



People Excellence Award 2010

Executive Summary



National Library Board Singapore

Knowledge • Imagination • Possibility

CE's Foreword



National Library Board is pleased to receive the People Excellence Award in 2010. As we celebrate this prestigious recognition as an affirmation of our commitment to excellence in people development, we recognise that this valuable journey is to inspire our staff to continually provide quality and innovative services to delight the customers we serve.

NLB's business is about providing access to knowledge and therefore, people are our most valuable asset. We believe that attracting and developing the right people is imperative so that we can bring more value to the communities we serve. A key prong to NLB's people strategy is to attract employees with a passion for learning and a heart for service and the community.

We recognise the importance of making NLB an employer of choice. As a result, a holistic framework for people development through a four-pronged approach was implemented: Talent Attraction, Talent Development, Talent Retention and Organisation Renewal. NLB embarked on its People Excellence journey with a spirit of wanting to improve itself. The process is just as valuable as the outcome because we were able to use this framework to see how we can better ourselves in various aspects of people development. NLB will continue to invest in leadership and professional development to equip and empower our staff with the relevant skills to meet future challenges of a more diverse customer base.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the SQA Governing Council for recognising NLB's efforts in people development and management. All of us at NLB are encouraged and further motivated by this prestigious award. I would also like to express my appreciation to our stakeholders, supporters, volunteers and library patrons for their unwavering support to our libraries.

Mrs Phoon Chew Ping
Chief Executive
National Library Board

ORGANISATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

The establishment of the National Library Board (NLB) on 1 September 1995 marked a major milestone in the transformation of libraries in Singapore.

NLB oversees both the National Library as well as the Public Libraries.

The National Library of Singapore (NLS) is a national knowledge institution empowering individuals and businesses with knowledge and information as it continuously expands its vast array of reference collections and services.

The NLS is responsible for preserving and making accessible the nation's literary and publishing heritage, and intellectual memory.

The Public Libraries Singapore (PLS) provides a professional and engaging public library service to Singaporeans in their pursuit of lifelong learning and discovery through the network of Public Libraries (including three regional libraries) located conveniently across Singapore.

Through its innovative use of technology and collaboration with strategic partners, NLB ensures that library users have access to a rich array of information services and resources that are convenient, accessible and relevant.

i) Organisation's Purpose, Vision and Values

Learning and the quest for knowledge are evergreen needs and have become even more important in today's knowledge economy. NLB's vision is to be an inspiring beacon of lifelong learning, making knowledge come alive, sparking imagination and creating possibility for a society of knowledge workers. To realise this vision, NLB is guided by its mission to provide trusted, accessible and globally-connected library and information services through the National Library and a comprehensive network of Public Libraries.

To achieve both its mission and vision, NLB embraced the shared values of Passion for Learning, Commitment to Customer Service, Valuing the Community, Working Together and Taking Responsibility.

ii) Organisational Structure and Staff Profile

People are the most valuable resource and hence NLB's organisational imperative is to develop their capabilities and professionalism.

Staff profile has also been transformed. In 1995, some 70% of NLB staff were non-degree holders. Today, to support its new critical role of preparing

Singaporeans for opportunities and challenges in a global knowledge-based economy, 52% of the 944 NLB staff are degree-holders, with enhanced and deeper professional capabilities. The remaining 48% are supporting staff with upgraded skills, and about a third of them are members of the Amalgamated Union of Statutory Boards Employees (AUSBE).

The NLB has a Collective Agreement with AUSBE that spells out the terms and conditions of employment for its unionised staff.

NLB believes that attracting and developing the right people is important to bring more value to the communities it serves. A key prong to NLB's people strategy is to attract employees with a passion for learning and a heart for service and the community. Where talent retention is concerned, 45% of NLB's employees have been with the organisation for over 10 years.

To position NLB as an employer of choice, a holistic framework for people development through a four-pronged approach was implemented: Talent Attraction, Talent Development, Talent Retention and Organisation Renewal. This enabled NLB to transform its Human Resource practices with the introduction and implementation of integrated programmes on core values, differentiating competencies, performance, rewards and recognition – adopting a total reward model – learning and development, workplace health and corporate citizenship.

iii) Roles of NLB

The NLB Act establishes and incorporates the NLB as a statutory board and transfers to it the National Library and all matters connected therewith. According to the NLB Act, it seeks to:

- Establish and maintain libraries, and provide library information services;
- Promote reading and encourage learning;
- Acquire and maintain a comprehensive collection of print and non-print materials;
- Provide advisory and consultancy services on library and information services;
- Maintain a national union catalogue and a national bibliography;
- Advise the government on national needs and policies in matters relating to publicly-funded libraries and information services.

iv) Main Products and Services

NLB has created a network of borderless libraries to place its knowledge and information management resources within easy reach of all Singaporeans. In addition, NLB offers an increasing number of services and resources online and through other mobile media.

NLB's core services are:

- Loan, renewal and reservation of materials;
- Programmes to promote reading and encourage learning, eg information literacy training, talks, workshops, seminars, school programmes, storytelling sessions, and training courses;
- Enquiry and information services – on-site, or through the phone, fax, email, regular or surface mail, and Internet;
- Access to e-books, e-databases and multimedia resources;
- Access to Singapore and South East Asian collections for research and reference purposes.

ORGANISATIONAL CHALLENGES

i) Strategic Challenges

NLB would continue to reinvent its services and programmes to meet changing needs of its customers. In particular, NLB will:

- Provide more diverse products and services to engage customers with increasingly sophisticated needs;
- Deliver learning and knowledge easily to help build an inclusive society;
- Provide access to real-time knowledge that is necessary to succeed in a globally competitive environment;
- Create collaborative spaces and an environment that builds social capital and delivers knowledge dividends to Singapore;
- Expand Singapore's collection of knowledge assets;
- Optimise service and operations efficiency by aligning innovation and technology to meet escalating demand without a proportionate increase in expenditure.

ii) People Challenges

In addition, NLB has identified the following people challenges that require focus in our ongoing journey to people excellence.

- Increasing competition for talent requires NLB to strengthen its talent attraction, development and retention effort for key talents.
- Changing employee demographics with aging population and a multi-generation workforce demands a diversified approach to employee engagement
- Upgrading professional capability to deepen the knowledge and skills of Professionals, within the organisation to meet increased customer sophistication.



SENIOR EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

“NLB has led a transformation of the library system, which is modern, dynamic and innovative. It fundamentally supports the nation’s capacity to learn and enhances Singapore’s competitiveness. It is a vital piece of Singapore’s social infrastructure.”

- Lynne Brindley, DBE, Chief Executive, The British Library

i) The NLB Leadership Team

The senior management of NLB steers the organisation through the generation and articulation of shared vision and values, inspiring organisation-wide commitment towards people excellence.

ii) NLB’s Mission, Vision and Strategic Thrusts

NLB’s corporate strategy is reviewed regularly to ensure that NLB stays relevant and effective.

In the journey towards people excellence, the NLB Leadership is focused on leading the employees from passion for their work to being an inspiration for the nation.

NLB leadership has identified and articulated a set of core values. These guide staff in serving the community and delivering public value. NLB emphasises the importance of stakeholder engagement through a virtuous cycle: Commitment to Customer Service & Excellence, Valuing the Community, Working & Sharing Together, Passion for Learning and Taking Responsibility.

Figure 1.1 NLB Vision, Mission and Strategic Thrusts



(iii) Focus on Learning

Through Passion for Learning, senior management creates an engaging environment where all levels of staff have meaningful opportunities to contribute resources to fulfill their expected responsibilities. Each year, senior management and heads of divisions establish staff development priorities for the year. Training and development programme outcomes are reported at the HR Steering Committee regularly to identify gaps and improvements required.

Senior executives guide and encourage NLB project teams to develop new products and services for customers, implement-training programmes, test new ideas, learn from mistakes, and drive cutting-edge initiatives.

(iv) Communication

To build relationships, senior management regularly communicates the organisation’s vision, mission and people-centered core values to internal and external stakeholders (Table 1.1).

| Communication Channels | Stakeholders | Communication Channels (Formal and Informal) | |
|------------------------|---|---|---|
| Internal | • Employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Staff Forum • Communication sessions • Staff meetings • Focus groups • NLB newsletters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CE Dialogues / Connect Blogs • Divisional blogs • Induction programmes • Corporate events (e.g. D&D) • NLB Intranet |
| External | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers • Partners/Suppliers • Donors • Friends of the Library | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meetings/focus groups • Dialogues • Annual Reports | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate websites/newsletters • Media coverage • Appreciation events • Volunteers website |

Table 1.1 Channels of Communication to NLB Staff and Stakeholders

In addition, senior executives are involved in supporting staff through various organisational tasks and activities, often acting as role models and champions (Table 1.2).

| Efforts to Promote People Excellence | Senior Management Involvement |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Personal Development Key Result Area | Senior management encourages staff to make use of the 10% PDKRA to participate in cross-functional initiatives to network and learn outside their specific work areas |
| Performance Management Programme | During the annual PMP planning, mid-year and year-end appraisal discussions, senior management discusses with key staff their development opportunities and follow-up |
| High Potentials Identification | Senior management actively identifies staff with high potential, give them opportunities for stretching, and support them for development |
| Succession Planning | This is taken seriously by senior management, to mentor and groom successors for key positions identified |
| Review of HR Policies and Procedures | The HR Steering Committee (HRSC) reviews HR policies and processes regularly to pursue people excellence, chaired by CE NLB. |

Table 1.2 How Senior Management Promotes People Excellence

Supporting its People Policies & Values

NLB adopts people-focused policies and practices that support its values (Table 1.3).

| NLB Shared Values | People-focused Policies and Practices | |
|---|---|---|
| Commitment to Customer Service and Excellence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Customer Appreciation Day - Staff Excellence Awards and Recognition - Learning Needs Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - After-Action Reviews - WITs and Staff Suggestions Scheme |
| Valuing the Community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate Volunteerism - Friends of the Library (FOL) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network of Specialists - NLB Alumni on Facebook |
| Passion for Learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Learner Awards - e-Learning - One Learning Hour | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Sponsorships and Scholarships - Education Assistance Scheme - Communities of Practice |
| Working and Sharing Together | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cross Function Project teams - Team Building Programmes - Team Excellence Awards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Knowledge Champions |
| Taking Responsibility | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ethics Hotline - No Wrong Door Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feedback Channels |

Table 1.3 People-focused Policies and Practices that Support NLB’s Shared Values



Corporate Framework for People Excellence

HR strategies target staff development to empower staff to meet corporate objectives and achieve high performance. The corporate HR framework (Figure 2.1) focuses on people excellence, integrating leadership commitment to organisational culture with corporate planning, finance and IT systems.

In addition, four HR strategies – Talent Attraction, Talent Development, Talent Retention and Organisation Renewal – ensure organisational success and sustainability by managing talent flow-through as well as organisation renewal for long-term success.



Figure 2.1 Corporate HR Framework

“We are very impressed with the National Library Board Singapore’s long-term planning, the development of human resources, innovative customer services and the clear differentiation between the core and non-core services of National Library Singapore.”

- Zhan Furui, former Director of National Library of China

STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT AND DEPLOYMENT

NLB’s annual Corporate Planning and Review Exercise (CPR) comprises of four phases: a review of the previous financial year’s achievements; crafting of corporate strategies for the next year; finalising of group, HR and IT work plans; and presentation of the corporate plan to the NLB Board and staff. In particular, the HR plan to support the corporate strategies for the following year is presented and approved at the third quarterly CPR session.

All the four CPR sessions are chaired by the Chief Executive (CE) and attended by all Group Heads (GHs) including Director (Human Resources), with the Corporate Planning and Relations (CPR) Division providing support.



“NLB has put in place effective people management processes to equip its staff with the required skill-sets and attitudes to be open and creative, to share their knowledge, and to relentlessly innovate to meet customer needs.”

- Henk Das, Chief Executive Officer, NBD/Biblion B.V.

MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION

NLB’s information framework is related to NLB’s corporate strategies. Besides supporting corporate planning and performance management operational efficiency, information is also used to better understand the needs and development of NLB’s staff to promote a culture of continuous learning at both the individual and organisational levels as well as people excellence.

Figure 3.1 shows the overall NLB information framework while Figure 3.2 shows how NLB selects, collects, captures, retains and uses information related to human resource management & development. Information is analysed and used at different levels to meet business needs.

Information Perspectives

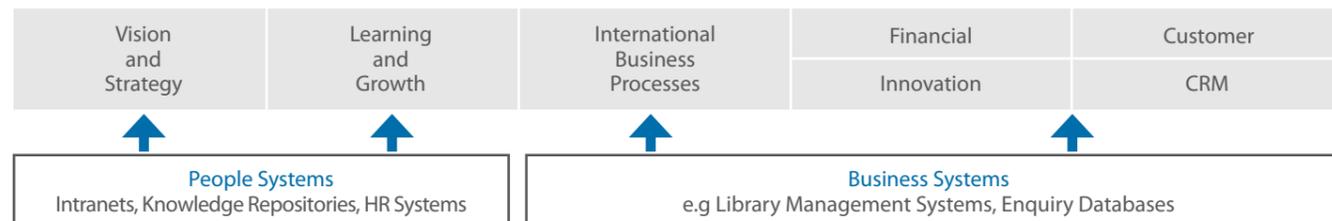


Figure 3.1 NLB Information Framework

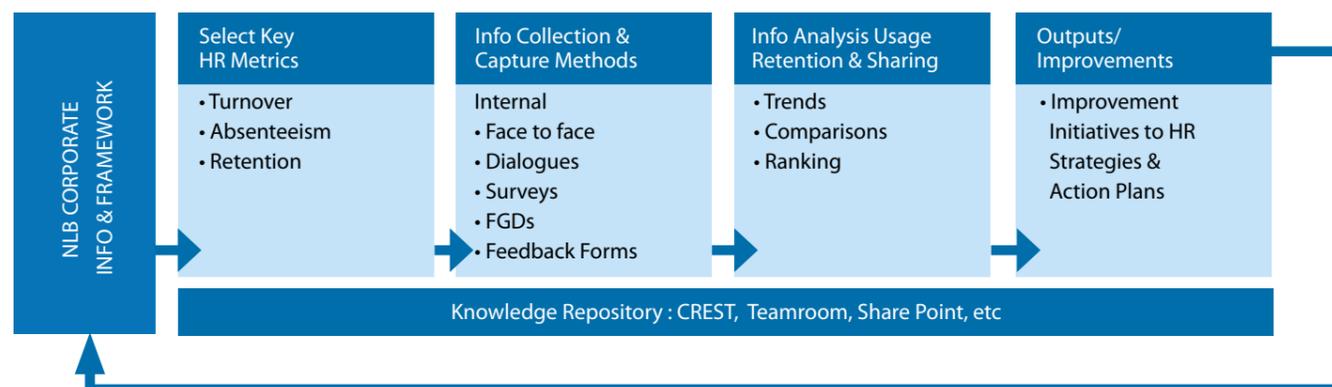


Figure 3.2 PMD Information Management Process

Knowledge Repository

Managing knowledge is an integral part of HR strategies and goals. In areas such as competency and skills building, a robust knowledge identification process supported by an emphasis on knowledge sharing ensures that skills are not only learnt, but also shared through collaborative activities.

ensure that such skills and competencies are passed on, thereby further ensuring better organisational renewal of talent.

NLB promotes information sharing to encourage employee engagement and learning, and conducts regular reviews to evaluate the effectiveness of its information dissemination channels (Table 3.1).

In terms of career development for staff, knowledge exchange activities such as mentoring schemes further

| | |
|---|---|
| Knowledge Management (KM) Process and Methodology | The Knowledge Management methodology was introduced to enhance staff capabilities to facilitate learning and sharing of knowledge. Among the initiatives were the teaching of advanced KM techniques such as Open Space Technology, Wiki Raid, Knowledge Café and several Web 2.0 applications to selected K Champions to enhance knowledge facilitation skills amongst staff. |
| Project Centric Organisation | NLB has developed a project-centric environment, which has been successful in breaking the functional silos and providing NLB with a dynamic and flexible means to form cross-functional project teams to implement ideas by having various domain experts involved as project team members. |
| Infrastructure and Systems | Electronic systems and resources enable staff to collaborate, learn and share information through Divisional Blogs, Comb, MyNLB, Triple I system, Document and Record Management system, Data Warehouse, Team Rooms and the IDEAS portal. Physical spaces such as K-Ba, K-Byn and Discussion Korner facilitate collaboration and learning. Annual Learning events such as the Learning Festival, Innovation Carnival, and Knowledge Management (KM) Fair serve as channels to promote the spirit of learning and continuous improvements among staff, through collaboration and friendly competition. |

Table 3.1 Mechanisms for Information Sharing in NLB

COMPARISON AND BENCHMARKING

NLB uses five mechanisms to conduct benchmarking and comparisons to improve human resource management:

- Adoption of International Standards
- Surveys & Literature Benchmarking
- Business Excellence Award Winners
- International Benchmarking Across Libraries – Peer Reviews
- Consultancy Projects

NLB uses comparative and benchmarking information to set goals and improve human resource strategies, policies and systems, as shown in Table 3.2.

NLB regularly conducts comparative studies and benchmark activities with various public and private agencies to assess and improve its HRM performance and practices. Using data from authoritative research studies (e.g. the Corporate Leadership Council), NLB continually improves its HR strategies, policies and systems.

| HR Goals | Examples of Criteria Used |
|----------------------|---|
| Talent Attraction | Information to strengthen employer value proposition and branding |
| Talent Development | Information to manage multiple career tracks for professional development |
| Talent Retention | Information to strengthen onboarding process of new hires |
| Organisation Renewal | Information to mitigate potential succession risks |

Table 3.2 NLB’s Criteria for Selecting Comparative and Benchmarking Information



“I have been consistently impressed with the high quality of NLB staff in providing professional library, research and information services that are timely, useful and accessible, delivered consistently and affordably to meet a diverse range of needs.”

- Penny Carnaby, Former Chief Executive, National Library of New Zealand

HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

NLB aims to be an employer of choice by attracting, rewarding, and retaining the most suitable talent through career and personal growth opportunities and providing an environment for work-life balance. HR goals are thus established and aligned with the HR strategies, supporting the overall NLB corporate strategies, mission and vision (Figure 4.1).



Figure 4.1 Human Resource Strategic Plan

| Strategies | Action Plans | Involvement of line managers |
|--|---|--|
| Attract talent through recruitment branding and positioning NLB as Employer of Choice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop innovative approaches to attract high-calibre talent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manpower requirements and develop relevant job description Conduct job interviews |
| Build the right competencies and skills among staff and providing career development opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop both Talent and Career Development Framework and adopt best practice policies for leadership and professional development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represented at the career development panels for policy making Determine Div/Dept's training and development requirements Manage staff career development and deployment Conduct training to cascade knowledge and experience sharing |
| Attract talent through competitive market practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmark compensation and reward models with relevant industries Create a positive and productive work and learning environment Promote healthy lifestyle and family-friendly schemes for a balanced work-life environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Panel members in the respective award committees Promote and organize the respective sites' health programmes, events, activities for a balanced work-life environment Address staff engagement issues at line departments |
| Continue NLB's quest for organisational excellence through leadership development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop effective organisational structure On-going process improvement and redesign for greater impact and efficiency | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and develop high potentials for succession planning |

Table 4.1 Line Managers' Involvement in HR Strategies and Action Plans

Besides the corporate planning and Human Resource Steering Committee platforms, HR strategies and action plans are also developed in consultation with line managers and employees at various other platforms (Table 4.1). In addition, NLB CREST system which is a common Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform shared by four other agencies, has a built-in process that require a line manager's inputs

when making decisions affecting a staff's career or development.

Figure 4.2 illustrates how the recruitment and selection policy is aligned with the HR strategies and action plans and how it helps to enhance the recruitment branding and position NLB as the Employer of Choice.



Figure 4.2 Recruitment and Selection Framework

The core workforce is the main workforce that provides stability to meet the core business needs. The contingent workforce such as contract staff, provides the specialised and project-specific manpower needs. The extended workforce, on the other hand, comprises volunteers and the network of library communities, which meet the ad-hoc and seasonal manpower needs.

The NLB Recruitment and Selection Framework (Figure 4.3) ensures that the recruitment and selection process is aligned with the organisation's objectives and policy e.g. the L2010 strategic goals. It also served as an aid to assist HR Account Managers, line managers and employees to carry out the recruitment and selection process in a fair, effective, efficient and systematic manner.

Line managers are involved in three main employee recruitment and selection processes:

- Job description – they provide manpower requirements and develop the relevant job description;
- Manpower requisition – they shortlist suitable candidates for interviews.
- Interview and selection – they interview and select suitable candidates.



Strategies to encourage employee involvement and commitment in teamwork, innovation and achievement of organisation objectives and goals

The employee involvement strategies and mechanisms that contribute to NLB's organisational objectives and goals are classified into three areas: Innovation, Team Learning and Communication & Sharing.

Among the many mechanisms for individual staff involvement is the Staff Suggestion Scheme, which yielded a number of meaningful, award-winning suggestions. These include the "BookCross@SG" and "Book Exchange" ideas which were subsequently developed and implemented as projects that won the Gold Awards at the MICA Innovation Fiesta in 2008 and 2009.

NLB is positioned as a project-centric organisation to promote teamwork, collaboration and learning via project teams. Training of the project management methodology and tools is mandatory and taught to all staff. Besides functional project teams that supports divisional business needs, NLB also initiated cross-functional project teams to meet Cross Sharing of Domain Expert Knowledge, Testing of High Potential and Rapport Building and Bonding purposes.

Staff involvement activities are tracked, reviewed and reported to senior management on a regular basis ranging from bi-monthly, quarterly to annual and bi-annual meetings to evaluate the effectiveness and improve the overall process in a systematic manner.

EMPLOYEE EDUCATION, TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

NLB's commitment to staff learning is encapsulated in its motto: Shared Values, Passion for Learning. Mechanisms and programmes have been developed to follow through NLB learning systems, modelled after People Developer best practices. NLB adopted the People Developer standard in 2001 and was re-certified in 2006.

As a learning organisation, NLB invests in re-training and lifelong learning to promote individual and organisational development.

Under its Continuous Education Programme framework, NLB sponsors part-time and full-time courses from certificate to postgraduate level. NLB's participation in the Workforce Development Agency's (WDA) Standards Committee helped shape the national competency framework for library professionals, ensuring that NLB's staff development framework is also aligned with the national framework.

NLB conducts an annual Learning Needs Analysis exercise to support its business objectives for the year. The Senior Management team, division and department heads, and all staff are involved in this exercise.

The development of Individual Learning Plans is guided by the Learning Focus set for the year. The Learning Focus comprises the corporate-level learning and development priorities to support business objectives. Over the past five years, the learning focus was primarily on management and professional development, customer service/innovation and building employability skills.

NLB develops its Total Learning Plan upon completion of its Learning Needs Analysis conducted at the individual, department/division and corporate level. The Individual Learning Plans (ILPs) are created by staff and approved by their supervisors. These are compiled into Division Learning Plans (DLPs), which are then reviewed/approved by the Division Heads. The Division Learning Plans are then compiled into the Total Learning Plan, which comprises various learning activities to support the organisation's total learning needs. Upon approval of the Total Learning Plan by CE NLB, each employee will receive his/her approved Individual Learning Plan (ILP) for the year. Employees are expected to take personal responsibility for the fulfillment of their Individual Learning Plans (ILP).

The Learning Objectives and Post-Course performance targets are communicated to employees before learning. An organisational training review is conducted annually, using Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Framework. The annual review and improvements are tabled at the Senior Management forum.

| NLB Vision, Mission, Objectives and Goals | | |
|--|--|---|
| Strategies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a culture of Open Communication, Working Together, and having a Passion for Learning • Provide opportunities to innovate | |
| Five Shared Values | Commitment to Customer Service & Excellence, Valuing the Community, Working & Sharing Together, Passion for Learning and Taking Responsibility | |
| MECHANISMS | | |
| Corporate Level | Operation Level | Individual Level |
| Cross-functional Project Teams Staff Surveys Staff Forum Black Box Library Innovation Centre MICA Innovation Fiesta PS21 ExCEL Convention Sports Interest Groups (SIGs) Retreats | Work Improvement Teams (WITs) Communities of Practice (COP) One Learning Hour (OLH) Guest Speaker Series (GSS) Divisional Roadshows Retreats | Staff Suggestion Schemes (SSS) Dialogues with CE Work Improvement Teams (WITs) In Conversation Series e-Forums Blogs |
| Key Indicators | Projects/WITs and SSS Achievement, Staff Engagement Index | |
| Review | Conduct comparative studies with public and private organisation, pulse survey, periodic reviews by SMC | |

Figure 4.3 Integrated Employee Involvement and Commitment Framework

| Induction Timeframe | Induction Item | Conducted by | Applicable to |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1st day of joining | Structured HR Induction | HRM Dept | New hires |
| Within 2 weeks of joining/posting | Department Induction – Generic | Line Mgr or designated staff | New hires/ existing staff |
| Within a stipulated period | Department Induction – On-the-Job Training (OJT) | Line Mgr or designated staff | New hires/ existing staff |
| Quarterly | New Staff Orientation Programme | NLB Academy (NLBA) | New hires |
| 3 months from 1st day of joining | Buddy System | Appointed buddy | New hires/ existing staff |
| Within the 1st Year | Mandatory Training Programmes | NLB Academy (NLBA) | New hires |

Table 4.2 Staff Induction Framework

Induction of new employees and training for existing employees given new job function

NLB has a framework (Table 4.2) for the structured induction of all new hires and existing staff assuming new job responsibilities. The induction programmes include HR, Learning and line/functional components.

Programmes for leadership development and succession planning for key positions

Senior management conducts career dialogues with promising staff to jointly agree on an Individual Development Plan (IDP) that provides development options that include learning programmes, job postings and projects. Succession planning is conducted annually for key senior positions in NLB to ensure continuity of leadership in the organisation.

Career development planning

NLB improved its Competency-based Career Development Framework in 2007 to support staff in their professional development and encourage personal ownership in career management.

Career development policies and practices comes under the oversight of three Professional Panels, chaired by senior leadership, a reflection of leadership commitment to staff career development.

EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND SATISFACTION

Health and employee wellness has been positioned as a work life strategy that contributes to the HR goals of talent retention and NLB strategic objectives.

NLB develops strategic partnership with the Amalgamated Union of Statutory Board Employees (AUSBE) to proactively tackle emerging labour issues. Two such examples is the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding of Fair Employment Practice and the Re-employment of Older Worker. As a result, NLB was granted Advantage funding from the Workforce Development Agency to develop programmes for our older workers in Nov 2009.

| Work-Life Strategy To create a work environment that enhances customer service, effective employee development and high employee satisfaction | | |
|---|---|--|
| Mechanisms/Programmes | | |
| Work-Life Balance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work-Life Coaching Service - Flexi-Work Arrangement - Work-Life Advocate - Work-Life Ambassador - Corporate Volunteerism Programme - Learning Festival - Gym, Pantry and Cafeteria | Workplace Health Programmes (WEALTH) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health at Work Charter - Monthly Events - Regular Evening Classes - Annual Health Screening - One Learning Hour - Sports Interest Groups | Workplace Safety <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appropriate Equipment Provided to Staff - Pleasant and Conducive Work Environment - Compiled with Statutory Requirements on Employees' Safety - Work Injury Compensation - Crisis Management |

Table 4.3 Work-Life Strategy

One of the most effective feedback platforms is the organisation climate survey (OCS), conducted online once every 2 years. The survey covers issues ranging from NLB's culture, workplace satisfaction, work life balance, management commitment and leadership to learning & development and feedback on NLB's commitment to customer service and innovation excellence. The 2008 survey showed high staff satisfaction in areas such as working relationships, supervision, career development, performance management and rewards, which exceeded the Singapore and Public Sector norms, as well as Towers-Perrin High Performing Companies Norm 2008.

As a voluntary survey, staff participation rate at 88% and 90% in 2006 and 2008 respectively were deemed by Towers-Perrin, the appointed consultant, to be extremely high as 85% was considered to be high as a norm. This is a testament that our staff are highly engaged. Besides the OCS, NLB assesses staff satisfaction from indicators such as the percentage of staff participation in WITs and SSS and their competitive/collaborative contributions to innovation, health and lifestyle surveys, and exit interviews.

EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE AND RECOGNITION

NLB's performance-based compensation polices aim to ensure external competitiveness and maintain internal equity. As shown in Figure 4.1 earlier, the NLB Compensation and Benefit policy is closely aligned to the HR strategies and goals of talent retention.

Managing staff performance to achieve the organisation's objectives, strategies, goals and targets

The NLB performance appraisal framework, also commonly known as the NLB Performance Management Programme (PMP), provides a holistic recognition, promotion, compensation and reward system that encourages employees to achieve high performance to contribute to the achievement of the organisation's goals and objectives. Performance planning includes performance coaching and review, and a clear recognition and rewards system that feeds into the work plan loop addressing the Balanced Scorecard goals and targets relating to content, customer, community, culture and capability.

Rewards and Recognition

NLB has a broad-based Rewards and Recognition (R&R) system that provides a well-communicated process for celebrating and rewarding staff's contribution, participation in service and innovation excellence.



Awards & Accolades

Major accolades and recognitions received by NLB in recent years include:

International Awards

- Japan Creation Award (2010)
- IFLA International Marketing Award (2009)
- Most Admired Knowledge City Award (2008, 2007)
- ASEAN Energy Efficient Building Award (2007)
- ZDNet Asia Smart 50 Award (2006)
- Royal Australian Institute of Architects Commendation (2006)
- World Association of Chinese Architects Gold Award (2005)

Singapore Awards

- Singapore Service Excellence Award (2009)
- Best PS21 Project – Silver Award (2009)
- Building Construction Authority's Green Mark Platinum Award (2009, 2005)
- Distinguished Public Service Award (2007, 2004)
- President's Design Award (2007)
- Building Construction Authority's Universal Design Silver Award (2007)
- Building Construction Authority's Merit Buildable Design Award (2006)

- Singapore Institute of Architects, 3rd SIA Facade Design Excellence Awards, Silver Award (2006)
- MICA Innovation Fiesta Gold Award (2006, 2010)
- Singapore Quality Award (2004)
- Singapore Innovation Excellence Award (2001)

People Awards

- National Safety & Security Watch Group Award (2009)
- Singapore Health Award – Platinum (2009)
- iKMS's Knowledge Management Excellence Award (2009, 2008)
- Work-Life Achiever Award (2008)
- People Developer Standard (2006, 2001)
- Pro Family Award (2006)
- HRM Award for Best Change Management Practices (2006)
- Work-Life Excellence Award (2006)
- Leading Human Resource Practices in Health & Employee Wellness Award (2005)
- Leading Corporate Human Resource Award (2005)
- Gold Award for the Public Service Department of the Year (2005)
- Platinum Award for HEALTH (2004)
- The Singapore Health Award (2002)
- Singapore HEALTH Award – Gold (1999 – 2003)

People Results

a) Employer of Choice

NLB is an employer of choice. This, together with its recognition for leadership, culture and best practices, has enabled NLB to attract and retain top talent. Various indicators have been used to measure and validate NLB as an employer of choice.

i) Staff Take Pride in NLB

Through the Organisation Climate Survey (OCS), NLB staff have indicated that they are proud to be associated with NLB. NLB ranks very favourably when compared to other organisations (Figure 5.1).

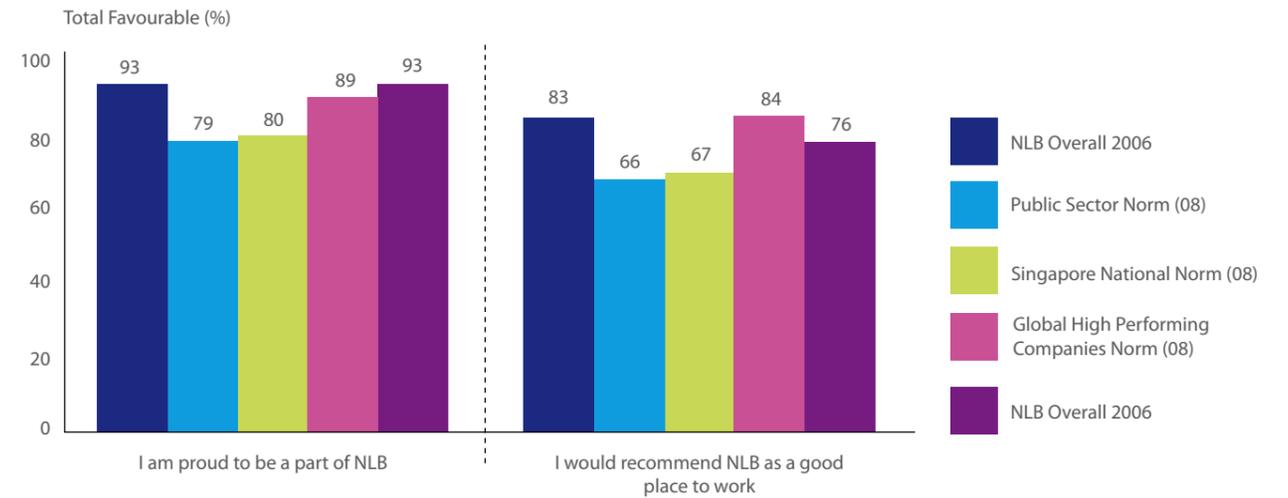


Figure 5.1 NLB Overall 2008 vs Benchmarks

OCS Results Engagement Score that are indicators of "Employer of Choice"

ii) Low Staff Turnover Rate

NLB aims to keep its staff turnover rate (figure 5.2) at 2% below industry average. Through effective talent retention and reward strategies, NLB has done better than average despite staff competition for talent in the marketplace.

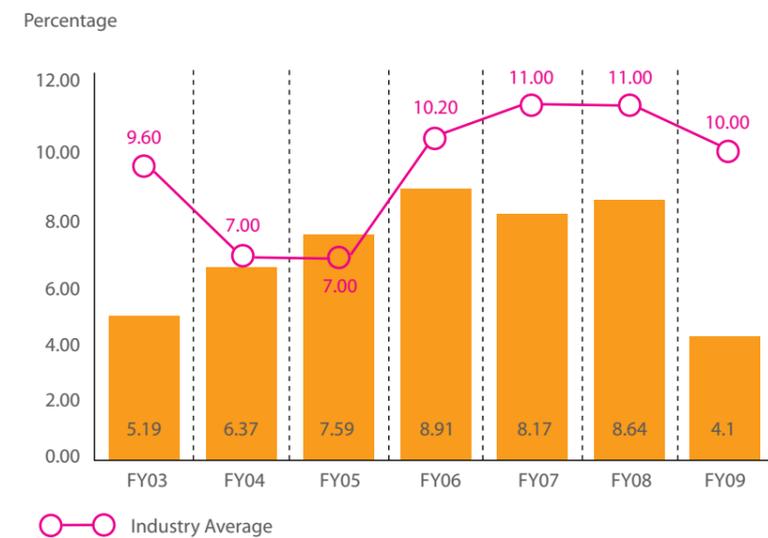


Figure 5.2 Turnover Rate

Note: A global comparison with FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work for 2009 shows that the annual turnover rate for the top ten best companies to work for ranges from 5 to 11%. In contrast, NLB's resignation rate of 4.1% for 2009 is below the 5% turnover rate for the top ten best companies to work for.

iii) A Caring Employer

NLB's care for the welfare of the employee is reflected in all our human resource policies. This culture of care includes potential employees as well as those who are retiring. For example, in 2008, NLB signed the pledge on Fair Employment Practices with the union. NLB also signed the MOU with the union to re-employ staff beyond the retirement age of 62.

iv) Strong Staff Loyalty (Percentage of Staff with 10 Years and More of Service)

The number of long serving staff with at least 10 years of service (Figure 5.3) has increased, especially between FY08 and FY09. The number would have been higher if not for the outsourcing exercise that was conducted in 2008. This indicator reinforces NLB's commitment as a caring employer that can inspire the loyalty of its staff.

v) Friends and Fans of Library (Number of Volunteers and Volunteer Hours)

An external validation of NLB's people centric approach and measure of support from the community can be seen in the increasing number of volunteers (Table 5.1) who join and actively serve in the libraries.

| | Number of Volunteers | | Number of Volunteers Hours | |
|------|----------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|
| | (Target) | (Actual) | (Target) | (Actual) |
| FY06 | 3,200 | 7,686 | 40,000 | 51,620 |
| FY07 | 8,000 | 10,170 | 80,000 | 78,680 |
| FY08 | 8,000 | 16,680 | 96,000 | 89,406 |
| FY09 | 20,000 | 23,681 | 120,000 | 135,048 |

Table 5.1 Total Number of Volunteers and Volunteer Hours

b) Global Leadership

i) Number of Overseas Visits

As a leader in the library world, NLB has responded to frequent requests from both local and international organisations (Table 5.2) to share its practices and processes. Such requests recognise NLB as a global leader in the world of management and the provision of library services.

ii) Number of Speaking Engagements

NLB's leadership in the library world is reflected in the number of invitations to speak in conferences, both local and overseas. (Table 5.3)

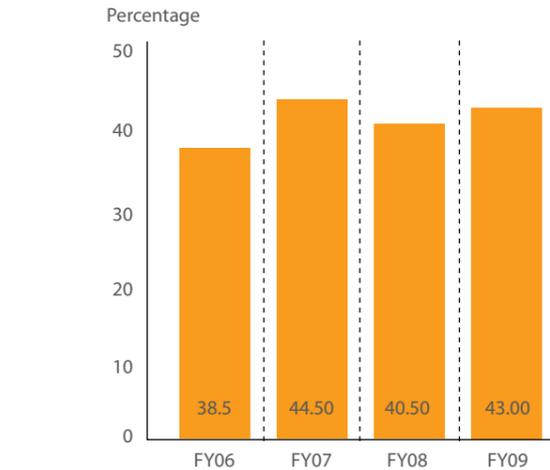


Figure 5.3 Percentage of Staff with 10 Years and More of Service

| Financial Year | No. of Overseas Visits* (Groups) |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| FY06 | 244 |
| FY07 | 232 |
| FY08 | 224 |
| FY09 | 177 |

Table 5.2 Number of Overseas Visits
* Note: Some groups may consist of more than 1 library/institution

| Financial Year | Invited | Fulfilled |
|----------------|---------|-----------|
| FY05 | N.A | 41 |
| FY06 | 176 | 156 |
| FY07 | 44 | 37 |
| FY08 | 58 | 54 |
| FY09 | 89 | 85 |

Table 5.3 Number of Speaking Engagements

c) Engagement – Organisational Climate Survey (OCS)

NLB conducts a biennial Organisational Climate Survey (OCS) among staff to determine workplace satisfaction, staff perceptions of organisational culture and leadership and employee engagement. All the surveys were conducted online with the response rates averaging 90%. Overall, the OCS results show that NLB has outdone both the Singapore National Norm and the Singapore Public Sector Norm in all categories surveyed, with Working Relationships, Company Image and Communication attaining remarkably positive scores.

d) Employee Involvement and Commitment - Staff Suggestion Participation Rate

In the area of employee involvement, there has been a healthy increase in staff participating in the Staff Suggestion Scheme (SSS) from FY05 to FY07 (Figure 5.5) and this has been consistently above the Civil Service performance norm from FY06 to FY08.

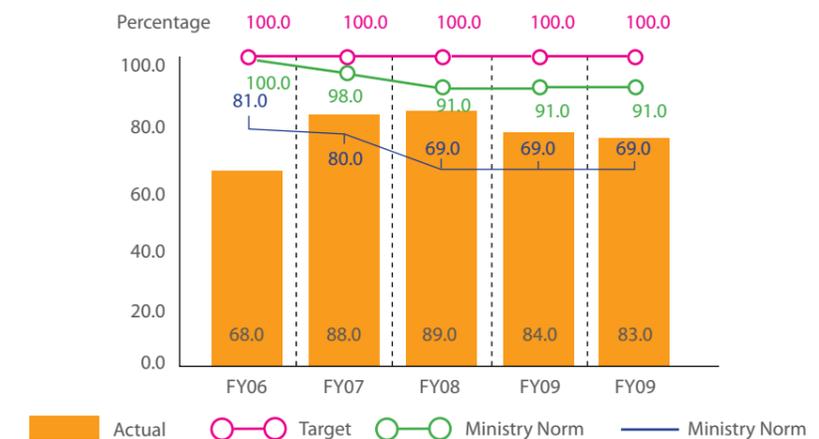


Figure 5.5 Staff Suggestion Participation Rate

e) Employee Education, Training and Development

NLB's learning and development strategies have led to staff improving their skills in their job, which is also above the Public Sector and Singapore norms (Figure 5.6).

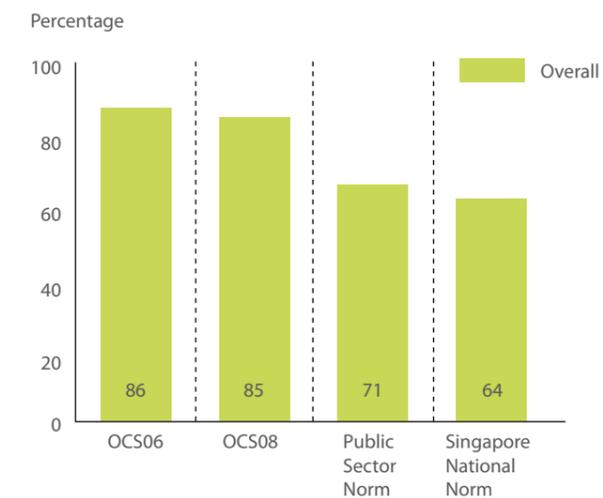


Figure 5.6 Percentage of favourable response to question on NLB having sufficient opportunities for training to improve skills

OCS Results for Career & Training Development

Average Learning Hours per Staff

NLB Management made a strategic decision to set the average learning hour target at 60 hours per staff in order to manage the operational manpower and training demands. Over the last five years, the average learning hours per staff has consistently exceeded the target (Figure 5.7).



Figure 5.7 Average Learning Hours per Staff

f) Employee Health and Satisfaction

High Staff Engagement Rate in Survey

As a voluntary survey, the biennial OCS has garnered high participation rates (FY06: 88%, FY08: 90%). The high participation rate is a reflection of employees' commitment to the organisation and their desire to contribute to the improvement of NLB.

The overall results of the engagement survey have been consistently above both the Singapore and Public Sector norm since 2006. The results also compares favourably with Nanyang Polytechnic (2009 Hewitt Best Employer Singapore Award winner) which validate the people excellence practices in NLB.

g) OCS Results for Engagement (See Figure 5.8)

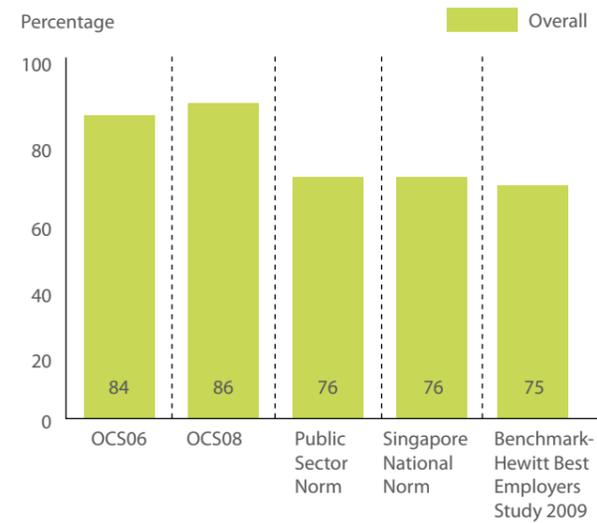


Figure 5.8 OCS Results for Engagement

h) Absenteeism Rate

Another indicator measuring staff well-being is the rate of absenteeism. The absenteeism rate (Figure 5.9) has been decreasing from FY07 to FY09 due to the success of the strategies adopted.



Figure 5.9 Absenteeism Rate (Average Number of Sick Days per Year) Average SB Absenteeism Rate: 4.9 days (2008), 5.65 days (2007)

In addition, NLB's absenteeism rate compares favourably to two Singapore Quality Award organisations.

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