function is to coordinate development and training for employees in the ROV group when they are first hired and then track their progress to plan for their growth into critical positions such as supervisors and superintendents. “When we had 300 people this process was fairly simple, but with 700 people it's easy to lose people. They drop off the radar,” said Klein.

Tammy Shook, Corporate Training and Development Manager, agrees. “We have 7,500 employees worldwide. Many of our employees are very remote because they are offshore. There is really no way we can hold enough classes in all of the topics and course titles that are needed. What we really wanted was a way to help deliver training, not only standardized or packaged

training, but something we could put together. We wanted a customized curriculum to deliver to our employees no matter where they were or what time zone they were in,” said Shook.

The Solution

While exploring different tools and options available in the training area, the company learned about two systems, The Learning Management System (LMS) and the Talent Management Systems (TMS), both provided by LearnShare LCC (Toledo, OH). The Learning Management System (LMS) is web based and allows employees to search for online and instructor-led classroom training, any of which employees can register for through this system. All data associated with this training is tracked online. Employees can see which training courses they’ve completed and what other training is needed for their positions. Additionally, managers and supervisors are able to view this information to pinpoint deficits in employees’ knowledge and skills.

The Talent Management System (TMS) tracks employees throughout the organization to plan their job growth. It identifies specific characteristics of employees, such as who has completed specialized training or who is multi-lingual. Managers can search the system to find employees with the right profile to fill a job need. Furthermore, after managers and employees determine employees’ strengths and weaknesses, they can then together create a plan to overcome those weaknesses while maximizing their strengths.

The LMS has been especially useful for tracking employee certification. “These certifications are vital to the Oceaneering business because employees can’t do their jobs if that certification is not current. Often we have to produce the certification to our customers to prove the employee is qualified for the job,” said Shook. The LMS sends notification prior to the expiration of the certification/training, which gives Oceaneering a better method of tracking

training requirements and making those requirements visible to employees. “Manually tracking certifications is a living nightmare. There were copies in file folders and file cabinets and it was crazy trying to find them. We had a Certification Customization added to the LMS, so now we can attach scanned copies of their certificates to the employees’ records. The employee has access to it from any Internet connection and can print it off and hand it to the site manager right there,” said Shook.

Reconciling Gaps in Employee Training, Knowledge and Skills

About two years ago, the ROV group developed a competency program to determine the training needed for new employees as well as existing employees as they advance within the company. This is done through the TMS and helps the company deploy resources appropriately. “The Talent Management System has broadened our strategy planning and allows us to identify gaps in employee training. Then the LMS lets us look at where we can best close that gap, whether it’s through third party online training, an internal classroom program or an outside class,” said Klein.

The ROV group also uses the TMS to identify employees ready for advancement. “We use it to compare people. If we have five spots available for supervisor positions and there are ten people available, we can look at their training, work history and talent profile to truly pick the best five. Those not picked are then given a plan for improvement. This plan is added to their talent profile and if they continue on this path and do everything we ask of asked, it’s almost a guarantee of promotion,” said Klein.

Additionally, LearnShare developed a team building hierarchy (specific to Oceaneering) for the TMS. A manager can search the database and based on the skill sets needed for a

particular job, pick appropriate crew members, rather than calling around to find out the training and skills for these employees.

These systems have solved many of Oceaneering's human capital challenges. They help with tracking the training needs, requirements and testing of employees to determine the ongoing education and competency of the actual workforce. The implementation was easy, and feedback from the employees has been positive. The LMS and TMS allow employees to take ownership and manage their own training profiles. Klein notes, "It's give us more data points, views and insight to our employees and gives them a transparency for what we've planned for them. When you enter something into their talent or learning profiles, the employees see it every time they log on and know that's what you expect of them. If they fail to do that, they also realize that. It gives them control of their destiny and a strategy for promotion."

Shook also sees the benefits of these systems for the employees and the organization as a whole. "It's beginning to change the mindset of the company and has changed the way we do business around training. It's also changed the importance of training and helped to increase the awareness among upper level management as to how important training really is," said Shook.

Additional Benefits

Because of the formal enrollment process with the LMS, including automatic wait lists, e-mail notifications and reminders, employee participation in training classes has increased. This reduces training costs because Shook now holds fewer classes due to a diminished absentee rate.

In addition, the LMS reduces costs associated with data entry. Prior to implementation of the system, the ROV division had three full-time employees whose jobs consisted of data entry for the tracking of training of the 3-4,000 offshore employees. Now there is only one employee doing data entry for only a few hours daily, tracking any training that wasn't automatically pre-

enrolled in the LMS. The other two jobs were eliminated, and those employees were moved into other positions at the company.

More importantly, Oceaneering employees are excited that the company invests in its employees. Not only can they take courses specific to their jobs, they can take any course they want that interests them if they are willing to pay for it themselves and take it on their own time. “The employees see this as a huge benefit,” said Shook. “They are really excited because we offer several hundred different topics of online training that are available from third party vendors. They love it when I add new topics to the LMS. If they have an interest in a particular topic that’s not in the LMS they let me know and I can go back to LearnShare and see if they have a vendor that has a topic on that.”

The Final Analysis

Oceaneering’s training and talent management challenges are not unique. The entire industry is experiencing growth, which translates into an influx of new employees lacking the appropriate training and experience. The processes and tools provided by the company’s LMS and the TMS allow for the needs of global companies to be managed more effectively.

About the Authors:

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