Westinghouse reinvigorates focus on performance planning: Salary.com solution delivers ability to drive employee performance and development.

After nearly 15 years of downsizing, the nuclear power plant industry is now seeing a stronger future. At Westinghouse, the changing business environment is requiring a sharper focus on recruitment and retention in order to support corporate growth. One of the company’s most valuable assets is the knowledge of their people and as younger individuals enter the nuclear renaissance at Westinghouse, transfer of industry knowledge from veteran workers is critical for continued organizational success.

Charged with developing a highly skilled, outstanding workforce and wanting to drive knowledge transfer from more experienced engineers to less experienced employees, Westinghouse began taking a more strategic approach to performance management. Replacing manual processes with TalentManager®, a solution from Salary.com, the organization is strengthening its pay-for-performance culture where employee goals are strongly aligned with business objectives.

Westinghouse Electric Company is the world’s pioneering nuclear power company and provides fuel, services, technology, plant design, and equipment to utility and industrial customers in the worldwide commercial nuclear electric power industry. Nearly 50 percent of the nuclear power plants in operation worldwide, and nearly 60 percent in the United States, are based on Westinghouse technology. Worldwide, nearly 8,500 employees of Westinghouse Electric Company support the organization’s mission of delivering value-added engineering and services to create success for customers in increasingly demanding markets.

Challenge
Recognizing that a large portion of their workforce would be retiring during the next decade, a focus on retaining employees while recruiting young engineers has become a key organizational objective. Because the transfer of knowledge from more experienced to less experienced employees is critical for future organizational success, the company needed a better solution than their existing processes to set goals and drive employee performance and development.

Customer profile
Westinghouse Electric Company provides fuel, services and technology for the commercial nuclear electric power industry. With headquarters in Monroeville, Pennsylvania – Westinghouse employs nearly 8,500 people, has operations in 12 states and 14 countries.

Customer challenges
• Lack of standardized performance management processes and global transparency across the organization.
• Cumbersome manual systems for setting performance objectives and competency expectations.
• Need for formalized knowledge transfer.
“We had been using a performance management process that was Microsoft Word-based and fed into a homegrown system here in the U.S.,” explained Camille Kovach, director of Human Resources for Westinghouse’s Nuclear Power Plant unit. “In our European offices, performance management is done on an Excel spreadsheet so there was really no standardization of our processes across the organization. Plus, our managers are global managers and are responsible for a growing variety of geographic locations. There was no way for them to go into the system and see performance ratings for members of their organization that did not reside at the same facility where they did.”

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Solution
Westinghouse recently began implementation of TalentManager to replace their manual processes, improve their overall performance management process and better communicate their compensation philosophy across the organization. TalentManager is an on-demand pay-for-performance application that is highly configurable to meet the needs and value systems of organizations of all sizes. It streamlines the entire employee compensation lifecycle, as well as performance and incentive management. With TalentManager, the compensation department and individual managers are able to efficiently process employee performance appraisals, set and monitor goals, adjust base pay, and process equity adjustments, promotions, bonus or incentive allocations, and stock options through an intuitive, easy-to-use Web interface.

Implemented as part of an initiative called Customer 1st – a focus on customer-centric continuous improvement in company operations using state-of-the-art tools and processes to enhance operational excellence – TalentManager is expected to improve the performance process by providing a holistic view of the organization and a line of site between individual objectives and company goals.

Using an automated solution to streamline the performance management process, managers will be able to see how dollars are delivered across their global organization and if they are indeed paying for performance.

“One of the goals we set is around knowledge transfer and that is accounted for in the performance management process,” said Kovach. “We chose the solution to improve our ability in setting performance objectives and competency expectations in a way that didn’t require a manual process. TalentManager is going to help us see where we are in terms of commitments to milestones down to the individual level. It will also allow us to store information in a database form that we can access up through the management chain rather than on Word documents. With this solution, our processes will be standardized across our business locations, which is something we didn’t have before.”

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Results
Now, managers will have information at their fingertips and improved visibility into their workforce. By being able to better monitor goal setting and achievement, managers and employees will be able to have more productive dialogs and feedback exchanges, helping to reinforce accountability. Through streamlining and strengthening the performance planning process, managers will have a complete and comprehensive view of performance information, enabling global salary planning and ensuring that the organization is paying for performance by rewarding top performers for a job well done.

For employees, the solution reinforces accountability by clearly identifying individual goals and how they correlate to organizational objectives. By identifying knowledge transfer as an important performance objective, Westinghouse is assured that less experienced engineers are exposed to the wisdom of longer-term employees and that relevant
information is preserved for the future. By removing manual processes, more time is spent on achieving objectives and fostering productive dialogs and less time on managing the performance process.

“TalentManager will enable a global view of our salary planning process and provide us with more robust reporting,” said Kovach. “We are now going to know whether mid-year discussions have taken place, and at the end of the cycle, employees will be able to document their progress on objectives and demonstration of competencies. The solution is going to eliminate non-value added time and increase our ability to spend valuable time with employees and managers having more timely feedback and more meaningful dialogues, ensuring a more productive workforce.”