

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

## Human talent management model based on work competencies: “Dulcería Los Almendros” Company, Rocafuerte canton

Modelo de gestión del talento humanos basado en competencias laborales: Empresa “Dulcería Los Almendros” cantón Rocafuerte

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**Abstract** This degree project proposes a Human Talent Management Model based on job competencies for the company “Dulcería los Almendros”, located in the Canton of Rocafuerte. The main objective was to design a management model tailored to the company’s needs through three specific goals: to present a model adapted to its structure, establish a guide for personnel selection by performance areas, and identify the staff’s training needs. Using a non-experimental design by work area, the research was applied, with a qualitative-quantitative, descriptive, field-based, and explanatory approach. The population consisted of thirteen female employees and the owner-manager, who also made up the sample for data collection. Techniques used included document review, interviews, and surveys through a questionnaire. Based on the data analysis, it was concluded that there is an urgent need to implement a human talent department to improve labor productivity and efficiency. However, considering the costs this would involve, it is recommended as an initial alternative to apply a human talent management manual based on job competencies. This manual would serve as a tool for personnel administration within the company and help align staff performance with organizational goals.

**Keywords** management, labor productivity, human talent, labor competencies.

**Resumen** El presente trabajo propone un Modelo de Gestión del Talento Humano basado en competencias laborales para la empresa “Dulcería los Almendros”, ubicada en el cantón Rocafuerte. El objetivo general fue diseñar un modelo de gestión adaptado a las necesidades de esta empresa, a través de tres objetivos específicos: presentar un modelo adecuado a su estructura, establecer una guía para la selección de personal por áreas de desempeño y determinar las necesidades de capacitación del personal. La investigación fue de tipo aplicada, con enfoque cuali-cuantitativo, descriptivo, de campo y explicativo, con un diseño no experimental por área de trabajo. La población estuvo conformada por trece colaboradoras y la propietaria-administradora, quienes constituyeron también la muestra para el levantamiento de información. Las técnicas empleadas incluyeron revisión documental, entrevistas y encuestas mediante cuestionario. A partir del análisis de los datos, se concluyó que existe una necesidad urgente de implementar un departamento de talento humano para mejorar la productividad y eficiencia laboral. Sin embargo, considerando los costos que esto implicaría, se recomienda como alternativa inicial la aplicación de un manual de gestión del talento humano basado en competencias laborales, que sirva como herramienta guía para la administración del personal dentro de la empresa.

**Palabras clave** gestión, productividad laboral, talento humano, competencias laborales.

### Introduction

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Over time, various theories have been proposed regarding the organizational environment, some have specifically emphasized human talent, highlighting its importance and classifying it as one of the organization's key elements. Good management is required to achieve optimal company performance. In addition to administrative management (referring to bureaucracy), human talent management must align with job competencies.

In the case of Dessler & Varela (2011), human resources management is mentioned.

It is the set of policies and practices that are crucial for directing aspects of managerial positions related to people or human resources belonging to organizations. This includes recruitment, selection, training, rewards, and performance evaluation.

Based on the above, human talent management emerges, oriented more toward the work competencies that an employee must possess in a specific job position, in different departments, for better employee performance, under indicators appropriate to each operational activity inside and outside the company.

Human talent management is an integrated set of organizational processes designed to attract, manage, develop, motivate, and retain employees (Pérez, 2021). The system will identify and evaluate core and differentiating competencies, formulate and design selection profiles, and implement induction systems.

Competency-based management becomes a continuous channel of communication between employees and the institution; this is when the company begins to involve the needs and desires of its employees in order to help them, support them, and offer them personal development capable of enriching their personality (Falcón & Amparito, 2011).

People require high levels of responsibility and competence to achieve goals successfully. This depends not only on individual traits but also on the interrelation of personality with social situational factors among coworkers (Montoya et al., 2016).

Therefore, competency management has become one of the best practices to align human resources with the global strategy of the organization since, taking as a reference the strategic planning of the company, it determines what knowledge, skills, attitudes and motivation are required to achieve the strategic objectives and at the same time allows to define what is expected of a person in a role or job and allows to identify the gaps between the current and expected levels of each competency (Vásquez, 2014).

In this way, the competency management model evalua-

tes the specific competencies for each job and contemplates the development of additional competencies necessary for employees' personal and professional growth (Ruiz, 2015; Quiroa, 2020).

Classification according to Magaña (2020):

- **Basic:** Refers to the basic behaviors that workers must demonstrate and are associated with formative knowledge, such as reading, expression, and verbal and written communication skills.
- **Generic:** Describes behaviors associated with performances common to various occupations and branches of productive activity, such as the ability to work in a team, plan, negotiate, and train.
- **Specific:** Identifies technical behaviors, linked to a certain technological language and a specific productive function.

Classification according to Charria et al. (2011):

- **Academic competence:** Academic competencies are Basic learning conditions that are developed from the early school years and are classified into basic skills such as: reading, writing, mathematics, speaking, and listening; development of thinking, consisting of creative thinking, problem-solving, decision-making, assimilation and comprehension, the ability to learn and reason; and personal qualities: self-responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-direction, and integrity.
- **Professional competence:** is the ability of a person to carry out a task effectively due to having qualifications that, in turn, represent the acquired ability to do a specific job or perform a position.
- **Occupational competency:** Professional competencies are not enough; they are also the skills a person has to perform the assigned functions according to their position or job title, thus becoming more competitive in the face of organizational demands and, consequently, entering and remaining in the world of work.

This model allows for the management of the professional qualities of a production unit's employees by analyzing each job position to find the right person to fill that position and perform to their full potential. This will benefit the production unit, as its productivity will increase, allowing for greater profits and lower costs, which most owners or shareholders seek to achieve.

A human talent management model is successful if it meets the organization's requirements and decision-making at a specific time. It must also be flexible enough to adapt

quickly to new organizational contexts (Sáenz, 2019).

It should be noted that any human talent management model will be successful if it meets all the company's labor and administrative needs, taking into account the best time to make decisions that benefit it. It must also have qualities that allow it not to act rigidly but rather to adapt quickly to the continuous changes in both internal and external conditions currently facing the organizational world.

Through this research, we aim to design an organized and structured human talent model to effectively meet the needs and requirements of the company "Dulcería los Almendros" by leveraging the organization's human capital.

## Methodology

This study employed a mixed-methods approach grounded in the theoretical foundations of human talent management and work competencies. The inductive, analytical, and synthetic methods were used to interpret findings: the inductive method helped generalize conclusions from specific cases; the analytical method facilitated breaking down components of the current talent practices; and the synthetic method allowed for integrating findings into a cohesive human talent model.

Empirical data collection included direct observation, interviews, and surveys. Direct observation was conducted during several visits to Dulcería Los Almendros, located in Rocafuerte, identifying the absence of a formal Human Talent Department and the need for a competency-based management model. An unstructured interview with the business owner, Mrs. Hondina Auxiliadora Delgado, provided qualitative insights into management practices.

Additionally, a survey with six closed-ended, multiple-choice questions was administered to all 13 female company employees, resulting in 14 participants, including the owner. This comprehensive methodological framework supported the proposal of a Human Talent Management Model tailored to the needs of small enterprises.

## Results and discussion

Using the company's current situation and the information gathered from the data, a diagnosis can be made of the potential organizational scenario for the object of study, concerning the functionality of the Human Talent Management Model Based on Labor Competencies once applied in the company.

To this end, Dulcería los Almendros identified the main threats and weaknesses, how to correct them, and the opportunities and strengths that can be exploited.

A SWOT analysis of Dulcería Los Almendros provides a comprehensive overview of the internal and external factors that influence the company's performance in the competitive confectionery market. By identifying its strengths, such as a strong brand reputation and loyal customer base, and recognizing weaknesses like limited distribution channels, the analysis offers valuable insights into the company's current position. At the same time, it explores opportunities for growth, such as expanding to new markets or introducing innovative products, and threats including rising ingredient costs and increasing competition. This strategic tool is essential for guiding Dulcería Los Almendros in making informed decisions to sustain and enhance its market presence.

### Strengths

- It began as a family business that has remained in the market for over 40 years.
- It is positioned in the market.
- It has a broad client portfolio.
- The premises of this sweet shop are its own.
- It is located in a profitable commercial area for the sale of its products.

### Weaknesses

- They do not have a department that manages human talent.
- They do not have a technical manual that certifies the appropriate process to which collaborating employees are subject.
- The personnel selection method used at the candy store is inferior.
- The company may be sanctioned under regulations and articles issued by the Ministry of Labor for failing to comply with a technical standard.
- Due to the number of employees, the IEES has requested a manual that complies with a Human Talent Management Model based on Labor Competencies.

### Opportunities.

- Free training provided by the Municipal Government of the Rocafuerte Canton.
- The use of updated technology for sales control.
- Gastronomic festivals organized by the Rocafuerte Canton Regional Government (GAD) under the direction of the Department of Gastronomy and Tourism, which promotes the economy by inviting various local candy stores to participate in these events.
- Advice the IRS provides on technical standards and compliance with tax provisions.
- The staff working at this candy store, originally from the Rocafuerte canton, have prior candy-making experience.

## Threats

- Strong competition from other candy stores near your location.
- The high cost of operating permits issued by the Municipality, Fire Departments, Health Department, and ARSA.
- Social unrest events that prevent the purchase of raw

materials for producing products prepared by this confectionery.

- Lack of trained and experienced human resources in specific candy production and manufacturing areas.
- The current social and economic crisis that the country is going through.

Considering the score obtained from the SWOT Matrix,

**Table 1.** Quantitative SWOT Analysis: averaged evaluation of strengths and weaknesses against opportunities and threats

		Opportunities					Average	Threats					Average
		O1	O2	O3	O4	O5		A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	
Strength	F1	3	2	5	4	5	3.8	4	3	2	5	4	3.6
	F2	1	3	5	3	2	2.8	5	4	2	3	3	3.4
	F3	1	3	5	3	2	2.8	5	4	2	1	2	2.8
	F4	2	2	4	5	3	3.2	4	3	2	1	1	2.2
	F5	3	1	4	2	3	2.6	5	3	2	1	2	2.6
	Average	2	2.2	4.6	3.4	3	15.2	4.6	3.4	2	2.2	2.4	14.6
Weaknesses	D1	3	3	2	3	1	2.4	4	2	1	5	2	2.8
	D2	4	2	3	2	2	2.6	4	3	2	5	3	3.4
	D3	2	3	2	1	3	2.2	5	2	1	4	2	2.8
	D4	3	3	3	2	3	2.8	4	5	2	2	3	3.2
	D5	2	2	3	1	2	2	4	2	3	5	2	3.2
	Average	2.8	2.6	2.6	1.8	2.2	12	4.2	2.8	1.8	4.2	2.4	15.4

Dulcería los Almendros in the city of Rocafuerte has a high score in the DA section for FO consideration; in the FA section, a higher score is reflected in DO consideration.

Despite the opportunities the company considers, these can be exploited to its strengths, but not in their entirety, and therefore do not offset its weaknesses.

Strategies are considered to counteract the effects of the weak parts of the company and its threats.

## Strengths to maximize:

It has a broad client portfolio.

It is located in a profitable commercial area for the sale of its products.

It should be noted that the strengths considered in the Candy Store do not compete with what is truly expected of the organization, which is why one of the best strengths they can acquire is the following:

Developing a Human Talent Model manual based on Workplace Competencies will be a great security tool to reinforce your strengths and enable you to defend yourself and confront threats, giving you a better chance of taking advantage of your opportunities and eliminating your weaknesses.

## Weaknesses to minimize:

They do not have a department that manages human talent.

They do not have a technical manual that certifies the appropriate process to which collaborating employees are subject.

The personnel selection method used at the candy store is inferior.

## Threats to mitigate:

Social unrest events that prevent the purchase of raw materials for the production of products prepared by this confectionery.

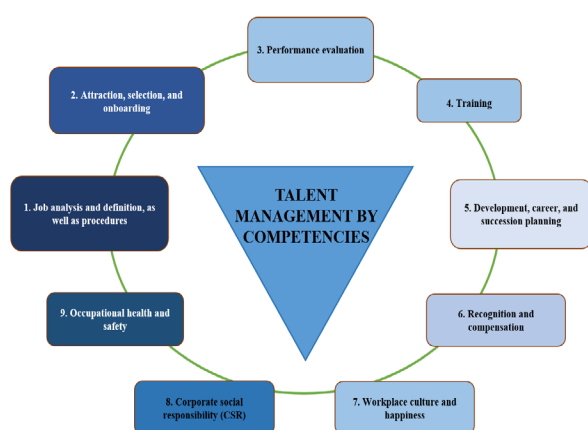
Lack of trained and experienced human resources in specific candy production and manufacturing areas.

Below is the competency-based model adapted to Dulcería Los Almendros, a research company. It includes nine important segments for the better and optimal development of Human Talent Management.

The proposed Model is generally supported by three sources: the Latin American Competence Network, the ILO International Training Centre in Italy, and finally, International Standardization for Organizations ISO 9001-2015 (Magaña, 2020).

The employer, or a team hired to select personnel, must analyze applicants and determine whether the person to be hired knows how to perform the duties, tasks, and activities involved in the position. To do so, four phases must be distinguished:

In the first phase, the responsibilities of the area manager and the new staff will be stipulated, specifying their purposes and conditions.



**Figure 1.** Talent management by competencies.

In the second phase, the employer must be transparent about the methods and types of data they will need, what sources of information they will have at their disposal, and what procedure they will use to obtain information from the applicant. For example, the most commonly used procedure is the job interview.

In the third phase, you must analyze the data obtained from your applicants and use customized techniques to ensure the accuracy of the information. One technique is to obtain good references from a former boss.

In the fourth and final phase, the analyst or employer evaluates the information obtained from the applicants and the positions analyzed.

### Attraction, selection, and incorporation

At this point, you can find three types of talent attraction media:

- The Internal Market: This shows the level and other indicators that collaborating employees can achieve from the company's human resources department. The person can be selected by competition or merit.
- The Informal Method: This form of attraction is by affinity. It can be known personnel, referrals, friends, family, or consultants.
- The Formal Method: This is the most serious and judicious method for selecting candidates. Performance evaluations, psychological tests, medical examinations, and references from former employers are considered. Recruitment through job fairs or direct applications is also considered.

Staff selection occurs after reviewing and analyzing recruitment methods, considering candidates who demonstrate a high level of competency and are best suited for the position.

Once the selection structure has been completed, the final

process launches the classified profile(s), proceeding to a final action but to a new beginning: the incorporation.

### Performance evaluation

Performance evaluations help employees and employers identify areas for improvement. This should occur when the company has changed its processes or updated work components, including machinery, tools, or the ability to monitor staff and keep everyone on the same page. This will increase the confidence level in continuing to meet the objectives and goals set by the company at the beginning of the year.

In the case of Dulcería Los Almendros, each department manager evaluates their employees daily through direct observation: their efficiency in performing an activity, the results of each product they produce, how they fulfill their proposed tasks, how they treat their customers, how they handle their mistakes, and if employees make any mistakes, they are corrected and taught immediately. This method of evaluation can continue to be used, but below is a performance evaluation form that will help the supervisor or department manager define, through indicators: talent detection, which job competencies the person being evaluated possesses, identifying what needs improvement, and is primarily aimed at those applicants who were hired by the company and are still on probation. This form must also be used at the end of each year and is aimed at all collaborative staff in the company to maintain personnel management.

### Training

The entire workforce at Dulcería Los Almendros comprises women (except the Dairy Manager) and ranges in age from 19 to 63. Since its inception, this company has welcomed employees: those without a degree, graduates, those with experience, and those without, but they have all demonstrated a desire to be part of this organization and help it thrive.

For this reason, within the Management Model being developed for the Confectionery, the company's Manager, Ms. Hondina Delgado, is asked to create a Compendium of the activities, responsibilities, and tasks each area manager must perform.

Likewise, each Area Manager is asked to structure a summary of activities and responsibilities according to their job position, including: primary assistants, secondary assistants, assistant 1, assistant 2, assistant 3, and assistant 4.

You can prepare the compendiums with the help of Business Administration students applying for Pre-Professional Internships or internships.



### Development, career, and succession plans

Dulcería Los Almendros is a family business. The CEO's succession plan will be established through a document protected by law and rights that formalizes actions after the company's patriarch retires. This way, Ms. Hondina Delgado's decisions will be respected.

To comply with the succession plan, the following process must be followed:

- Succession planning: At this point, you should be clear about the potential candidates for the new position; it would be helpful to consider staff proposals.
- Preparing the successor: Once you have decided who your new successor will be, the next step is to prepare them with all the necessary preparation and knowledge and get them up to speed on the pending activities of the person they are replacing.
- Handover: At this point, everything should be ready for the new successor to join. The new person usually begins to implement large or small changes. At the beginning of their term, there will be uncertainty and resistance to the orders and strategies they wish to dictate.
- Withdrawal: This is the final step in this process. As stated, it is the transferor's retirement and dismissal, handing over his or her position, responsibilities, and the company's leadership, if applicable, to a manager, to another equally qualified or better-qualified person. From then on, the delegate will manage the process.

### Recognition and remuneration

The director of customer service, Ms. Fernanda Romero, told us, "Well, there are awards from all sides: financial, psychological, and spiritual. In any case, the collaborators are rewarded, because thank God we have a good group, and they do receive rewards."

A more formal structure should be in place for rewards, recognition, and compensation. Managers should know when a reward is warranted and, in a certain way, when a punishment is necessary. In addition to the types of rewards mentioned above, I will include the following, referring to the recognitions that Dulcería Los Almendros can begin to implement:

- A framed photo of the employee of the month: This is the monthly selection of the employee who stands out the most each month. This can be selected by vote or for a productive action that stands out. It is usually placed strategically where people, especially customers, can see it.
- Physical badge or symbol: This is a distinctive mark

given to an employee recognizing the merits they have achieved in their job. It is usually small and is placed on the work uniform at chest level or on the side of the arms.

### Culture and work happiness

The Dulcería los Almendros company already has a culture based on a positive atmosphere and workplace happiness. The simple reason is that they consider themselves a big family, made up of people working toward a common goal, receiving the affection and recognition of every organization member. Mrs. Hondina Delgado, as the highest authority in the company, is attentive to each of her employees and, just as she demonstrates trust and loyalty, she also receives it. If there is a problem with any of her staff, she seeks the best way to resolve it.

At this point, the company's managers or the person in charge of a particular area are asked to find a way to establish a good relationship with the staff, regardless of their lower rank, and not allow differences within the company. Everyone should be treated equally, regardless of their rank, the activity they work in, their age, or the number of years of experience they have within the company. Everyone deserves to be happy at work.

### Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

To begin CSR practices, you should look for a problem or social conflict that has not yet been resolved or is in process, and any initiative that promotes improvement and change in the Rocafuerte canton. In this way, and depending on the resources that Dulcería los Almendros wishes to provide, it will be able to collaborate with the well-being of the Rocafuerte citizens.

CSR generates a positive correlation between fostering the development of the social environment and growth as a benefit to the company. It is not an obligation of the organization. However, it does have a responsibility to the common good of helping the city from which it sources, produces, and markets its products.

Knowing that Dulcería los Almendros cares not only about its employees but also about the well-being of the citizens of Rocafuerte Canton generates a favorable opinion among its customers. They understand that buying their products will not only benefit the company, but also that they are contributing to a social initiative. Therefore, customers increase, profits increase, and they gain more publicity, improving the organization's image and reputation.

## Occupational safety and hygiene

Regarding security, it is essential to identify areas within the workplace where accidents are most likely to occur and determine which locations pose the highest risk to employees. All personnel must be affiliated with a recognized social security institution to ensure access to medical care in case of injury. Additionally, it is crucial to establish clear guidelines for the proper use of equipment and tools by authorized personnel. Regular maintenance and upgrades of facilities and machinery should be carried out to ensure a safe working environment. Finally, fostering a strong occupational health and safety culture is vital to protect employees' well-being, uphold cleanliness standards, and minimize the company's environmental impact through responsible waste management.

## Conclusions

"Dulcería Los Almendros" lacked a Human Resources department to manage its workforce, prompting the creation of a Competency-Based Human Talent Management Manual tailored to the company's needs. This manual serves as a technical tool to enhance the management of human talent through the development and application of labor competencies. It supports key HR processes, including job analysis and design, recruitment, performance evaluation, training, career development, compensation, workplace culture, social responsibility, and occupational health and safety. To support this model, the company's organizational structure was formally established for the first time, defining roles, responsibilities, and staffing needs. Additionally, a Performance Evaluation Form was developed to help supervisors assess employee competencies and identify areas for improvement, especially for new hires during probation and annual evaluations across all staff.

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### Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that they have no conflicts of interest.

### Author contributions

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### Data availability statement

The datasets used and/or analyzed during the current study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request.

### Statement on the use of AI

The authors acknowledge the use of generative AI and AI-assisted technologies to improve the readability and clarity of the article.

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