smartsheet

SAP Helps Employees Reach their Career Potential

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Carmen Ehret, Director of Global Enablement Programs, SAP Ariba and SAP Fieldglass

SAP Ariba and SAP Fieldglass

Customer:
SAP Ariba and SAP Fieldglass

Industry:
Technology

Organization Size:
Enterprise (10,000+ employees)

Region:
North America

Website:
sap.com, ariba.com, and fieldglass.com

SAP Ariba and SAP Fieldglass solutions are how companies connect to get business done & spend better.

Background

As global leaders in procurement and external workforce enterprise application software, SAP Ariba and SAP Fieldglass are as committed to advancing employees' career growth and learning as to helping businesses run more efficiently. Carmen Ehret, Director of Global Enablement Programs, SAP Ariba and SAP Fieldglass, leads an employee skills management program that's being rolled out to provide personalized learning recommendations for the company's 15,800 employees worldwide.

"A lot of companies attempt to pull off a skills assessment solution like this because it's amazing to have that data on your employees," Ehret says. "But it's even more amazing to be able to give them a custom learning plan. This isn't about a performance review; it's more about the learning. This tool helps them succeed."

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Solution

Employee learning has evolved significantly from the heyday of the two-week intensive course. Today, employees need the option of education programs that are shorter, individualized, and available online, whether as a remote, real-time course or a self-paced program.

Ehret notes that these programs aren't just more cost-efficient and less disruptive to the workday; they're often more effective at helping employees retain and make use of what they learn.

Individualized online programs are also crucial for a global enterprise with offices in parts of the world where it's difficult to deliver the right in-person workshop or identify a course located close enough for reasonable travel.

Managing Accurate Assessment Data

The process that Ehret manages begins with employee self-assessments designed to quantify

Customer:

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their current skill levels and define their career goals. Employees use Smartsheet to track assessment adoption data, which is automatically fed into Ehret's 50+ sheets and 15+ dashboards.

Using only one sheet with restricted access enables her to quickly capture and format data for upload to the enterprise tool, which has strict requirements for data files. Other sheets show her which employees and teams have completed assessments. They all draw from the same master data source, so updates are automatically reflected in every sheet where the data is tracked.

Smartsheet dashboards help her tailor reports to share with leadership. By socializing detailed views with read-only access, she can keep all stakeholders up to date while preventing accidental changes to the source data.

"It decreases the margin for error significantly," Ehret says. *"When you're dealing with so much data, it is easy to make a mistake. Now when I send a report, it pulls from the source of truth; I've already validated that the report is written correctly. So then it's repeatable, and I don't have to second-guess myself."*

Shared Dashboards Reduce Requests for Reports

Smartsheet also makes it easy for Ehret to turn requests for updates into strategies for self-help. Instead of pulling reports upon request, she shares links to the appropriate dashboards across team shares such as SharePoint and Jam Sites, as well as in email exchanges.

The dashboards represent another advantage that Smartsheet offers over spreadsheets and other project management tools. To set up a dashboard view for a new corporate region or functional team, Ehret simply takes a similar view she's already created, saves a new version, and updates the appropriate data sources in just a few clicks — no need to recreate formatting or design elements.

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The Smartsheet dashboard automatically updates when new data is entered, while the spreadsheet-based version would require an hour or more to update both source data and the presentation for a single monthly report. The more Ehret uses Smartsheet dashboards, the more time she saves on reporting and maintenance.

With Smartsheet, Ehret can easily track who is completing their assessments, which teams need reminders, and which educational programs receive the highest satisfaction ratings.

More Time for Upleveling Skills

Halving this time is especially important because the skills management program is most effective when employees frequently update their data. Ehret recommends that employees do assessments at least every six months — more often if they're actively pursuing their learning plan.

When employees complete a course or document their mastery of a new skill, they make it easier for mentors and hiring managers to consider them for new opportunities.

"How many times have you applied for a job and never even been considered?" Ehret asks. "And it's not that you weren't a good candidate, you just didn't have the right skills — or your leadership thought you didn't have the right skills. Now you can not only position yourself as having the right skills but have it in writing."

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As roles evolve and job requirements change, Smartsheet helps her match available learning programs with the skills and roles they support. And she's able to do it all with a custom design that includes her program logo and the color scheme that employees expect to see in corporate communications.

"Smartsheet is just an amazing asset for me," Ehret says. "It's a tremendous tool and resource, just from a project management perspective. To build a huge program like this single-handedly would have been impossible without Smartsheet."

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