



Talent management – Establishing a process for high-potential identification

COMPANY

With 10.6 million insured persons, a budget of 33 billion euros for 2017 and its more than 13,500 staff, Techniker Krankenkasse (TK) is the largest statutory health insurance in Germany.

PROJECT TARGETS

Techniker Krankenkasse is in a phase of strong growth. One of the effects of that growth is an increased demand for skilled staff for key positions (both experts and managers). Techniker Krankenkasse is already using effective and well-established instruments for leadership, employee and talent development and for personnel selection. However, there is no comprehensive process to strategically identify people who have the potential for taking on more senior roles. By introducing a company-wide process of talent identification, the following goals are to be achieved, among others:

- identify and develop employees with high potential at an early stage, preparing them for more senior roles, and fill the respective roles with people from within the company
- give high potentials specific and detailed feedback on their individual strengths and learning areas
- create transparency with regard to career paths within TK
- make all managers of TK understand and internalize the concept of potential
- promote a company-wide feedback culture

FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

- Instead of providing a “one-size-fits-all” solution, the focus should be on developing a specific process for high-potential identification, in line with the decentralized company structure, internal processes and the corporate culture of TK
- The whole process, which is complemented by central measures, should above all strengthen the role of managers as “local personnel developers”
- The talent spotting process is to be linked to existing and well-established TK instruments and processes for personnel selection and development
- The works council and top management are to be involved at an early stage in the process of developing a talent management concept
- The goal is to establish a very simple and user-friendly high-potential identification process
- It also needs to be possible to connect the process to the SAP system in the future

SOLUTION

Profil M supported Techniker Krankenkasse throughout all the stages of the project. This included clarifying the specific requirements for a high-potential identification process, developing a concrete procedure model, designing the required instruments, supporting internal communication processes up to delivering training sessions for managers and facilitating the first talent conferences.

IMPLEMENTATION

Kick-off and concept meetings

During the kick-off meeting with the project team, all the initial content-related and organizational questions were clarified. Furthermore, there were regular project meetings to facilitate a regular exchange of experiences and ideas and a consistent approach throughout the project and to adjust the concept to the requirements of the company.

Defining the TK-specific talent spotting process

On the basis of an initial analysis of requirements and needs, Profil M developed different possible approaches for the TK talent spotting process. These were presented internally, discussed and then adjusted, resulting in a final procedure model that had been agreed jointly.

Designing the instruments and process materials

In line with the specifications, and working closely with the company's project team, Profil M designed the required potential evaluation instruments (e.g. potential assessment by the manager, systematic procedure for talent conferences) and process materials (e.g. potential portfolio, potential documentation, development plan).

Developing a communication concept

Profil M also supported the internal communication process, which included developing the necessary communication materials (e.g. a presentation on the benefits of the concept, information for participants, briefing of managers).

Training the managers

In preparation for the implementation phase, Profil M designed a concept for a one-day training session for managers on the topic of high-potential identification. During the pilot phase with ten local branches, a Profil M team carried out training sessions at the decentralized sites.

Facilitating talent conferences

In addition, Profil M developed a systematic approach for conducting the talent conferences. During the pilot phase, the talent conferences were moderated by the team of Profil M consultants. The goal of the talent conferences is, above all, to validate the individual assessment of potential and to finalize the planning of further development activities with the respective high potentials.

Training HR specialists

In a two-day training course, internal moderators from the HR division at TK were trained on how to facilitate talent conferences in the future and implement training sessions for managers.

HIGH POTENTIAL IDENTIFICATION CONCEPT

The TK-specific talent spotting process distinguishes between potential for more challenging expert tasks on the one hand and potential for a leadership role (first and more senior) on the other. The multi-tiered potential assessment process is structured as follows:

- All employees perform a **self-assessment** and describe their motivation to develop and change
- The respective **manager** makes a **standardized assessment of potential** with regard to certain potential criteria
- The assessment is **validated multiple times** (for instance in a talent conference) so as to achieve a maximum degree of objectivity
- Employees can also initiate the process themselves to **assess where they stand right now**
- Participating employees receive **final feedback** from their manager

Development of high potentials and sustainability

High potentials are developed both “locally” and in processes that are designed and controlled centrally, as part of well-established development programs. The following aspects have proved useful to make the topic of personnel development part of the TK company “DNA” and to promote a culture of talent management:

- Employee development is a topic that is enshrined in the TK leadership guidelines as a core value and an important leadership task
- The talent management activities are combined with other TK leadership instruments (e.g. the TK competency model or internal development programs)
- The high-potential identification process is integrated into the personnel development cycle and linked to the annual performance review
- High-potential identification and employee development is a topic covered in TK manager training sessions, making it an integral part of the manager training program
- Managers as “local personnel developers” play a pivotal role in the talent management process and also act as mentors for high potentials from other areas
- Every employee can initiate the potential assessment process themselves to find out where they stand
- Managers and the executive board act as observers in the established selection procedures for new managers at different management levels
- The process is evaluated and adjusted regularly to ensure it is tailored to the company’s needs and requirements.

OUTCOMES

- The objective to fill vacancies mainly with internal staff has been achieved, and managers accept and embrace their role as leaders and personnel developers at the local branches
- The high-potential identification process is implemented regularly in the decentralized areas
- All managers are prepared for their role as local personnel developers and receive training on how to use the different instruments
- The feedback from the pilot phase shows, among other things, that the process has made the requirements for expert and leadership roles more transparent, that talented people who have not been in the spotlight before become more visible, and that the process is designed to systematically identify and develop talents
- The outcomes of the selection procedures and the feedback from managers also show that high potentials are better prepared for future tasks



Florian vom Hagen

Profil M GmbH & CO. KG Partner

florian.vomhagen@profil-m.de