DEVELOPMENT OF A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
FOR THE SABC (PORT ELIZABETH)

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on exploring and finding the ideal performance management system suitable for the South African Broadcasting Corporation by establishing an understanding of employees’ experiences and perceptions of the previous and a proposed performance management systems and their value to SABC employees. This was done by eliciting how employees see, make sense of and interpret their everyday experiences of performance management systems, in order to develop a more suitable inclusive performance management system.

A qualitative study was used to seek answers to the research questions. A focus group interview was selected for data collection. The data was analysed according to guidelines indicated and proposed by Creswell (1998:147-148).

The researcher made use of convenience sampling to select 45 participants in 5 groups for the focus groups. One group consisted of managers/supervisors, and the other four groups were employees from four different business units. Participants were guaranteed confidentiality. Credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability were used as the main components in the model, to determine the truth-value of the study.

Findings indicated that there was a fair understanding of the previous performance management system but there had been poor implementation of the system. The participants concurred that the previous performance
management systems in the organisations were not adding any value to their lives. They pointed out that there was no reward in place for high performers and no action taken for non-performers, and this impacted negatively on how implementation was perceived and experienced.

The recommendations are that the revised performance management system should have a stronger emphasis on effective management, monitoring, feedback and reward. Furthermore, the system should close the current gaps of reward for high performance and correction of low performance. It was further concluded that for a performance management system to be effective, it should incorporate updated job descriptions, performance measures and standards, as well as evaluator training and guidelines for improvement, employee input, compensation and/or rewards.
DECLARATION

I declare that the research:

“Development of a performance management system for the SABC (Port Elizabeth)”

is my own work, that it has not been submitted for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

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Vuyo Nyembezi

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Today more organisations are relying on employees for success and competitiveness, and consequently to find strategies for identifying, encouraging, measuring, evaluating, improving and rewarding employees’ performance at work. In this respect, performance management and appraisal systems have come to play an indispensable role in helping organisations to reach their goals of productivity (Stevers & Joyce, 2000:22).

Human Resource Management (HRM) practices can be seen as “signals” of an organisation’s intentions toward its employees, and are interpreted as such by individual employees (Rousseau & Greller, 1994:385). However, employees do not necessarily perceive such signals similarly or react to them in a similar manner. The impact of Human Resources (HR) practices on employees’ commitment and performance depends on employees’ perception and evaluation of these practices (Guest, 1999: 5). Perceptions and attitudes may mediate and moderate the relationship between HRM practices and employees’ performance-related behaviour.

Variation may exist in employees’ perceptions of HRM practices even when, in objective terms, what is offered to different employees is very similar. Individual
differences in perceptions and reactions to what the organisation has to offer may, for instance, follow from an employee’s previous experience as well as his/her beliefs.

Against the above background, it was important that research be conducted or existing research be expanded, on understanding employees’ experiences and perceptions of performance management and appraisal systems, in order to develop a comprehensive performance management system. The cognitive perceptions people have about performance management and appraisal systems are a key determinant of a system’s long-term success or failure (DeNisi, 1996:360). If employees are not happy about the system, they are likely to be unwilling to take an active part in the process because they do not see any value in it, which in turn creates low morale and inevitably affects productivity. This study attempts to improve employees’ productivity by investigating their cognitive perceptions of the organisation’s performance management system.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The process of measuring and subsequently actively managing organisational and employee performance in order to improve organisational effectiveness is currently seen as critical to the development and survival of organisations (Heinrich, 2002). It may be positively dangerous simply to copy schemes used in other organisations, and worse still to introduce a scheme simply because it is the managerial fashion (Rees & Porter, 2002:229). Employee perceptions and attitudes affect employee performance, which in turn affects organisational performance and productivity.

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The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) has developed four performance management systems over the past eight years. Currently a new performance tool was developed, and was presented to the top management. It appears that staff and union councils are still doubtful and suspicious of the implementation of this new tool. This study seeks to find and understand descriptions of employees’ experiences and perceptions of the previous performance management system and its value to SABC employees in the SABC Port Elizabeth region. The objective is to identify performance standards as perceived by employees, and to develop an improved, relevant performance management system.

The research problem in this case is defined as follows:

“How can failures in the implementation of the previous performance management system at the SABC be rectified by the introduction of a new system?”

The sub-problems that have arisen are:

- What performance management system model is suitable for the SABC employees?
- How can buy-in from the employees and union council be obtained when a new performance management system is introduced?

Past studies have mostly focused their attention on appraisal ratings, scales and rater error training as a means of increasing the accuracy of performance evaluation. A closer look at the literature reveals that the influence of behavioural factors on the use

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of the performance management process has been underexposed in scientific and professional literature (Vagneur & Peiperl, 2000). A great deal of performance management research has focused on the technicalities of implementing a performance management system, rather than on behavioural issues (Martins, 2000). This indicates that there is a gap. Therefore, the focus of this study is centred on employees’ cognitions of the previous performance management system used by the SABC, to find how employees see, make sense of and interpret their everyday experiences with such a system, with the aim of developing a suitable improved performance management system.

1.3 TERMINOLOGY

Performance management: is defined by Armstrong (2001:6) as “a means of getting better results from a whole organisation by understanding and managing within an agreed framework, performance of planned goals, standards and competence requirements”.

Performance appraisal: (or evaluation) is “a systematic process of measuring a person’s performance in the job, based on predetermined performance criteria” (Smit, 2004:2).

Managers/supervisors: For the purposes of this study, managers/supervisors are defined as those individuals who are first-line function supervisors of employees. These individuals have a minimum of three employees reporting to them.
1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

It appears that the SABC staff and union councils were still doubtful and suspicious of the implementation of the previous performance management system and the one being proposed by the Human Capital Services (HCS) [HR department] in SABC. Therefore, the aim of this study was to investigate the challenges around the previous performance management system at the SABC. Although the study was exploratory; it might contribute to identifying causes of resistance and stumbling blocks to the acceptance and implementation of the proposed performance management system.

The challenges listed below were identified during various discussions with management and staff, and were investigated in order to contribute to an improved performance management system:

- Employees and union councils were not consulted when a new performance management system was developed.
- There was a lack of buy-in from the employees and union council when a new performance management system was introduced.
- There were two different performance management systems used at the SABC, one for middle to senior managers and the other for the rest of the employees.
- Middle and junior managers/supervisors did not understand either the previous or the proposed new system.
- Staff perceptions were that performance management systems are intended to punish employees.
There were also additional sub-challenges:

- Management wanted to link the proposed performance management system to the existing annual bonus pay-out.
- The performance review process was not clearly explained.
- The reward system was not clearly explained.

Therefore the study aimed at providing a better understanding of employees’ cognitive thought-processes, which could contribute to the tailoring of a suitable performance management system that would have buy-in from all stakeholders.

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study was to improve the effectiveness of the performance management system. This was done by exploring employees’ experiences and perceptions of the current performance management and appraisal system that was in place, and assessing its value to the workers in the SABC Port Elizabeth region. Performance standards as perceived by staff members were identified.

In addition to the above-mentioned primary objective, the following objectives were pursued:

- To present a group perspective of employees’ experiences and perceptions by means of focus group data-gathering methods;
- To compare the findings with existing related literature; and
- To present descriptions of participants’ experiences and perceptions of the previous performance management system.
The ultimate objective of this study was to help the organisation in selecting the most appropriate and effective performance management methods and system. Although the study was exploratory, it is helpful in identifying causes of resistance and stumbling blocks for the implementation of the performance management system/s in the SABC Port Elizabeth region.

To achieve the above-mentioned research objectives, a Qualitative research method was employed, and therefore the following research questions related to the themes "performance management and appraisal system" were explored in an open-ended fashion:

- What experiences did the employees have with the previous performance management system?
- What were employees’ understandings of a performance management system?
- Were employees effectively prepared for the new performance management system/s? and
- What were the challenges during the implementation of previous and proposed performance management system/s?
1.5.1 Research Design Objectives

A Qualitative research approach was used to seek answers, using focus group interviews for data collection. The research took the form of applied research, and the findings were used to solve the research problem in a deductive way. The participants were selected using a systematic sampling and convenience sampling method so as to eliminate bias while using available employees. A literature review was conducted to achieve the research design objectives. The aim of the literature review was to identify the critical points of current knowledge on this research subject, with the goal of summarising current literature on the topic.

1.5.2 Delimitation of Research

This study was confined to the employees of the SABC Port Elizabeth region. The researcher selected 45 participants in 5 groups for the focus groups. One group consisted of managers and supervisors and the other four groups consisted of employees from four different business units. This approach was used as an attempt to get as many different points of view as possible from the SABC Port Elizabeth region. Confidentiality was guaranteed.

A private office was arranged for the focus group sessions. The participants were usually seated around a table to ensure maximum opportunity for eye contact with the researcher as well as with other participants.
1.6 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

The study is divided into five chapters:

Chapter 1 outlines the scope of the study, comprising the contextual information, rationale for the study, the research problem, the research gaps, and the significance of the study.

Chapter 2 presents a research literature review on performance management systems.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology, which includes the research paradigm, sampling design and measuring instruments. Issues of data reliability and validity are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 presents the empirical results, data analysis and therefore the interpretation and summarisation of the findings.

Chapter 5 draws conclusions on the findings and makes recommendations to implement an improved performance management system.
1.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Royse (1991:240-243) lists a few of the following ethical guidelines that were fully adhered to:

- All subjects involved in the research were volunteers.
- Sufficient information about the study was provided to ensure that risks and benefits were understood.
- No volunteers were compensated for participation in the study.
- Participants could have withdrawn at any time if they so wished.
- All literature sources of information were acknowledged.
- The researcher ensured freedom of opinions, respect and non-discrimination.

Permission was sought from management for the study to be undertaken, as well as from the focus group members themselves. The interviews were tape-recorded with the permission of the all the individuals. Trust was of major importance; access to SABC premises and documents needed to be negotiated, and permission needed to be granted before the study commenced.

1.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter the aim of the study was introduced, and the research question and the sub-challenges were outlined. The terminologies were defined and the significance of the research was presented. The aim of this research was to help the organisation in selecting the most appropriate and effective performance management system that

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performance management format studies and the related available theory, to assist in framing the current research.

Creswell indicates (1998:10) that the decision on a theoretical perspective to frame the study, is taken based on the goal of the research and the strategy of enquiry. Literature was therefore used inductively in this study, and a comparison of literature to the findings of this study was carried out, and not vice versa.
CHAPTER 2

UNDERSTANDING PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

2.1 STRATEGIES FOR PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

2.1.1 Introduction

Creswell (1998:20) states that the literature section in a research study achieves several purposes: firstly, it shares with readers prior studies closely linked with the study being reported; secondly, it relates a study to the larger ongoing dialogue on the topic as well as filling in gaps and extending prior studies; and lastly it provides a framework for establishing the importance of the study and a benchmark for comparing the results of a study with other findings.

Wright (2001) argues that people are an important resource, and like all resources they need to be managed properly so as to assist them to perform at their peak level. The success of an organisation does not depend on the resources at its disposal, but on how they are utilised. These resources need to be deployed, managed and controlled. According to Weinbach (2003:71), management is the realisation of organisational goals through such activities as planning, organising, leading and controlling organisational resources. Thus management has the responsibility to manage all these resources, including the human resources.
The management of each of these components plays an important role in the overall functioning of the organisation, and the management of the human component is vitally important. Swanepoel (2003:13) confirms this by saying: “The employee’s performance behavior at work and satisfaction levels has to be monitored and kept in line with the requirements of the organisation”. Smither (1998:7) describes work performance as the record of outcomes produced on a specific job function, activity or behaviour during a specified time period.

2.1.2 What is Performance Management?

Fletcher, as cited in Edmonstone (1996: 109), defines performance management as “an approach to creating a shared vision of the purpose and aims of the organisation, helping each individual employee understand and recognize their part in contributing to them, and in so doing manage and enhance the performance of both the individual and the organisation”.

The two terms “performance measurement” and “performance management” are often used interchangeably. However, it could be argued that performance measurement is the act of measuring the performance, whereas performance management aims to react to the “outcome” measure, using it in order to manage the performance. This is more clearly defined by Lebas (1995: 23-25), who stated that “Performance Measurement: includes measures based on key success factors, measures for detection of deviations, measures to track past achievements, measures to describe the status potential, measures of output, measures of input, etc. and Performance
Management: involves training, team work, dialogue, management style, attitudes, shared vision, employee involvement, multi-competence, incentives and rewards, etc.”

Swanepoel (2003:375) states that it is important to distinguish performance management from performance appraisal, as the former is a broader view of performance appraisal where rating is de-emphasised. Fletcher’s definition, as cited in Edmonstone (1996: 109), differentiates performance management from performance appraisal. Performance appraisal comes into the picture when measuring individual performance, while performance management starts with the organisation’s mission, vision and strategy until individual development plans are put in place. Baron and Armstrong (1998:38-39) emphasise the strategic and integrated nature of performance management, which in their view focuses on “increasing the effectiveness of organizations by improving the performance of the people who work in them and by developing the capabilities of teams and individual contributors”. Performance management is defined by Armstrong (2001:6) as a means of getting better results from a whole organisation by understanding and managing within an agreed framework, performance of planned goals, standards and competence requirements.

Bacal (1999:87) defines performance management as “an ongoing communication process, undertaken in partnership, between an employee and his or her immediate supervisor that involves establishing clear expectations and understanding about:

- The essential job functions the employee is expected to do;
- How the employee’s job contributes to the goals of the organisation;

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2.1.3 Why is Performance Management Essential?

Performance management deals with the challenge organisations face in defining, measuring, and stimulating employee performance, with the ultimate goal of improving organisational performance. Performance management has come to signify more than a list of singular practices; rather, it is seen as an integrated process in which managers work with their employees to set expectations, measure and review results and reward performance, in order to improve employee performance, with the ultimate aim of positively affecting organisational success (Mondy et al., 2002). This same emphasis is found in the literature on strategic Human Resource Management (HRM) emphasising the importance of so-called high performance work systems (Appelbaum et al. 2000).

According to Roberts (2001), performance management involves: the setting of corporate, departmental, team, and individual objectives (sometimes labelled “policy deployment”; the cascading down of strategic objectives to a meaningful set of targets for every individual involved); the use of performance appraisal systems, appropriate reward strategies and schemes; training and development strategies and plans; feedback, communication and coaching; individual career planning; mechanisms for
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monitoring the effectiveness of performance management system; interventions and
even culture management. Thus, performance management involves the day-to day
management, as well as the support and development of people.

Therefore a performance management system needs to be based on meaningful,
realistic, attainable and measurable performance standards. These types of standards
are set, so that there is no doubt about whether the actual performance meets the
standard or not. These standards emanate from a strategy, which is converted into
plans and objectives for the future.

2.1.4 Performance Management System Approach

Performance management involves multiple levels of analysis, and is clearly linked to
the topics studied in strategic HRM as well as performance appraisal. Different terms
refer to performance management initiatives in organisations, for example,
performance-based budgeting, pay-for-performance, planning, programming and
budgeting, and management by objectives (Heinrich, 2002).

Different models of performance management are found in the literature. Each model
stresses its importance as a system for managing organisational performance,
managing employee performance, or for integrating the management of organisational
and employee performance. Performance management involves managing employee
efforts, based on measured performance outcomes. Thus, determining what
constitutes good performance and how the different aspects of high performance can

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be measured is critical to the design of an effective performance management process. These topics have been extensively studied in the area of performance management. Much of the performance management research stems from work and organisational psychology, where the accurate measurement of key aspects of employee performance has constituted an important research topic.

Rudman (2003) claims that performance management techniques can be categorised into either a people approach, whereby high performance can only be achieved through the right people, or into a process approach, whereby the best procedural system is determined and adopted. In reality there is a cross-over between the two approaches. He adds that for either approach to succeed, it must fit with the organisation’s culture. A performance management system, according to Rudman, is increasingly seen as a means of integrating HRM activities with the business objectives of the organisation, where management and HR activities are working together to influence individual and collective behaviour to support the organisation’s strategy.

The emphasis of performance management systems is on continuously improving organisational performance, and this is achieved through improved individual employee performance (Macky & Johnson, 2000).

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2.1.5 The Balanced Score Card

The Balanced Score Card is one of the tools used for performance management. It was introduced by Kaplan and Norton (1996: 106) as a tool to assist managers in equitably balancing the achievement of organisational objectives. The purpose of a balanced scorecard, according to Kaplan as cited in de Waal (2003:84), is that it links the vision and strategy to employees' everyday actions by translating the abstract strategy into clear priorities and initiatives and relating these to clear, tangible strategic outcomes that the organisation and its employees have to strive for. These outcomes include satisfied shareholders, delighted customers, efficient and effective processes and a motivated workforce. In this way, the balanced scorecard makes strategy everyone's responsibility.

The balanced scorecard is viewed as a communication and learning instrument, rather than a control system (Kaplan & Norton, 2001:10). Management alone should not formulate the objectives – the staff's input should also be obtained (Huang & Hu, 2007:179). The balanced scorecard does not only measure financial performance, but also considers performance from three non-financial perspectives, namely internal business processes, the customer, and learning and growth. Non-financial measures are vital because of their long-term outlook (Kaplan & Norton, 2001).

Implementation of the balanced scorecard is directed at strategic as well as individual performance management levels, and pervades the entire organisation. The scorecard can be used by profit-making as well as non-profit-making organisations.
According to Harrison and Goulding (1997:183), there are numerous ways of measuring performance, although generally, methods are described as comparative or non-comparative. The former compares one individual’s performance with that of others, while the latter looks at each employee’s performance individually, comparing their ability or productivity against previously defined targets.

2.1.6 What is Performance Appraisal?

Performance appraisal has been identified as one of the many factors or elements of a performance management system. Although not called performance appraisal, the concept has a long history: the Bible has many examples of the evaluation of an individual performance; merit exams were given for selection and promotion decisions as early as the Han Dynasty, 206 BC – 220 AD; “Imperial Raters” were employed in the early third century AD by the Wei Dynasty to rate the performance of the official family members (Wiese et al., 1998:233). Swanepoel (2003:372) defines performance appraisal as “a systematic and formal process by means of which the job-relevant strengths and weaknesses of employees are identified, observed, measured, recorded and developed”.

Performance appraisal can be defined as a periodic evaluation of the output of an individual measured against certain expectations (Yong, 1996). The most commonly used appraisal system is the informal one where both the employee and manager meet on a regular, day-to-day basis. Maund (2001:572) states that performance appraisal focuses on what has been achieved and what needs to be done to improve...
it. It is a process intended to facilitate effective communication between managers and employees. Ideally, appraisal discussions provide employees with useful feedback that they can immediately apply to improve their performance. This feedback includes suggestions for change, as well as encouragement to continue with positive behaviours. Managers show employees how improving their overall performance and developing new skills will lead to additional responsibilities, promotions and increased monetary benefits.

2.1.7 The Purpose of Performance Appraisal

Performance appraisal is an integral part of an HRM system. In addition to allocating rewards, organisations use appraisals to give developmental advice to employees, as well as to obtain their perspectives and justice perceptions about their jobs, departments, managers and organisations (Longenecker, 1997).

Performance appraisal is important as a management tool to assess employees’ efficiency in the workplace (Armstrong and Baron, 1998). It is carried out for various purposes, such as for professional and career development, as an accountability check, a link between recognition and compensation, references to disciplinary procedure and, most commonly, as a mechanism to determine salary increments and promotions (Abdul Aziz, 1999).

Performance appraisals are expected to serve a number of purposes simultaneously. Noe et al. (1996:198-199) and Swanepoel (2003:372) agree that performance appraisals serve administrative and developmental purposes. For strategic purposes,
Noe et al. (1996:198) and De Cenzo et al. (1996:322) concur that a performance appraisal should link employee activities with the organisation’s goals. For administrative purposes, Swanepoel (2003: 372) and Noe et al. (1996:199) discuss the recording and the use of performance data to make reward decisions, placement decisions, promotion and retrenchment decisions, and for validating selection procedures.

The literature reaches no consensus on the purpose of performance appraisal, although four general uses have been identified:

- To provide feedback about strengths and weaknesses;
- To distinguish between individuals and allocate rewards;
- To evaluate and maintain the HR systems of the organisation; and
- To create a paper trail of documentation (Milkovich and Boudreau, 1994).

2.1.8 The 360º Performance Appraisal

The 360º feedback process is feedback from multiple sources, and it is a performance appraisal approach that relies on the input of an employee’s superiors, colleagues, subordinates, sometimes customers, suppliers and/or spouses (Yukl & Lepsinger, as cited in McCarthy & Garavan, 2001).

Ward (1997: 4) describes 360º feedback as “the systematic collection and feedback of performance data on an individual or group, derived from a number of the stakeholders in their performance”. Assessment through 360º feedback is normally via
a questionnaire completed by a “stakeholder” in the individual’s performance. The data is then fed back to the participant, in a way that is intended to result in acceptance of the information and the formulation of a development plan (Ward, 1997).

The adoption of 360° feedback is that it heightens an individual’s self-awareness by highlighting differences between how participants see themselves and how others see them. Handy et al. (1996:13) emphasise that “different groups of employees together hold a unique mirror that enables an individual to see, perhaps for the first time, how his or her actions are understood and interpreted” and as such may be a key component in management development. This statement implies that awareness motivates development and improves performance. Furthermore, the people involved may prove to be the most important factor because “like performance appraisals and assessment centers, 360° feedbacks depend on the capability to generate reliable data from unreliable sources (that is, people)” (Bracken et al., 2001:6).

2.1.9 Self-Appraisal

Traditionally, appraisal discussions have taken the form of an authoritative, parent-child relationship (Meyer, 1991). Allowing employees to appraise their own performance increases the degree of influence they have in the appraisal process. Allowing employees to participate in their own evaluation has both real and symbolic importance. Research by Cederblom (1982) suggests that self-appraisals increase participation in the appraisal process, which in turn, leads to increased satisfaction levels (Cederblom, 1982).
Maund (2001:575) suggests that in order to get away from the top-down "sterile and biased" approach, the use of self-appraisal should be introduced. In using this method, appraisees state how they feel, the value of training received, the effects of amendments to their jobs, perceptions of key objectives of the job, future aspirations, and training and development required to meet those aspirations (Maund, 2001:576).

But it is important to note that negative results can occur. Miller and Ross (1975) state that the appraisal process can trigger defence mechanisms that cause employees to engage in a self-serving bias, in which they attribute their successes to themselves and their failures to external causes (Miller and Ross, 1975).

2.1.10 Management by Objectives

Management by objectives (MBO) is the process according to which an organisation sets specific objectives as broad organisational goals. Duffy (1989:166) refers to the process and suggests that the process ensures that results resemble the established objectives. This is a process where supervisors and subordinates are involved in a joint participative process and from which these organisational goals, as well as specific goals for an individual, are set.

The process of setting and participating in the process of setting these goals, is also then a motivational process for the individual, in selecting own personal goals. It is part of the job description of the individual, and also sets specific performance targets.
for the individual. Together with the process of setting individual goals for personnel, it is then also important to discuss and agree on certain evaluation mechanisms and the process of determining performance successes. Management requires two-way communication and the sharing of management power by objectives (Duffy, 1989:167).

Personal goals are also set within limits which are monitored by the manager. Rogers and Hunter (1991:322) state that goal-setting is the fundamental aspect in the process. The process of management by objectives requires subordinates to know the organisation’s purpose, mission, long-term goals and strategy. Rogers and Hunter (1991:325) indicate that productivity gains will correlate with the extent of top management support for and participation in the management by objectives (MBO) programme. It is a motivational process which gives the individual the feeling of being involved and creates a sense of ownership for employees.

MBO also creates the environment in which an individual will be measured according to his or her own performance and output, with set standards for evaluation as a participative process. The only concern about the process is that it is time-consuming and involves much paper work. The process needs evaluation on a regular basis. If the enterprise has a flat management structure, it might create problems where individuals heading flat structures will have to sit down with numerous subordinates to create these individual objectives and performance targets. Feedback on this system is also time-consuming.
2.1.11 Conducting Performance Appraisal

Harris (1997:204 -209) suggests that there are two phases for managers to follow in conducting performance reviews, and lists ways in which the review can be handled. He recommends the following for conducting feedback reviews:

- Distinguish between formal and informal feedback sessions.
- Focus on behavioural examples.
- Seek the employee’s input.
- Carefully plan the feedback session.
- Use effective communication skills during the feedback session, and
- Document everything.

2.2 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BENEFITS

Performance management reminds one that being busy is not the same as producing tangible results. It also reminds one that training, strong commitment and lots of hard work alone cannot guarantee results. The key role of performance management is its focus on achieving results. A well-implemented performance management process is beneficial to the company, its managers and employees. The advantages given by O’Callaghan (2004) include:

- Integration
- Open communication
- Improved performance
- Training and development
- Clarity of standards/requirements
- Placement of Individuals

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2.3 PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT CYCLE

Performance management goes through a systematic cycle, and it is not all about appraisal only, but also involves planning, managing, reviewing, rewarding and/or improving employee development (Schneier, Beatty and Baird, 1987:98). It should not be looked at from an appraisal point of view only where rewards are awarded, but it should be viewed holistically, including all elements of management, as seen in Figure 2.1 below. Schneier, Beatty and Baird (1987:98) state that it is a management tool and should include elements such as employee development.

Figure 2.1: The Performance Management Cycle


Reviewing is a fundamental factor affecting performance management. Performance needs to be reviewed at predetermined intervals and feedback given to the employee. The review process identifies areas of improvement in relation to the skills, knowledge
and attitude in performing functions. Planning is a continuous process in performance management and should be executed with great care (Schneier et al., 1987:98).

Good and excellent performance need to be rewarded. The rewards need to be known upfront and agreed upon by all stakeholders. This will promote transparency and consistency within the organisation. Poor performance needs action from managers with the aim of improving and assisting the relevant employee. Punitive measures are the last resort that managers have at their disposal whenever performance does not improve to the required standard. The cycle of performance management continues throughout the working life of the employee (RSA: White paper on Human Resource Management, 1986:143).

2.4 TRAINING IN PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

A major aspect of developing an effective performance management system is training for those individuals involved as assessors or managers. This training should start with a focus on providing the managers with a systematic approach to the practice of effective people management (Goff & Longenecker as cited in Boice & Kleiner, 1997: 176). This training needs to focus on the process of managing, motivating and evaluating employee performance. Again, performance appraisal is only a part of the overall process, and it is important for managers to understand it within its wider context, and not as a simple “quick fix” solution.

Training should start with those levels of management that will be involved in administering the programme. These managers can then provide training to the lower-
level supervisors. Once these senior managers have “bought into” the system, skills’ training is needed for junior managers and supervisors. Once an individual assessor or manager has been through the necessary training, periodic refresher courses will be required, to help the manager or assessor to maintain the necessary skills in performance assessment (Bruns, 1992: 93).

2.5 PERFORMANCE INCENTIVES

Incentives and incentive systems are fundamental to developing capacities and to translating developed capacities into better performance. Sheffrin (2003) refers to “incentives” as external measures that are designed and established to influence the motivation and behaviour of individuals, groups or organisations (Sheffrin, 2003). Capacity does not automatically translate into improved performance and better development results. To illustrate this, Boesen states that: a car engine may have all the components to run smoothly, but it will sit idle without fuel and a driver. By the same token, capacities may be in place, but appropriate incentives need to be present to put them into gear to move toward the desired development destination (Boesen, 2004).

Griffin (1987:208) suggests that pay should be contingent on performance, so that improved performance will lead to higher pay. Nearly all performance management systems attempt to relate pay to performance. However, this link is often unsatisfactorily established, and even less often maintained to the satisfaction of employees and supervisors or organisations. Many organisations have discovered that in order to stay competitive, it is important that this linkage strength be obtained.

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and maintained. When pay is not directly related to performance, it is possible that employees will discount the performance management process.

The issue of a performance-based reward and recognition system has long been a contentious one in most organisations. The question is raised whether performance pay creates an overly competitive environment. Some maintain that it is feedback and recognition that motivate employees rather than money. Other factors, such as motivation, skill, knowledge and ability, equally affect performance.

Griffin (1987:208) also states that a merit system does not automatically improve performance, and that for the merit system to be effective, employees must believe that their performance will be fairly and accurately evaluated. The other systems used are performance bonuses whereby executives' bonuses of up to 50% and more of their base annual yearly salary may be offered for good individual and corporate performance. Salespeople may be paid commission on sales performance, and production workers may be placed on the incentives of piece-rate systems. Group incentives pay employees on the basis of work-group productivity rather than individual productivity. Profit-sharing returns a percentage of the whole organisation's profit to each employee, and is mainly used by profit-making organisations (Myland, 1992:71).
2.6 DEVELOPING A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Clear and detailed employee performance objectives play a crucial role in helping companies to perform in accordance with their business plan and achieve their strategic goals. Performance objectives are a necessity in setting clear goals for employees. They also challenge staff members to achieve maximum results to promote business growth, and make continuous improvements to meet the challenges and changing demands of the marketplace. Macky and Johnson (2000) suggest that a typical performance management system would include:

- The organisation communicating its mission/strategies to its employees;
- The setting of individual performance targets to meet the employees’ individual team and ultimately the organisation’s mission/strategies;
- The regular appraisal of these individuals against the agreed set targets;
- Use of the results for identification of development and/or for administrative decisions; and
- The continual review of the performance management system to ensure it continues to contribute to the organisation’s performance, ideally through consultation with employees.

Fletcher (1996: 118) suggests that the main building blocks of a performance management system approach include:

- Development of the organisation’s mission and objectives;

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- Enhancing communication within the organisation so that employees are not only aware of the objectives and the business plan, but can contribute to their formulation;
- Clarifying individual responsibilities and accountabilities;
- Defining and measuring individual performance;
- Implementing appropriate reward strategies, and
- Developing staff to improve performance, and their career progression further in the future.

2.7 THEORETICAL MODEL FOR CONDUCTING A PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

According to Schneier, Beatty and Baird (1987:98), a performance management system is classified into a development, planning, managing, reviewing and rewarding phase as seen in Figure 2.2. Clear and detailed employee performance objectives play a crucial role in helping companies to perform in accordance with their business plan and achieve their strategic goals.
2.7.1 Phase 1 – Developing and Planning Performance

Planning is the first step in the performance management process cycle and provides the foundation for an effective process. Planning helps to encourage commitment and understanding by linking the employees’ work with the organisation’s goals and objectives (Schneier et al., 1987:98). Planning typically includes identifying key value drivers of stakeholders (stakeholders typically are the shareholders, customers and employees of the organisation) as seen in Figure 2.3. Once the key value drivers are identified (value drivers are the key aspects that create economic wealth for the key

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stakeholders, and can include profitability, quality service, training, etc), the key performance objectives and action plans are put in place.

According to Armstrong and Baron (2004), objectives (some organisations prefer to use “goals”) describe something to be accomplished by individuals, departments and organisations over a period of time. They can be expressed as targets to be met (such as sales) and tasks to be completed by specified dates. They can be work-related, referring to the results to be attained, or personal, taking the form of developmental objectives for individuals.

Armstrong and Baron (2004) further state that objectives need to be defined and agreed on. The objectives relate to the overall purpose of the job and define performance areas – all the aspects of the job that contribute to achieving its overall purpose. Targets then are set for each performance area.
Part of the planning phase includes the agreement on a formal development plan for the employees. Typically this plan should be based on requisite skills, behaviours and knowledge (key competencies) that will be required to achieve the objectives and targets set. The development plan can also include long-term developmental initiatives (usually based on potential and good performance).

2.7.2 Phase 2 – Managing Performance

Managing is the second component of the performance management cycle. This step distinguishes performance management as a process from performance appraisal as an activity (Schneier et al., 1987). According to Schneier et al. (1987:98), every employee is responsible for managing his or her own work performance. This involves: (1) maintaining a positive approach to work, (2) updating and revising initial
objectives, performance standards and job competency areas as conditions change, (3) requesting feedback from a supervisor, (4) providing feedback to a supervisor, (5) suggesting career development experiences, and (6) employees and supervisors working together, managing the performance management process.

Armstrong and Baron (2004) stress that at its best, performance management is a tool to ensure that managers manage effectively. This means (1) that they ensure the people or teams they manage know and understand what is expected of them, (2) have the skills and ability to deliver on these expectations, (3) are supported by the organisation to develop the capacity to meet these expectations are given feedback on their performance, and (4) have the opportunity to discuss and contribute to individual and team aims and objectives.

It is also about ensuring that managers themselves are aware of the impact of their own behaviour on the people they manage, and are encouraged to identify and exhibit positive behaviours (Armstrong and Baron, 2004). The actual performance is compared to the desired performance, therefore the outcome is evaluated and a development plan is set according to the weakness with reference to the strategy as seen in Figure 2.4. This also provides a feedback mechanism to employees.
Performance reviews can be regarded as learning events, in which individuals can be encouraged to think about how and in which ways they want to develop. This can lead to the drawing up of a personal development plan (PDP) setting out the actions they propose to take (with the help of others, not least their managers) to develop themselves. To keep development separate from performance and salary discussions, development reviews may be held at other times, for example, on the anniversary of joining an organisation (Teke, 2002).

Research by Ashford and Cummings (1983) demonstrates that feedback has strong positive effects on the performance of both individuals and groups, specifically through role clarification, improved self-efficacy, the establishment of behaviour reward contingencies and increased self-regulatory control processes (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). During the appraisal/review discussion, the manager needs to provide feedback without animosity, to praise as well as critique, confront the employee.
Coaching is an important tool in learning and development. Coaching is developing a person's skills and knowledge so that his or her job performance improves, leading to the achievement of organisational objectives. Coaching is increasingly being recognised as a significant responsibility of line managers, and can play an important part in a PDP. Coaching can take place during the review meetings, but also and more importantly, should be carried out throughout the year. For some managers, coaching comes naturally, but for many it may not, and training may be needed to improve their skills (Cunneen, 2006).

### 2.7.3 Phase 3 – Rewarding Performance

Training activities should ideally be based on performance gaps that are identified during the performance review phase (Teke, 2002). By linking training to identified performance gaps, training will be focused, specific and relevant. As such, performance data should be a major input source of the annual training needs analysis.

Teke (2002) suggests that relevant training/development interventions and regular performance feedback are important factors in skills retention. High achievers start to look elsewhere for opportunities if these are not present in their working environment. Therefore the training, development strategy and the performance management
process should be closely aligned with the overall retention strategy of the organisation. Increasing emphasis on talent management also means that many organisations are re-defining performance management to align it to the need to identify, nurture and retain talent (Teke, 2002). Development programmes are reflecting the needs of succession plans and seeking to foster leadership skills. However, too much of an emphasis on talent management may be damaging to overall development needs, and every effort needs to be made to ensure that development is inclusive, accessible and focused on developing organisational capability (Teke, 2002).

A commitment performance approach views employees as resources or assets, and values their voice. This practice contributes to enhancing the positive effects on employees’ attitudes of pay-for-performance (Huselid, 1995). The interaction effects of pay-for-performance and commitment performance appraisal can be understood best when: (1) employees are most likely to perceive that pay differences are made fairly when they are provided with information regarding the appraisal process, (2) employees are allowed to discuss the appraisal results, (3) and also when employees believe that objective criteria were used in the appraisal decision. Moreover, strategic HRM has identified the effect as a bundle effect, because it occurs because of its consistency (Huselid, 1995).

### 2.7.4 Performance Measures

Several studies have shown that the most successful companies focus on only a few critical measures, as seen in *Figure 2.5*. The literature also suggests that the
organisation will not have only one corporate scorecard for the company as a whole, but will also have separate scorecards for each division/employee that feeds into the overall scorecard (Huang & Hu, 2007:176).

*Figure 2.5: The Performance Measures*

Within the **financial perspective**, the organisation should find an effective way to measure the performance of management. This is generally in the form of some kind of profit measure. Drury (2004:843-844) suggests that a manager should not be evaluated by deducting fixed costs that are not under his or her control, because this could be viewed as unfair and can be demotivational. Financial performance measures that a company can use may include *shareholder value* (e.g. economic value added [EVA]), profitability and growth (e.g. sales volume growth, cost reduction, return on assets, return on equity and residual income), or liquidity and solvency (e.g.

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working capital ratio, debtors’ days, inventory turnover and ratio of debt to assets) (Horngren et al., 2006:393-397).

With regard to the **customer perspective**, an organisation should divide the whole population of potential customers into segments, and then choose only those key segments in which it wishes to compete. No organisation has the resources to serve all markets, and an organisation should focus only on those segments it can serve better than its competitors do (Rix, 2004:93). The most pertinent performance measures that a company could use for its customer perspective are market share, client acquisition and retention rate, client satisfaction, client profitability, time, price and quality (Kaplan & Norton, 1996:67).

The measures needed in the **internal business processes perspective** can be summarised in the company’s value chain. Of particular importance in the broadcast sector value chain is the ability to deliver seamless broadcast and which is on time (Lorentzen & Barnes, 2004:475), as well as the effective utilisation of new technology (Schlie & Yip, 2000:348). Another crucial activity in the motor manufacturing value chain is ensuring the quality of the content being broadcast (Lin & Lu, 2006). According to the internal business processes perspective, it is also necessary to measure productivity, where the ratio of output to input is calculated (Horngren et al., 2006:480).
Regarding the **learning and growth perspective**, Kaplan and Norton (1996:98) regard innovation as critical. Companies tend to focus too much on performance measures of their current operations and neglect to pay attention to measuring the effectiveness of their research and development (R&D) processes. This is especially important in the broadcast industry, which operates in an environment in which technological development plays a key role. Measures that can be used to quantify innovation may include pod casting and audio streaming to the Internet, and R&D expenditure or capital expenditure on infrastructure (Kaplan & Norton, 1996:98).

The other side of the learning and growth perspective revolves around the company’s workforce. The most common measures to use with regard to the workforce are workforce satisfaction, employee retention (or staff turnover), workforce productivity (e.g. the ratio of output per unit of labour input) and workforce capabilities (Jackson & Schuler, 2003:257). The latter aspect can, for example, be measured by the strategic work coverage ratio, that is, the ratio of the number of workers who are qualified at a specific level relative to the company’s organisational needs (Kaplan & Norton, 1996:133). Motivation and empowerment also play a key role in building workforce capabilities. These can be measured by, say, the number of suggestions made by employees (engineers and journalists), and as a complementary measure, the number of suggestions implemented (Kaplan & Norton, 1996:136-137). Information system capability can be measured, for example, by the strategic information coverage ratio – the ratio of the company’s current access to information relative to strategic needs (Kaplan & Norton, 1996:136).
2.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter the theoretical perspective of performance management systems, appraisal and related components of performance management were outlined. Performance management was defined. A detailed theory was examined on the components such as performance appraisal, performance management cycles, benefits, training and incentives. The aim of discussing the theory was to lay a foundation and examine available performance management format studies and the related available theory to frame the current research.

Creswell (1998:10) indicates that the decision regarding a theoretical perspective to frame the study is taken based on the goal of the research and the strategy of enquiry. The following chapter will focus on the research methodology as well as the approach used for designing the qualitative questions used during the research.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 Introduction

According to Creswell (1994), “research method” refers to the rationale and the philosophical assumptions that underlie a particular study relative to the scientific method, and is directly connected to the problem statement and goal of the research. Research is a purposeful, precise and systematic search for new knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, or for the re-interpretation of existing knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (Creswell, 1994).

In this chapter, the sampling procedures and the research demarcation are discussed. The advantages and disadvantages as well as the recruitment procedure for the focus groups teams are discussed, followed by a justification for selecting this particular approach from among possible alternatives. The research instrument which was designed is attached as an addendum.

3.1.2 The Research Paradigm

According to Collis and Hussey (2003:46), the term “paradigm” refers to the progress of scientific practice based on people’s philosophies and assumptions about the world and the nature of knowledge; in this context, it is about how research should be conducted. Collis and Hussey (2003:46) identify two main research paradigms, namely the positivistic paradigm and the phenomenological paradigm. Creswell (1994)
refers to the positivistic paradigm as quantitative and the phenomenological paradigm as qualitative.

The positivistic approach attempts to explain the facts or cause of social phenomena by establishing a relation between variables, which are information converted into numbers, with little regard to the subjective state of the individual. It also involves testing a hypothesis. A hypothesis is stated in mathematical/statistical terms that make it possible to calculate the probability of possible samples assuming that the hypothesis is correct. Then a test statistic is chosen that summarises the information in the sample and is relevant to the hypothesis. A null hypothesis is a hypothesis that is presumed true until a hypothesis test indicates otherwise.

The phenomenological paradigm is concerned with understanding human behaviour from participants’ own frame of reference. This paradigm pays considerable attention to the subjective state of the individual. Qualitative researchers typically rely on four methods for gathering information: (1) participation in the setting, (2) direct observation, (3) in-depth interviews, and (4) analysis of documents and materials (Marshall et al., 1998). Qualitative researchers may use different approaches, such as the grounded theory practice, narratory, storytelling, classical ethnography, or shadowing (Marshall et al., 1998).

De Vos (2002:291) and Creswell (1997:17) assert that the nature of the research question determines the type of methodology to be used. This study was concerned

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with exploration and descriptions. This inquiry proposed to answer “what” and “how” questions, which, according to Creswell (1997:17), is typical in qualitative research. The phenomenological paradigm was pursued in this study and because it used qualitative research, certain design limitations existed, particularly with the concern of validity and interpretation of research findings. Internal validity threats in qualitative research are theoretical, interpretive, and descriptive in nature (Creswell, 1994). External threats to validity are comprised primarily of issues of generalisability (Creswell, 1994).

Theoretical threats to validity occur when the researcher does not address contradictory evidence or does not explore alternative interpretations of situations or events (Maxwell, 1996). Remaining open and receptive to issues that the participant chooses to address gives the qualitative researcher the opportunity to obtain information that may be contrary to held assumptions or that may provide negative evidence of held assumptions (Bogdan & Biklen, 1990). Peer debriefing provides an additional method for establishing validity (Creswell, 1994).

Threats to interpretation validity can occur as a result of the researcher’s own biases and beliefs if the researcher attaches his or her own words and meanings to the interviews and observations (Maxwell, 1996). Maxwell (1996:91) states that while there are no specific methods in qualitative research assuring that the researcher has correctly interpreted events and observations, triangulation provides a means for enhancing the validity of the findings. Triangulation is accomplished through the use of

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different methods of data collection such as member checks and the use of technical literature. Member checks are used to obtain feedback from research participants regarding the accuracy of emerging themes and categories, enhancing the validity of the decisions made by the researcher (Creswell, 1994).

The primary threat to description validity is an inaccurate representation of what the researcher heard or saw from a research participant (Maxwell, 1996). Qualitative design methods of audio-taping interviews and taking detailed, concrete, and chronological field notes during the interview process serve to enhance description validity (Maxwell, 1996). Member checks provide an additional method of ensuring description validity (Creswell, 1994).

The purpose of the present qualitative research was neither to remove the researcher from the research nor to conduct sterile research, but rather to garner an understanding of how the researcher fitted into the data collection, analysis, and interpretation of the research, using such awareness effectively. Qualitative researchers acknowledge that there is no value-free or bias-free design in any type of research (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:212). Furthermore, attempting to minimise the effect of the researcher on the interview process is not considered to be a meaningful goal in qualitative research (Maxwell, 1996:91). The most important goal is to understand how the researcher may be influencing the participant during the interview process, and how such influence may affect the validity of the research findings (Maxwell, 1996:91).
Asking open-ended, non-leading questions will serve to reduce undue influence of the researcher's perspective on the participant's response (Maxwell, 1996:91).

External threats to validity involve generalisability of research results to similar situations and subjects (Creswell, 1994). Although qualitative research is not intended to provide research results that can be generalised to other situations or subjects (Creswell, 1994), this does not mean that qualitative research results are never generalisable beyond the study (Maxwell, 1996:97). Qualitative studies have face generalisability, and are generally conducted with a focus on the development of a theory that will be applicable to future situations (Maxwell, 1996:97).

3.1.3 Sample Design

This study was based on convenience sampling, which is a non-probability group. According to Chisnall (1995), sampling methodology is the foundation of an effective research design. Basically, a sample is a microcosm of the population or universe from which it is drawn, and can only be accepted as accurate within certain limits (Lloyd, 1988). According to Collis and Hussey (2003:155), a sample is made up of some of the members of a population. A sample frame is a list of the population from which all the sampling units are drawn (Vogt, 1993:202). According to Hill et al. (1999), there are two main types of samples, namely a Probability and a Non-probability sample.

Probability samples, also referred to as random samples, are different from non-probability samples in that the entire number of respondents from whom the
probability sample will be drawn is known in advance. Because of this, the chance of each element to be selected can be calculated. This essential difference makes it possible to calculate the sampling error of a probability sample in showing the population parameter. With non-probability samples, there is no way of determining exactly the chance of selecting any particular element; therefore it is not possible to calculate the sampling error (Kress, 1982: 182).

Probability samples are divided into the following categories: *simple random sampling* is a sample type where each element has a known and equal chance of selection; *systematic sampling* is a sample type where every ‘K\textsuperscript{th}’ element of population is sampled, beginning with a random start and then skipping the following samples to K\textsuperscript{th} element; *stratified sampling* is a sample type where the entire population is partitioned into subpopulations and elements are selected separately from each group or stratum in a systematic or simple random method; *cluster sampling* is a sample type where the population gets divided into groups then the group/s is/are randomly selected for study; *double sampling*, also called sequential or multiphase sampling, is a sample type where a researcher collects information by sample then uses this information as a basis for selecting a sub-sample for further study (Patton,1990:169-186).

Non-probability sampling is divided into the following categories: *convenience sampling* is a sample type where respondent participation is voluntary or where the interviewer selects sampling units, that is, whomever he or she finds; *Judgemental sampling* is a type of sampling where respondents are chosen by an "expert" who
provides a list of respondents who he feels will form a representative sample; *Quota sampling* is a sampling method where specific numbers of respondents are chosen who possess certain characteristics known or presumed to affect the subject of the research study. Finally, *snowball sampling* is a type of judgement sample used for small specialised target populations where each respondent is asked to provide the names of other respondents who will qualify for the sample (Patton, 1990:169-186).

### 3.1.4 Demarcation

This study was confined to the employees of the SABC Port Elizabeth region only, and was based on convenience sampling, which is a non-probability group. This is the simplest form of non-probability sample. It is quite quick, easy and cheap, but is equally as representative as other sampling types. This is the method of choosing items from the frame arbitrarily and in an unstructured manner. Though almost impossible to treat rigorously, it is the method most commonly employed in many practical situations (Hill et al., 1999).

The researcher selected 45 participants of 5 groups for the focus groups. One group consisted of managers and supervisors and the other four groups were employees from four different business units. This selection was an attempt to get as many different points of view as possible within the SABC Port Elizabeth region. Confidentiality was guaranteed. Royse (1991:240-243) lists a few of the following ethical guidelines that the researcher fully adhered to:

- All subjects involved in the research should be volunteers.
- No volunteers should be compensated for participation in the study.

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- Participants can withdraw at any time if they so wish.
- All literature sources of information are and should be acknowledged.

3.1.5 Research Instrument and Data Collection Method

3.1.5.1 Constructing a Questionnaire

The qualitative questions based on the themes identified within the research question were prepared to assist in formulating the structure questions to be used as a research instrument. The structured questions were used in the focus group discussions and enabled the researcher to steer the discussion in the focus group when gathering information. The structure questions are attached as an addendum, as seen in Appendix A – (structured focus group questions).

3.1.5.2 Conducting a Focus Group

The researcher used focus group interviews as a measuring instrument and for data collection. Krueger (1994:10-11) defines a focus group as a carefully planned gathering designed to obtain perceptions on a defined topic of interest, and a research technique that collects data through group discussions. Careful planning with respect to participants, the environment and questions to be asked are the key issues to conducting effective focus groups. Webb and Kevern (2001:798) also indicate that the principal justification for using focus groups is to “capitalize on interaction within the group to elicit rich experiential data”. The researcher, as an employee of the organisation, stimulated group communication on the relevant themes.
Kitzinger (1995: 299) writes as follows in this regard: “The idea behind the focus group method is that group processes can help people to explore and clarify their views in ways that would be less easily accessible in a one to one interview. When group dynamics work well the participants work alongside the researcher, taking the research into new and often unexpected directions”.

De Vos et al. (1998:316-320) recommend the process given below for focus group interviewing.

3.1.5.3 Selection and Recruitment of Participants

This is listed as the most overlooked and underestimated aspect of focus group interviews. De Vos et al. (1998:317) note that the selection of the focus group participants will depend largely on the purpose of the study. Therefore purposeful sampling was used. To be more specific, this could be called availability sampling.

3.1.5.4 The size of the Focus Group

Traditionally a focus group ranges from 6 to 12 participants. De Vos et al. (1998:317) suggest that the ideal size is between 6 and 9 participants. Krueger (1994:23) cites smaller groups as being popular because they are easier to recruit and host, but they concede that their small size limits the range of experiences available. Therefore 45 participants of 9 groups for the focus groups were selected and recruited. One group consisted of managers and supervisors, and the other four groups were employees from four different business units. This arrangement was an attempt to get as many
different points of view as possible. Each group had a moderator, or researcher’s assistant.

3.1.5.5 Ensuring Attendance of the Focus Group

Permission was requested from the relevant line managers, and the venue was secured inside participants’ workplace for their convenience. However, getting individuals together for the focus groups was time consuming. De Vos et al. (1998:317) recommend that incentives such as snacks, free transportation or payment of participants be used to secure attendance. Snacks were chosen as an incentive. The focus groups were recorded on a digital recorder and analysed later by the researcher; the group members were informed beforehand about the recording.

3.1.5.6 The Role of a Moderator

Moderators play a key role in the success of focus groups. Their role was to keep discussions flowing and on track, to guide discussions back from irrelevant topics, and to make transitions into other questions; they needed to be sensitive to the mood of the group (Krueger, 1988). A moderator acted as the researcher’s assistant and took comprehensive notes, operated the tape recorder, handled environmental conditions, and responded to unexpected interruptions, for example latecomers. The data was collected on a tape-machine recorder for later analysis.

3.2 CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this chapter the research methodology and approach as well as the designing of the structured qualitative questions of the research were outlined. The phenomenological

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paradigm was pursued because this study was interested in exploration and descriptions. The sample was chosen with a clear demarcation.

The structured questions based on the themes identified in the research question were prepared to assist in formulating the research instrument, and the relevant data collection methods were also outlined. The following chapter will focus on the presentation of the research findings from the conducted focus group interviews in a narrative style.
CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of this chapter is to present and analyse the findings of the study. As discussed in the previous chapter, the method of data collection used was focus group interviews, where direct questions on the employees’ understanding and experiences of the previous SABC performance management system, appraisal and process for implementation were posed. It must be emphasised that the understanding of both the groups interviewed was largely based on and related to their experience and history in the organisation.

4.2 DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The concepts “understanding”, “perceptions” and “experiences” are interrelated, and present some difficulty in being separated in the discussion. “Perception” reflects people’s experience of reality and might influence the participants’ “understanding” of the performance management system, as well as their “appraisal” as most of them might lack formal exposure to the subject of performance management. However, the data-analysis yielded themes that could be categorised according to the headings.

The discussion of the findings of the focus group discussion are clustered into categories and sub-categories based on the four broad themes. The four main categories are outlined in bullet points below:

- Developing a Performance Management System
• Understanding of performance management system
  The discussion in this category of the findings focused on what the participants cognitively, thought and knew about performance management from the development stage to the implementation stage.

• Experiences and observation of previous performance management systems
  The findings reflected how the participants qualitatively evaluated the effectiveness of the process they had been exposed to, as opposed to their ideal system. This category further looked at the transparency of the process.

• Management /Supervisor and employee attitudes and also competency impacting on the performance management system
  For the purpose of this study, “attitude” indicates that the experiences, feelings, beliefs and understandings of performance management created a mental state which became apparent in behaviour and responses to the topic. This category also looked at the competency of the managers and supervisors regarding the topic.

• Envisaged performance management system
  The discussion in this category of the findings focused on the format and possible system content from the participants’ point of view. This category looked specifically at the components of the envisaged performance management system.
The responses to the bullet points above are now discussed below and are grouped into four categories with the relevant sub-categories.

### 4.2.1 Understanding of the Performance Management System

The participants’ reflection on their understanding of the performance management and appraisal related to previous practice, where the performance management system was part of the overall corporate management structure of the organisation. However, most staff perceived it as just a tool and a procedural activity to satisfy the line managers. The groups concurred that the previous performance management systems in the organisation were not adding any value to their lives; further they stated that there was no reward in place for high performers and no action taken to assist non-performers. The group stated that the agreed development or identified courses during performance management were not implemented by the training department year after year, thereby making the exercise a non-value-adding activity.

As for the newly proposed performance management system, the union members felt there was not enough consultation with their representatives, and therefore they did not want anything to do with it; this was the cause of a deadlock on the implementation of this new proposed system. Bourne et al. (2003) state that setting up a good performance management system does not happen overnight or by accident. Its design needs to be carefully considered, and how it will work should be carefully planned before managers begin using it to evaluate employees. Furthermore a performance management system should provide employees with at least these four

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basic benefits: (1) a clear understanding of job expectations, (2) regular feedback about performance, (3) advice and steps for improving performance, and (4) rewards for good performance or else a corrective mechanism.

The managers’ focus group agreed that the goal of a performance management system is to help boost employee performance and, ultimately, the productivity of the business. Participants stated that for it to be effective, a performance management system should incorporate updated job descriptions, performance measures and standards, evaluator training and guidelines for improvement, employee input and compensation and rewards.

4.2.2 Experiences and Observation

4.2.2.1 The Effectiveness of the Previous System

Organisations are profoundly influenced by their past experience with performance management and related initiatives. Opaque rationales and erratic implementation of performance assessment schemes in the past tend to create scepticism about the effectiveness and motivation of performance management today (DeNisi, 1996).

Some employee focus groups stated their concerns and scepticism around the fact that the previous performance management system in the SABC was only implemented from middle manager down, with a different performance management system for General Managers of the business units and top management. The employees agreed that the system needed to extend consistently throughout the
organisation from the senior leadership team, with support from all line managers. The managers’ focus group went further to state on this point that the key was to ensure that senior and middle managers should see themselves as part of a leadership team, accept their management roles and responsibilities, and be equipped to carry them out.

The groups agreed in expressing concern about the fact that it had been a norm in the SABC, looking at the previously used performance management system, that the system was not linked to career progression, and it was used to manage productivity without offering value to the performer, which in a long run led to staff resentment of the process. Therefore a complete performance cycle as drawn according to Schneier et al. (1987:98) as in Figure 2.1 in this study, would be welcomed and supported by most of the focus groups. Those employees who had fewer years of experience might not have had an opinion or understanding, but contributed very well to the discussion. The researcher’s skill and understanding of the organisation had to be used to ensure that all opinions of old and newer staff members were represented.

4.2.2.2 The Process Transparency

In order to ensure that distrust of the system was minimised, employees proposed that the process of evaluation should be transparent. Some comments from the focus groups about the transparency of the system follow.

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“The review process is also not very open. It’s this closed up thing that gives rise to bickering and one saying that, that person is not such a good performer. And the way it is done sometimes leaves so many questions.”

“Boundaries get shifted all the time; it depends on the person for whom they need to shift the boundaries. Especially if your perception is that that person is the boss’s favourite.”

These comments from the employees’ focus group reflect the lack of confidence they had in the system but are largely based on their understanding of the previous performance management system. They conceded that they did not fully understand it, which makes for unnecessary tension amongst staff. The absence of clearly defined communication of the process and the perceived shifting of boundaries for some and not others are some of the signs that support their notion of a process that lacks lucidity.

De Cenzo et al. (1996: 325) reflect that emotions in evaluation often affect employee satisfaction with the evaluation process. In evaluating performance, emotions may arise and if these emotions are not dealt with correctly, it may lead to greater conflict, often perceived by employees as favouritism.
4.2.3 Attitude and Competency

4.2.3.1 Manager/Supervisors’ and Employees’ Attitudes

“Attitude”, for the purpose of this study, refers to a complex mental state involving beliefs, feelings, values and dispositions to act in a certain way (www.cogsci.princeton.edu/cgi-bin.webwn). Therefore, experiences, feelings and beliefs/understandings about a performance management system influence a mental state which becomes apparent in behaviour and responses.

Coffey and Atkinson (1996:83) indicate that we analyse not only content, but also “meaning and metaphor”. These authors imply that it is not just about, “what is said”, but also “how it was said”. Themes reported here are categorised as attitudes in that it is often perceived behaviour and inferences drawn from contributions rather than explicit commentary. In the focus group discussions, much of this information also emerged from group interaction and dynamics. The researcher observed that, although interaction between participants in all focus groups was free and open, some participants were overbearing, and appeared to want to dominate discussions. This was not questioned by the other participants, and the inference can be drawn that many participants preferred to follow the lead of the more vocal individuals.

Within the employee groups there was more openness of expression, even in inappropriate language, as the atmosphere was relaxed and casual. It almost seemed to be a relief to finally share their opinion on this important process in their

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professional lives. On the other hand, the atmosphere in the managers group was stiff and almost stifling. They indicated that they felt inhibited by the recorder. In addition, their focus group session was held after those of the staff, and they felt exposed.

The employees expressed an attitude of distrust and scepticism towards the performance management system currently proposed by HCS, because they felt that their union councils had not been properly consulted by the HR department. They felt that this behaviour needed to change if management expected a full buy-in from them.

As for the attitude of the employees towards the system, all of the focus groups felt the performance management system was needed, but that it should include the components of planning (involving staff with proper union consultation), fair monitoring and rewarding high performers and correcting of low performers, as stated in the theoretical sample of a performance management system.

4.2.3.2 Manager/Supervisor Competency

Swanepoel (2003:379) states that the two conflicting purposes also force managers into conflicting roles in performance management and appraisal, serving simultaneously as both judge and counsellor.

The view from a number of employees’ focus groups is summarised as follows; “I do not think that the supervisors have enough skills or training to evaluate us. They are
supervisors based on years of experience and they require training in actual managerial skills.”

The managers’ group’s view is summarised as follows; “There is a lot of training to get through, and we have not been trained on how to do performance management, appraisal, time management, that is the problem.”

Despite the fact that the interviews were the responsibility of line management, all focus groups agreed that it should be the HR practitioner’s job to ensure the effectiveness of a performance management system, by training supervisors how to plan and conduct the processes properly.

4.2.4 Components of the Expected System

The analysis of past experience and the researcher’s theoretical proposed performance management system shed light on the envisaged performance management system.

From the employees’ focus group viewpoint, the purpose of performance management is summarised in four-fold as follows: (1) “Tell me what you want me to do, (2) Tell me how well I have done it, (3) Help me improve my performance, and (4) Reward me for doing well.” Locke et al. (1981) concur, and state that numerous studies have shown that goal-setting is an important element in employee motivation. Goals can stimulate employee effort, focus attention, increase persistence, and encourage employees to find new and better ways to work.

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The managers’ focus group viewpoint was that “the overall goal of any good performance management plan is to ensure the employees’ activities (the tasks they perform and how well they perform them) support the goals of the organization while maintaining a motivated and happy workforce.”

From the above-mentioned input it was concluded that the revised performance management system should have a stronger emphasis on proper planning, managing, monitoring, reporting, and reward high performance and/or correction of low performance.

4.2.5 Conclusion on the Discussions

The conclusion that can be drawn from all focus groups is that the previous performance management system used by the SABC was on track with clear objectives, and was largely integrated with the department’s planning process, primarily through the use of divisional planning objectives as a basis for employee performance agreements. However, the general findings were qualified by the need to address several key issues, and to make some improvements to the process. As a result it was also concluded that the revised performance management system should have a stronger emphasis on effective managing, monitoring, reporting, and rewarding high performance and correcting low performance respectively.
4.3 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS

The analysed data compiled from the focus group discussions was discussed with reference to three major categories and related sub-categories. The categories were: understanding of the performance management system; experiences and observation of previous performance management system/s; and attitudes reflected during the study and towards the subject of performance management.

Findings were discussed in narrative style, and sub-categories were contextualised within the framework of relevant literature and supported by quotations from the original transcriptions. In the first category the understanding of performance management system by employees and their managers was described. These were categorised into the sub-categories development, effectiveness, transparency and the implementation of the previous SABC performance management system, as well as the manager/supervisors’ and employees’ attitudes towards the system.

- The employees’ understanding of the previous performance management system was that it was just a tool and procedural activity with no value adding and no link to rewards. However, the managers/supervisors understood the importance to employees of a performance management system, and saw value in doing the exercise.

- The lack of management consultation with the union council was found to be another factor which led to scepticism among employees.

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• The managers/supervisors’ and employees’ attitudes and general reaction to the previous SABC performance management systems process were not clearly defined although the objectives were clear. The focus group contributions recommended a defined step-by-step clear performance management system process with integration of all the relevant components of an acceptable performance management system.

• As regards the effectiveness of the system, the process transparency and the manager/supervisor competence, from the data collected it would appear that the previous performance management system was poorly managed and not motivating to staff members. Lack of manager/supervisor training was also pointed out as a demoralising factor.

• This category also attempted to cover the challenges faced during the review process, with recommendations by participants for more transparency and clear communication. The relevant literature was referred to during the discussion.

• The final category dealt with an envisaged performance management system, using a theoretical performance management system as a proposed copy during the focus group interviews. This sub-category reflected the attempts by employees and managers to recommend a performance management system that would fill the gaps of rewarding high performance and correcting low performance respectively.

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In conclusion, the managers and employees showed a clear understanding of performance management systems and proposed some improvements and addition of other key performance management issues like rewarding excellent performance and improving relationship management during reviews. The conclusion was that a revised performance management system should have a stronger emphasis on effective management, monitoring, reporting and reward for high performance and correcting low performance.
CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Rheem (1996) suggests that companies which utilise performance management systems can strategically perform more effectively, in financial terms, than those firms which invest less in this Human Resource management system (Rheem, 1996).

In Chapter 1 an outline was given of the qualitative research process used to explore the research problem. Chapter 2 described the relevant literature in order to frame and provide a backdrop to the study. Chapter 3 focused on the research methodology of the study. Chapter 4 focused exclusively on the findings of the study, and the supporting relevant literature.

The aim of this chapter (Chapter 5) is as follows: (1) to summarise the discussion on research methodology and the subsequent findings of the study, (2) to draw conclusions from the findings, and (3) to make relevant recommendations based on the findings.
5.2 DISCUSSION ON THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

5.2.1 Summary of the Research Methodology

The research design was based on De Vos (2002) and Creswell’s (1997) assertion that the nature of the research question determines the type of methodology to be used. This study was interested in exploration and descriptions. The research proposed to answer “what” and “how” questions which, according to Creswell (1997:17), is typical of qualitative research.

The research problem, on which the research was based, was formulated and defined as:

“How can failures in the implementation of the previous performance management system at the SABC be rectified by the introduction of a new system?”

This study was confined to the employees of the SABC Port Elizabeth region only, and was based on convenience sampling. The method of data collection was focus group interviews. The researcher selected 45 participants of 5 groups for the focus groups. One group consisted of managers and supervisors and the other four groups comprised employees from four different business units in an attempt to get as many and different viewpoints as possible. Group discussions were used throughout, with a focus on basic themes. The focus group interviews were audio-taped and transcribed verbatim in some instances. Guidelines for data analysis by Creswell (1997) were

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used. A moderator was also used, who acted as research assistant and took comprehensive notes, operated the tape-recorder, dealt with environmental conditions, and handled unexpected interruptions such as latecomers.

Categories that emerged from the data analysis were subjected to literature control. Lastly, data verification was performed, based on the model by Lincoln and Guba in Creswell, 1997, using the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability.

5.2.2 Conclusion on the Discussions

This conclusion is based solely on the research methodology:

**Focus group participants:** Participants contributed to the structured nature of the research process and were helpful participants. The researcher chose to interview 45 participants in 5 groups for the focus group samples. One group consisted of managers and supervisors and the other four groups were employees from four different business units in an attempt to get as many and different viewpoints as possible.

**Focus group interviews:** This method of data collection proved very suitable because the employees and their managers had very busy schedules. It also gave participants an opportunity to react to one another’s comments, resulting in rich data being collected. The interviews were conducted at the site, and no time was wasted in travel and search for locations.

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Research design: No technical hitches were presented by the research design, which suited the qualitative nature of the study. All participants and the researcher were comfortable with the research design.

Audio-taping: As mentioned, all focus group interviews were recorded. The staff group had no qualms about this, but the managers'/supervisors' group were initially self-conscious and indicated that they felt inhibited by the recorder. The researcher found the use of the audio-tape invaluable in collecting accurate information on a highly subjective topic.

Guidelines for data analysis: The guidelines for data analysis recommended by Creswell (1998) were applied in this study. These guidelines proved to be very practical and pliable.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS ON THE FINDINGS

This chapter draws conclusions on the findings. However, in Chapter 4 an extensive discussion of the findings has been given and summarised. Reference was made to the main categories and sub-categories which were followed during data analysis. The findings were discussed in narrative form, and each category and sub-category was highlighted by appropriate quotations from the transcripts and then compared with relevant literature and available research.

Four main categories of findings with related sub-categories are summarised below.
5.3.1 Understanding of Performance Management System

The participants reflected a fair understanding of the previous SABC performance management and appraisal system. It was stated and can be concluded that for a performance management system to be effective, it should incorporate updated job descriptions, performance measures and standards, evaluator training and guidelines for improvement, employee input, and compensation and rewards.

However, Kohn (1995:4) cautions against a performance management system where rewards play a big role, as it does not produce lasting change in attitudes. Competition can also destroy cooperation and relationships between supervisors and subordinates.

5.3.2 Experiences and Observation

5.3.2.1 The Effectiveness of the Previous System

A concern was expressed that the SABC’s previously used performance management system was not linked to career progression and did not offer reward to high performers. Therefore a complete performance cycle, as drawn according to Schneier et al. (1987:98) as in Figure 2.1 in this study, was proposed and supported by most of the focus groups.

5.3.2.2 The Process Transparency

The findings observed were that the absence of clearly defined communication of the performance management process and the perceived shifting of boundaries for some employees but not others, were areas of concern for participants.

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De Cenzo et al. (1996: 325) caution that emotions in performance process evaluation often affect employee satisfaction with the evaluation process. Emotions may arise, and if they are not dealt with correctly, this may lead to greater conflict, often perceived by employees as favouritism. In order to ensure that distrust of the system was minimised, participants proposed that the process of evaluation should be transparent.

5.3.3 Attitude and Competency

5.3.3.1 Manager/Supervisors’ and Employees’ Attitudes

The findings concluded that in the employee groups there was openness of expression, even in inappropriate language, as the atmosphere was relaxed and casual. On the other hand, the atmosphere in the manager group was stiff and almost stifling.

As for the attitude of the participants towards the system, all of the focus groups felt that a performance management system was needed, but should include the components of planning (involving staff with proper union consultations), fair monitoring, rewarding high performers and correcting low performers.
5.3.3.2 Manager/Supervisor Competency

The findings were that all focus groups agreed that HR practitioners should assist to ensure the effectiveness of the process by training supervisors how to plan and conduct performance management properly.

5.3.4 Components of the Expected System

The findings concluded that a revised performance management system should close the missing gaps and have a stronger emphasis on proper managing, monitoring and reporting, as well as rewarding or correcting high or low performance respectively. According to Schneier et al. (1987:98), a performance management system is classified into a development, planning, managing, reviewing and rewarding phase as seen in Figure 2.2.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the research findings and the literary contextualisation of the findings, the following recommendations can be made.

5.4.1 Summary of the Recommendations

- The SABC needs to establish clear organisational objectives which will contain clear criteria and standards of expected performance from all business units and each employee.

- The performance management tool should be negotiated and agreed with the union councils and management. The performance measures or key

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performance indicators should be agreed upfront with all employees, irrespective of their level in the organisation.

- Flowing from the previous recommendation, it is recommended that only one performance management system should be implemented across the organisation.

- The SABC needs to develop a performance management system comprising planning, managing, reviewing and rewarding stages. A system of ongoing performance feedback, both formative and summative, should be implemented.

- It is recommended that discussion about performance management be improved and should happen regularly for reasons of transparency, so as to restore a culture of trust in the organisation.

- The SABC needs to train all managers and supervisors how to use the performance management process effectively so as to improve employees’ performance, not for punitive measures.

- In respect of this recommendation, the management team should resume training about how performance information can and should be used: how to interpret the data, how to analyse the results, how to develop action plans, how

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to monitor and evaluate actions, and how to use performance information visibly for employee development.

- It is recommended that the performance management system be linked to other HRM practices like career progression and employee development.

- It is recommended that a quantitative study be conducted on the impact that a performance reward might have on the organisation.

- It is recommended that a more comprehensive exploratory study should be undertaken organisation-wide, for developing a more comprehensive performance management system.

5.4.2 Integrated Model for Conducting Performance Management

According to Schneier et al. (1987:98), a performance management system is classified into a development, planning, managing, reviewing and rewarding phase. The findings concluded that the revised performance management system should be inclusive and close the previous gaps by having a strong emphasis on effective management, monitoring, reporting and reward. Therefore it is recommended that the SABC develop a performance management system similar to Figure 5.1 and inclusive of all relevant stakeholders.

Phase 1: to focus on the development and planning of the system which involves the development plan, setting objectives, consultation and getting buy-in from all
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stakeholders. According to Schneier et al. (1987), this will help to encourage commitment and understanding by linking the employee’s work with the organisation’s goals and objectives.

**Phase 2**: to focus on managing and reviewing the employees’ performances, that is, making assessments against objectives, feedback and coaching.

**Phase 3**: to focus on linking performance to a suitable reward, personal development and/or corrective measures. Griffin (1987:208) states that pay should be contingent on performance, so that improved performance leads to higher pay. When pay is not directly related to performance, it is possible that employees will discount the performance management process.

*Figure 5.1: The Performance Management System Phases*

A well-designed performance management process flow chart as seen in *Figure 5.2*, is therefore recommended for the SABC, to address the problem of gaps in rewarding

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high performance and correcting low performance respectively, and for a step-by-step, clear process. The performance management process as seen in the Figure 5.2 chart, should be as follows:

- A performance management agreement should be accepted by management and employees respectively. The objective and the expectations should be clearly indicated, with agreement about the support, training and development which will assist employees in improving performance.

- A routine supervisor assessment should be conducted, which entails a review of achievement against objectives, including necessary realignment to take account of changing circumstances.

- A full review and appraisal should take place, to identify successes and areas of improvement arising from retrospective discussion of performance against objectives.

- Following the full review the actual performance should be compared to the desired performance and therefore the outcome be evaluated with high performance being rewarded and low performance corrected.

- Relevant training/development interventions and regular performance feedback are important factors for low-performance corrective measures.

- If a performance corrective measure is not effective, then a full incapacity management process should be followed, to consider the matter case-by-case.
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Performance Management Agreement

Supervisor/Manager – Communicate/Discusses Expectations with employee

Supervisor/Manager – Assess employee

Employee meets expectations

YES

Evaluation

Identifying Rewards

NO

Performance Improvement Process

Discussion

Problem not corrected

Problem corrected

Positive Discipline

Monitor & Follow-up with appropriate actions

Corrected

Disciplinary action

*Understanding & acceptance of expectations
*Desired vs. Actual
*Examples of issues are discussed

*medical boarding
*Transfers/demotion
*Case by case

Source: Adapted from Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Figure 5.2: The Performance Management Process Flowchart
5.5 CONCLUSIONS ON THE RESEARCH

The aim of this study was to explore and find the ideal performance management system suitable for the South African Broadcasting Corporation by understanding employees’ experiences and perceptions of the previous performance management systems and their value to SABC employees. The aim was also to identify performance standards as perceived by employees.

The available literature on performance management was examined to assisting in framing the research. Performance management theory reminded one that being busy was not the same as producing tangible results. It also reminded one that training, strong commitment and lots of hard work alone did not guarantee results; only clear, measurable objectives, continuous feedback, full performance review and appraisal produce results (with high performers being rewarded and non-performance corrected).

It would appear that the biggest problem that led to the failure in the implementation of the previous performance management at the SABC were lack of buy-in by employees. The employees perceived the previous performance management as a procedural activity with no value-adding, no transparency, unclear performance processes and no link to rewards.
Organisational effectiveness is measured in many different ways; two broad outcomes are financial success and employee growth and satisfaction (Meyer & Gupta, 1994). Employees spend much of their lives at work in organisations; their satisfaction and happiness is important not only for the employees themselves but also for the organisations where they work. Poor working conditions or unfair employee practices lead to a high turnover, job alienation, sabotage, tardiness, and absenteeism, all of which contribute to poor morale, which in turn leads to lower productivity, quality problems and reduced sales. Consequently, the challenge for good managers is to maintain a well-motivated workforce. From the research it can be concluded that an effective performance management system is one of the solutions to motivating a workforce. From the focus group there is sufficient factual evidence to support the conclusion that the proposed performance management system would yield the desired results.

Based on the findings of this study, further research is advisable to provide an organisation-wide exploratory study, to develop a more comprehensive performance management system. It should incorporate updated job descriptions, performance measures and standards, development training, and guidelines for improvement and reward achievements.
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APPENDIX A – STRUCTURED FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

*Interview Questions (IQ):*

IQ1] *What do you understand by the term performance management?*

IQ2] *What do you understand by the term performance appraisal?*

IQ3] *Please describe, in detail, your experiences of the SABC previous performance management system.*

IQ3.1] The method used in developing the system
IQ3.2] The effectiveness of the system
IQ3.3] The implementation of the system within the organization
IQ3.4] The induction of staff and/or training on the system

IQ4] *Please describe, in detail, your understanding of the SABC previous performance management process.*

IQ4.1] The link with rewards
IQ4.2] The link with development
IQ4.3] The review process

IQ5] *Please describe your observation of the previous performance management system.*

IQ5.1] Process transparency
IQ5.2] Manager/supervisor competency

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IQ5.3] The set criteria
IQ5.4] Employees’ attitude toward the performance management
IQ5.5] Manager/supervisors’ attitude toward the performance management

IQ6] Please describe your suggestions/inputs for your envisage performance management system.
IQ6.1] With reference to the development of the system
IQ6.2] With reference to the planning of the system
IQ6.3] With reference to monitoring of the system
IQ6.4] With reference to the review of the system
IQ6.5] With reference to the rewards of the system