



ABAC ODI JOURNAL Vision. Action. Outcome

ISSN: 2351-0617 (print), ISSN: 2408-2058 (electronic)

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ABAC ODI JOURNAL Vision. Action. Outcome Vol 13(2) pp. 97-119

<https://assumptionjournal.au.edu/index.php/odijournal>

Published by the
Organization Development Institute
Graduate School of Business and Advanced Technology Management
Assumption University Thailand

ABAC ODI JOURNAL Vision. Action. Outcome
is indexed by the Thai Citation Index and ASEAN Citation Index

Employee Learning Motivation: Employee Self-Development and Growth Mindset at Metalworks Company ABC in Thailand

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Received: 30 June 2025. Revised: 8 August 2025. Accepted: 16 August 2025

Abstract

Employee self-development is essential for an organization to grow and remain competitive. Employee self-development refers to the proactive behaviour of employees to engage in activities outside of business formalities to improve work-related expertise and skills. Employee learning motivation would be a key driver for employees to acquire new knowledge and skills to employ. This is crucial for both individual and organizational success. The aim of this study is to explore the relationship between growth mindset, motivation, empowering environment, supportive learning culture, self-efficacy, and employee self-development. The study also presents insights about them from the perceptions of employees at a metalworks company in Thailand. This study aims to contribute to the understanding of factors that foster self-development among industrial organizations in Thailand. This study investigates how growth mindset, motivation, and other psychological and environmental factors influence employee self-development at a Thai metalworks company. These data and insights then provide strategic recommendations. This study is a mixed-method study. The quantitative and qualitative data were collected via an online questionnaire. The quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive analysis and Spearman's correlation. Content analysis was used to produce final themes for the qualitative data. The sample size of the study is 52 employees. The descriptive analysis showed that growth mindset has the highest mean score of 4.53 (N=52) and employee self-development has the lowest mean score of 4.18 out of all the factors. The results from Spearman's correlation showed that self-efficacy has the highest significant positive correlation with employee self-development at $\rho = 0.63$ ($p < 0.05$). This is followed by Empowering Environment ($\rho = 0.62$), Motivation ($\rho = 0.59$), Supportive Learning Culture ($\rho = 0.52$), and lastly Growth Mindset ($\rho = 0.45$), which all had significant positive relationships. The final themes of the qualitative results include: value for personal self-development, rewards and personal fulfillment as motivators, the need for training on new tools and equipment and language skills, achieving targets and recommendations as sources of confidence and self-efficacy, and learning and development opportunities, training and

development, and autonomy as some of the most prominent factors to promote employee self-development. The findings inform practical, sustainable strategies to foster a growth-oriented and self-motivated workforce within the company.

Keywords: growth mindset, motivation, empowering environment, supportive learning culture, self-efficacy, employee self-development

Introduction

There is a direct relationship between employee growth mindset and innovative behaviour and the strengths of the employees partially mediates the positive relationship between them (Liu & Tong, 2022). Shin and Park (2024) identified motivation as a critical factor influencing employee self-development. Their findings also emphasized the importance of inclusive decision-making, as decentralized systems better align individual and organizational goals. This is to harmonize the goals of individual employees with the shared goals of the organization.

It is also known that an individual's growth mindset is foundational to the growth mindset of the organization as a whole (Eckerwall & Karlsson, 2021). Growth mindset enhances learning and development within individuals, thus by cultivating this practice and understanding its dynamics, organizations can better manage the contributing factors and challenges (Eckerwall & Karlsson, 2021). Self-directed learning activities are one way to independently foster a growth mindset. Ariyawong and Phongsatha (2017) found in their study that by creating a nurturing and supportive environment for self-directed learning, people are more eager to identify pain points and improve them by creating activities that are tailored to an individual's unique learning preferences. Through this method, individuals can collaborate effectively in a group setting, cultivate a knowledge-sharing culture, and foster a people-centered atmosphere (Ariyawong & Phongsatha, 2017)

Background of Study

In today's globalized and competitive business environment, employees' lifelong learning and self-development have become more critical than ever (Lejeune et al., 2016). More and more organizations and businesses are implementing personal development plans to support the growth and development of employees. Lejeune et al.'s (2016) study explored the relationship between personal development plans at organizations and the employees' engagement in learning activities and their perceived performance with the moderating role of employee self-directedness and this study revealed that there are positive relations between these factors. This study showed that employees self-learning not only increases the engagement of employees, but also increases their performance which in turn yields positive results on the outputs of the organization.

Garanina et al.,(2017) presented the multifaceted model deriving from the theoretical and practical features of professional and personal self-development of skilled employees. Throughout the study it was shown that self-development is a comprehensive system based on active personal transformation aided by shifts in behavioural patterns and self-regulation. Garanina et al., (2017) concluded that the main factor impacting self-development and growth of skilled professionals is meaningfulness in the work they do associated with readiness of knowledge.

Since readiness of knowledge is a significantly contributing factor, the factors influencing and relating to knowledge availability and knowledge sharing becomes critical. Intrinsic motivation is found to be one of the factors that positively relates to the four types of knowledge sharing tendencies : automatic response, rational reflection, ridiculed reflection, and deprived reflection (Sun et al., 2022). Another highlight this study revealed was that self-efficacy also relates either positively or negatively to these knowledge sharing tendencies.

Self-efficacy on the other hand when incorporated with psychological empowerment can lead to proactive work behaviour (Huang, 2017). When managers can effectively empower the employees to be more creative and productive and foster self-efficacy, organizations can see a dramatic improvement in employees' behaviour.

In Thailand's industrial sector, especially in manufacturing and metalworks companies, employee development plays a key role in driving innovation and maintaining competitiveness. However, there is limited understanding of how these factors interact specifically within Thailand's industrial and metalworks settings.

ABC Metalworks company was founded in 2015 in Thailand. The company has over 50 dedicated employees who are all committed to drive innovation through engineering and uplift competitiveness through cutting-edge solutions. An in-person meeting was set up with the Managing Director (MD) and the General Manager (GM) to examine the current situation of the employees at ABC. This would help identify pain points, challenges, or any opportunities that may exist for the company. This study aims to explore how growth mindset, motivation, and other key factors influence employee self-development within a metalworks company in Thailand.

Organization Diagnosis

Various insights about ABC Metalworks company were gained during the initial discussion. Information gathered from this in-person meeting and discussion was utilized to conduct an organizational diagnosis. A SWOT analysis identifying several strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats would assist to evaluate the organization's internal capabilities and assess the external factors. These in turn would inform the organizational diagnosis by identifying areas of focus for development.

Table 1

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Technically Proficient Workforce: ABC's technically proficient workforce offers a strong foundation for self-directed learning initiatives. Established SOPs: The company's existing standard operating procedures (SOPs) and internal training structures offer a useful platform for enhancing employee motivation, performance, and continuous skill development. Innovative Business Model: ABC's one-stop service model provides customers with an integrated, seamless solution to tools management, addressing key pain points despite the company's relatively small size and recent entry into the market. Competitive Compensation: Employees receive salaries above the market average for comparable	Insufficient Support Systems: The absence of structured support mechanisms such as mentorship and coaching limits employees' ability to pursue self-directed learning effectively. Additionally, there is a lack of an internal knowledge-sharing platform to facilitate peer learning and collaboration. Skill Gaps Due to Rapid Growth: The company's fast-paced expansion has outpaced employees' ability to develop the necessary skills, resulting in inefficiencies and performance gaps, thus the need for self-development. Limited English Proficiency: Many employees face challenges in understanding technical data and resources due to limited English proficiency, which hinders effective self-learning.

roles, which contributes positively to morale, motivation, and retention. 5. Collaborative Culture: The company promotes a culture of engagement, teamwork, and cooperation. This environment not only strengthens employee loyalty but also reduces turnover and fosters a sense of belonging. 6. Flat Organizational Structure: a flat organizational structure at the company also supports autonomy, which is conducive to developing a growth mindset.	4. Lack of Formalized Training: The lack of structured training and mentorship inhibits employees' ability to build self-efficacy and pursue personal growth, both key drivers of motivation and development. 5. Weak Employee-Manager Relationships: The level of professional connection between employees and managers is low, with limited emphasis on open communication and mutual respect which adversely impacts a supportive learning culture. 6. Unclear Career Path (Non-Sales Roles): While a clear career path exists for the sales team, employees in other departments lack visibility into advancement opportunities, which can impact motivation and retention.
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
1. Digitalization & AI Integration for Enhanced Performance and Strategic Decision-Making: By integrating AI and digital tools, the business can automate processes to improve employee performance and efficiency. Additionally, AI-driven data analytics enables timely and informed strategic decision-making, leading to better overall business outcomes. 2. Gaining Competitive Advantage through Personalization: This innovative approach ensures that ABC stands out in the industry, enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. 3. Partnerships with Educational Institutions: Collaborating with local educational institutions can provide additional resources and expertise to upskill employees' capacity to generate more revenue. 4. High Market Demand: The strong unique selling point (USP) of the products and services leads to high market demand, presenting significant growth potential and an opportunity to increase market share.	1. Competitive Job Market: The competitive landscape for skilled workers may lead to challenges in retaining talent if employees feel unsupported in their professional growth. 2. Economic Factors: Economic downturns could limit budget allocations for training and development initiatives, further exacerbating issues related to employee motivation and skill stagnation. 3. Price Volatility of Raw Materials: Steel and other essential materials experience price fluctuations, which can increase manufacturing costs and reduce profit margins. 4. Tariffs and Trade Restrictions: Changes in trade policies, such as tariffs, may raise the cost of raw materials, impacting production expenses. 5. Rapid Technological Changes: Intensified global competition, increased investment in R&D, and technological convergence drive rapid advancements that may quickly render current skills obsolete, requiring continuous learning that the company may not yet adequately support. 6. Burnout and Employee Turnover: High work pressure caused by a lack of sufficient support can lead to job dissatisfaction, increasing the risk of employee turnover despite currently low rates.

Statement of Research Purpose

Employees at ABC Metalworks Company demonstrate limited engagement in proactive learning and problem-solving activities. Meanwhile, the company also lacks support, resources, and structure to facilitate the importance of employee self-development and self-learning motivation that is desired. This study emphasizes identifying barriers to this challenge and implementing strategies to foster a self-driven, growth-minded skilled workforce who are capable of creativity and independent decision-making. The purpose of this study is to identify psychological and environmental factors that influence employee self-development and to propose strategies to foster a growth-oriented learning culture in an industrial context.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the influence of a growth mindset on employee self-development.
2. To investigate the relationship between employee motivation and self-development.
3. To explore how an empowering environment impacts employee self-development.

4. To assess the role of a supportive learning culture in enhancing employee self-development.

5. To analyse the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationships between growth mindset, motivation, empowering environment, supportive learning culture, and employee self-development.

6. To contribute to the understanding of factors that foster self-development among employees within industrial organizations in Thailand.

Research Questions

1. How does a growth mindset influence employee self-development?

2. What is the relationship between employee motivation and self-development?

3. How does an empowering environment impact employee self-development?

4. What is the role of a supportive learning culture in enhancing employee self-development?

5. What is the mediating role of self-efficacy in the relationships between growth mindset, motivation, empowering environment, supportive learning culture, and employee self-development?

6. What kind of contributions can be done to understand the factors that foster self-development among employees within industrial organizations in Thailand?

Significance of Study

The findings from this research offer insights into fostering sustainable employee self-development and strategically promoting self-learning motivation. Metalworks company ABC, stands to gain substantial benefits from the findings of this research as they would offer actionable insights regarding the barriers to employee self-development and self-learning motivation factors. The strategic recommendations provided from this research can guide the company in creating a supportive structure, empowering policies, and an inclusive culture that encourages continuous learning, creativity and innovation, and improve the overall organizational performance. This research will also contribute to the field of Organization Development (OD) by addressing the current issues of learning and development among skilled professionals. This would contribute to the body of knowledge in Organization Development, particularly in strategies that promote workforce growth and learning. This study supports the development of a growth mindset culture by highlighting how the organization can foster continuous learning, resilience, and the belief that employees can develop their skills through effort and support.

Scope and Limitations of Study

Scope

This study focuses on only one metalworks company in Thailand and the current situation of employee self-development practices and the motivational factors influencing self-learning among employees. The scope contains the organizational dynamics and culture, leadership influence, and the perceived attitudes towards continuous development by the employees.

Limitations

There are some limitations as well. There is a scarcity of existing research on employee self-development in Thai manufacturing companies, making it challenging to establish a baseline or compare results. Time constraints restricted the project to delivering findings and recommendations only, without execution. The sample size was small (less than 100 respondents), limiting the range of applicable analysis methods. The small population size limits the generalizability of the findings beyond the case organization.

Literature Review**Social Cognitive Theory**

Social Cognitive Theory by Albert Bandura accentuates the role of observational learning, self-efficacy, and self-regulation in an individual's behavior. Bandura's work highlights how belief in one's abilities (self-efficacy) affects motivation, learning, and performance. There are three components to this theory : environmental factors, cognitive factors, and behavioural factors. Under cognitive factors, there is self-efficacy and this happens to be the most prominent factor in the theory according to Behaviour Institute (2024). The Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) integrates behavioural factors such as learning and growth mindset, motivational factors, and supportive environmental factors which would help align and categorize the findings of this research.

Self-Efficacy Theory

According to Lopez-Garrido (2025), self-efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in their capability to execute behaviors necessary to generate desired outcomes. Self-Efficacy itself has four contributing factors, performance outcomes, vicarious experiences, physiological feedback, and verbal persuasion (Lopez-Garrido, 2025). The self-efficacy theory states that as employees increase in performance and self-doubt decreases as the sense of efficacy rises (Lopez-Garrido, 2025). Albert Bandura founded this theory and Bandura (1994) states that people with a profound self-belief see their excitement as something that drives their performance whilst those who have self-doubt can only see this excitement as an obstacle. This suggests that when employees have a high self-efficacy, it increases their potential to take initiative in upskilling and reframe their perspectives of viewing obstacles into opportunities for growth. Pertaining to employee continuous self-learning and progression, self-efficacy plays a pivotal role by shaping how the employees approach challenges and set goals. When employees have a high self-efficacy, they are more likely to engage in self-directed learning, increase resilience, sustain continuous learning in the workplace.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory, or SDT, consists of three core psychological needs : autonomy, competence, and relatedness and when employees are satisfied with these needs, they are highly likely to be motivated, both intrinsically and extrinsically (Deci & Ryan, 2008, as cited in Ackerman, 2018). This suggests that externally driven behaviours such as skill development or goal achievement can become a personal value which would lead to a sustained engagement and deeper commitment to learning and growth. With respect to employee self-development, SDT suggests that when the work environment is able to support these psychological needs either through providing opportunities, providing constructive feedback, or fostering a supportive environment, employees are more likely to engage in learning and development behaviours. The Self-Determination Theory provides a valuable theoretical basis

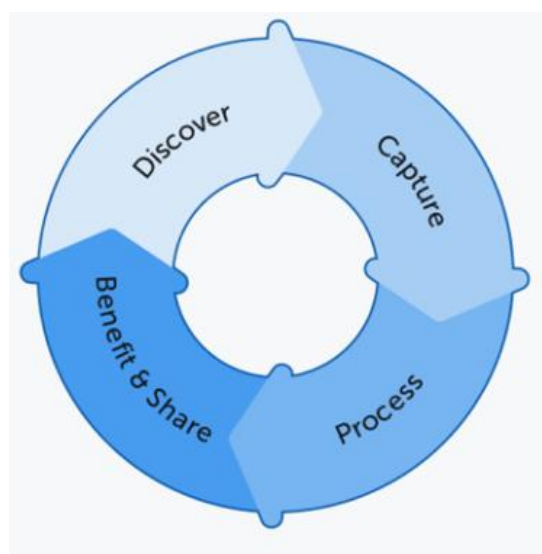
for exploring how workplace conditions can influence employees' internal motivation for self-development.

Knowledge Management Cycle Model

In Knowledge Management there are three states of knowledge : data, information, and decision (Frobe, 2018). According to Baskerville and Dulipovici (2006), knowledge management is an essential field building on conceptual insights from information economics, strategic management, organizational culture, organizational behavior, organizational structure, artificial intelligence, quality management, and organizational performance measurement. The Knowledge Management Cycle Model as shown in Figure 1 depicts that there are four stages in the knowledge management discipline : (1) discovering where the knowledge comes from - this could be from employees' skills and experience or stored data, (2) capture all the knowledge and information through surveys or feedback forms, (3) process and analyse the knowledge gathered in the previous steps into a structured and easily accessible form, and lastly (4) for this easily accessible knowledge to be available to staff at any moment to maximise performance (Evans et al., 2014). Andreev (2025) claims that leadership must prioritize and reward knowledge sharing and encourage employees to continuously create knowledge and share it for the sake of learning and innovation.

Figure 1

Knowledge Management Cycle Model



Note: From “Knowledge Management” by Ivan Andreev (2025). Copyright 2025 by Valamis.

Knowledge Management Cycle Model in Figure 1, with regards to employee self-development, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how knowledge is identified, collected, shared, and created within an organization and through this readily accessible knowledge, employees can obtain any relevant information that would support their continuous learning and development by integrating knowledge activities into everyday work routines, which fosters a culture of sustainable self-development and self-directed learning.

Adult-Learning Theory

In 1968, Malcolm Knowles, identified a gap in learning theories and later theorized that learning as a child and learning as an adult are entirely different and founded the adult learning theory (Park University, 2025). There are six principles in this theory : (1) Need to know - adults have a desire to understand the reasons for learning, (2) Self-directed learning - adults

prefer freedom and autonomy over their learning, (3) Drawing from lived experiences - adults draw personal and professional experiences into their learning, (4) readiness to learn - if a subject is directly relevant to them, adults are more likely to engage in learning, (5) Life-centered orientation to learning - adult learners prefer to learn something that could be immediately applied to their situation, and lastly (6) Intrinsic motivation to learn - adults need internal motivation and a desire for personal and professional development rather than external rewards (Feder, 2021). This theory focuses on how adults can effectively learn and since all the employees are adults, the application of this theory within the company can create workplace culture and work environment that support autonomy and offer opportunities to reflect and apply new knowledge which would encourage the employees to embrace continuous growth.

Social Learning Theory

Albert Bandura founded another theory called the Social Learning Theory and this theory emphasizes that people learn through observation and imitation as direct reinforcement alone cannot influence learning behaviours in people (Sutton, 2021). The key components of this theory are : (1) Attention - Notice the behaviour, (2) Retention - Remember observation, (3) Reproduction - Perform the observed behaviour, and (4) Motivation - Desire to adopt behaviour (McLeod, 2025). A classic example would be a customer service trainee learning how to give quality customer service by observing how an experienced colleague smiles at and speaks with customers. Regarding employee growth and learning, the Social Learning theory offers a valuable perspective by highlighting that employees often develop new skills and habits by observing colleagues, mentors, or leaders within the company. Hence, having visible role models who are innovative and value learning and growth, could empower employees to mimic this behaviour.

Self-Leadership Theory

Manz and Neck founded the Self Leadership Theory in 1987 which theorized that individuals can lead and manage themselves toward the performance they desire (Flashhub, 2023). Within the realm of employee self-learning, the Self Leadership theory urges the importance of an individual's initiative to be responsible for their own growth. The theory explains that when an employee adopts self-leading behaviours such as goal-setting or visualizing successful outcomes, this employee will increasingly become motivated to be better equipped to perform work tasks and responsibilities and progressively pursue self-development opportunities to remain competent and fulfilled.

Social Recognition Theory

Social Recognition Theory was developed by Yoesoep Edhie Rachmad in 2022. This theory expresses that acts of social recognition such as giving compliments, acknowledging efforts, or appreciating individuals for their contributions positively influences an individual's motivation, satisfaction, and engagement (Rachmad, 2024). When considering employee self-development, leadership can foster a recognition culture and promote transparent and consistent recognition practices to increase motivation and the desire to constantly improve themselves via reskilling and upskilling. This positive influence would encourage employees to proactively seek opportunities to develop skills, mindsets, and capabilities to ensure that self-development and self-directed learning are celebrated aspects of the workplace.

Business Agility Theory

Business Agility Theory indicates an organization's ability to promptly change business processes during market shifts, technological advancements, or demand and supply changes and still effectively manage these uncertainties and preserve their competitive advantage(s) (Oosterhout, 2010, as cited in Bronlet, 2023). A business with employees who are prepared to navigate through these uncertainties by responding effectively to change, have the ability to innovate, and take on new roles and responsibilities would be agile and competitive in dynamic markets. Thus, fostering employee self-development is vital as this would equip the employees with the skills, attitude, mindset, and resilience required to adapt swiftly and contribute to organizational success.

Employee Self-Development

Employee development means enhancing an individual's ability to function effectively at work (McCauley & Hezlett, 2001, as cited in Ellingson & Noe, 2017). Employee self-development refers to the act of employees participating in activities outside of formal organizational requirements to improve work-related knowledge and skills (Orvis & Leffler, 2011, as cited in Ellingson & Noe, 2017). Additionally, taking initiative to identify learning needs and choosing to learn those needs and evaluate the learning outcomes is called self-directed learning (Knowles, 1975, as cited in Ellingson & Noe, 2017). Employee self-development benefits individual employees while enhancing team collaboration and innovation, hence benefiting the workplace and contributing to organizational success (Andronic, 2025). Moreover, employee self-development cultivates a growth mindset in individuals which facilitates them to adapt and flourish in dynamic environments since these individuals would have better engagement and increased productivity (Andronic, 2025).

Self-Efficacy

Self-Efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform a task, achieve goals, or implement actions to generate expected outcomes successfully (Nursiani et al., 2023). In Nursiani et al.'s study in 2023, the researchers examined the influence that self-efficacy has on self-development patterns of 100 respondents who regularly have to engage in decision-makings for the directions, strategy, and operations of the business and found that having high self-efficacy will have an impact on good self-development patterns. Furthermore, the researchers concluded that one should have good self-efficacy to possess advantageous self-development patterns and boost innovations within the business. In addition, based on the meta-analysis of the relevant literature done by Judge et al. (2007), self-efficacy has a particular contribution to performance which is that self-efficacy can be a predictor for task performance, but not job performance. Based on these findings, self-efficacy can be seen as an underlying enabler for employee self-development, as it empowers employees to be proactive, persist through challenges, become resilient, and actively seek growth opportunities which are all essential behaviours in today's vastly evolving work landscapes.

Growth Mindset

Harvard Business School defines a growth mindset as the attitude that views intelligence and capabilities as things that can be improved by putting in effort (Cote, 2022). Additionally, to develop a growth mindset, one must commit to the occurring process of learning and development with a thirst for knowledge, welcoming feedback, embracing failure, sharpening problem solving skills, and remaining flexible (Freeman, 2023). The Managing Director of Oregon Tilth, a non-profit organization advised that to establish a growth mindset

culture in an organization, both leaders and employees must play their part to support a learning environment, recognize the need for growth, foster collaboration, and reward those who exhibit a willingness to learn (Freeman, 2023). In Liu and Tong's (2022) study of 244 employees in China, it was found that growth mindset positively related to innovative behaviour and that employees who demonstrate a growth mindset also displayed innovation in attaining goals, learning from mistakes, and observing the strengths of colleagues. Eckerwall and Karlsson (2021) conducted a growth mindset study on an individual and organizational level and found that employees' growth mindset is rudimentary to cultivating an organizational growth mindset culture to create an organization that embraces learning and development. These findings indicate that a growth mindset is an important tool for employees and organizations to have and a solid step towards promoting self-development in employees.

Motivation

The London School of Business and Finance defines motivation as a force that directs the actions of a person, a decider of goals, and the provider of the desire to reach that goal (LSBF, 2024). There are two types of motivation : intrinsic and extrinsic (Pandey, 2025). Research has shown that intrinsic motivation is positively related to self-efficacy in employees which in turn encourages employees to practice knowledge sharing and innovation in the workplace (Sun et al., 2022). With regards to extrinsic motivation, Locke and Schattke (2019) deduced that money alone cannot motivate an employee to commit to self-development, instead extrinsic motivation in this context usually serves as an employee "doing something in order to get some future value", which would lead to completing tasks with a standard of excellence. Shin and Park (2024) examined the effect of motivation for self-development on job performance and concluded that motivation for self-development is critical in organizations as this would assist in the organization to create new opportunities and that mandatory strategies for motivation and self-development should be implemented in organizations.

Empowering Environment

An empowering environment refers to creating a work environment where employees feel valued, supported, and trusted in their work with an adequate amount of autonomy to succeed in performing any work tasks and responsibilities (Natarajan, 2022). Leaders play a major role in fostering the atmosphere or an environment at a workplace (Siena Heights University, 2022). Hence, leaders can create an empowering environment by being empowering leaders themselves. A lack of empowering practices within the workplace causes engagement level of employees to be at the lowest and the more the empowering leader creates an empowering leadership, the more positive the effects are on employee performance, engagement and the more employees are likely to pursue beyond their limitations (Medhn Desta & Mulie, 2024). An empowering environment also involves providing employees with necessary tools and resources to effectively do their job and granting autonomy to the employees with decision-making power (Venturiz, 2025). Additionally, in this Venturiz LLC's article it is stated that organizations must implement protocols to achieve this empowering environment and that transparent communication, training, and support to employees are required. Annuar et al. 's (2021) research led to conclusions that in order for individuals to pursue learning and contribute to their self-development, organizational support is required to not only comprehend the theories, but also have practical applications of this learning. An empowerment intervention conducted by Laschinger et al. (2012) proved that the employees who underwent the workplace empowerment intervention program revealed increased results in job satisfaction, overall empowerment, motivation, and trust in management which resulted

in employees thriving and contributing more. From the findings, it can be deduced that empowering environments are essential for promoting employee self-development since they would provide support, psychological safety, and foster a workplace where every employee feels they have the capability to grow, learn more, and exceed expectations.

Supportive Learning Culture

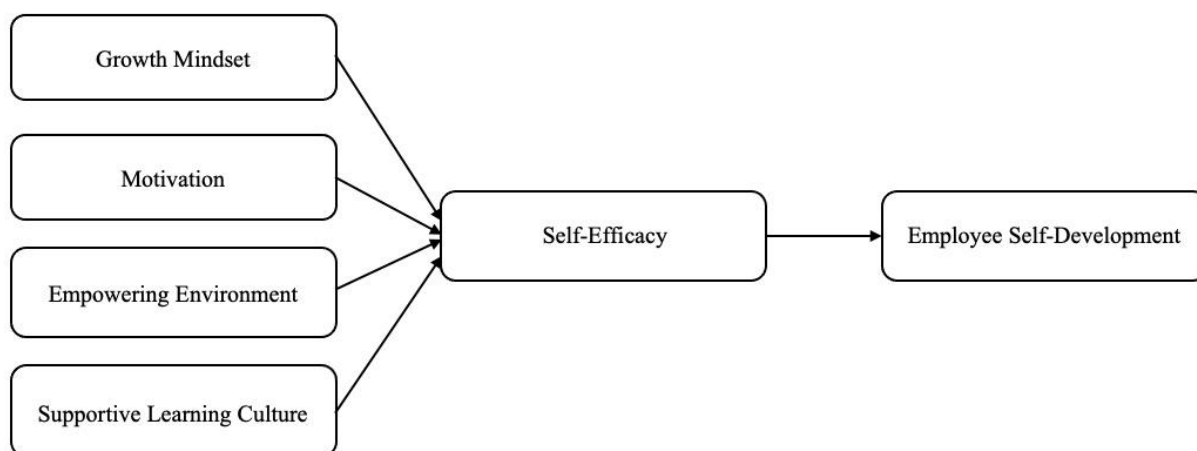
A learning culture as defined by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, abbreviated CIPD (2020) is a culture that immerses learning into the workplace at an individual, team, and organizational level and requires leaders to support employees towards a shared vision of learning and reflection. There are several reasons why a supportive learning culture would positively influence employee self-development within organizations. A Harvard Review Article, 'Build a Strong Learning Culture on Your Team', stated that there are two conditions required for employees to learn : context and capacity (McKenna, 2023). McKenna (2023) continues to explain that employees who are enthusiastic learners tend to be more innovative, agile, more capable to generate more knowledge, more engaged and moreover, since a visible supported learning culture is created, this makes the organization stand out in the market to top-tier talents which in turn can result in increased profitability of the organization. Organizations where a learning culture is supported - continuous learning is encouraged - also has a positive influence on employee self-efficacy which indicates that employees are more likely to feel confident about the ability to handle change and improve performance (Chughtai et al., 2023). The findings stipulate that a supportive learning environment can drive innovation and individual growth among employees.

Conceptual Framework

To assess how employees at Company ABC engage in self-development, this study proposes a conceptual framework that explores the relationships between various organizational and individual variables. The development conceptual framework is founded on existing theories and past literature evidence. The framework focuses on variables such as : growth mindset, motivation, empowering environment, supportive learning culture, and self-efficacy to explore how they collectively can influence employee self-development.

Figure 2

Conceptual Framework of the Study



Note: Developed for this study by the researchers, 2025.

Research Methodology

Research Design

This research is a mixed-method research using quantitative and qualitative data to investigate the relationship between growth mindset, motivation, empowering environment, supportive learning culture, self-efficacy, and employee self-development and to gain insights of them from the employees of company ABC. A mixed-methods design was employed to combine the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. This design is particularly valuable for this study as it allows for the identification of measurable patterns through survey data, while also providing deeper insights into employee attitudes, motivations, and lived experiences via interviews. This design enhances the study by offering a more complete understanding of employee self-development within a growth mindset culture.

Research Instrument

The authors used online Google Forms to create the questionnaire for collecting data. Quantitative data is collected by statements using a 5-point Likert Scale : 1 - Strongly Disagree, 2 - Disagree, 3 - Slightly Agree, 4 - Agree, and 5 - Strongly Agree. There were 24 quantitative questions : 4 questions per variable across six variables, 5 open-ended qualitative questions for deeper insights and perspectives, and 9 demographic questions, thus 38 questions altogether.

Research Sampling

Primary data was collected from the employees of company ABC. The company is a small-sized firm with approximately 60 employees in total. The sample size of the study is 52 permanent employees selected based on purposive sampling. The selected participants of the questionnaire are all skilled, full-time employees of the company with the Managing Director of the company exempted. This ensured that all participants had relevant experience and insights and target those most familiar with the organization's practices. The questionnaire received a total of 52 responses, hence a 100% response rate.

Data Collection

The online questionnaire link created by Google Forms was sent to the General Manager (researchers' contact person) of the organization and shared with sample employees. The form was created in Thai language since company ABC is a Thai company. Before any questions, clear instructions were provided for all the respondents to successfully complete the questionnaire correctly. Confidentiality was also assured, meaning no respondent will have to reveal their names and will remain anonymous throughout the entire process. During this process, informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their voluntary involvement to ensure all participants fully understood the purpose and scope of the research. All collected data were securely stored digital files accessible only to the researchers, ensuring compliance with ethical standards for data privacy and protection.

Data Analysis

For the collected quantitative data, descriptive analysis containing mean scores, percentages, and standard deviation was used as well as Spearman's correlation. Spearman's correlation was used over Pearson correlation due to the non-parametric nature of the data and the relatively small sample size, $n = 52$, which is less than 60. Since the assumption of normality could not be guaranteed, Spearman's correlation is an appropriate analysis method to examine the strength and direction of the variables in this study. As for the qualitative data collected

from the open-ended questions included in the questionnaire, content analysis was deployed. For quantitative data :

1. Descriptive Analysis:

- Frequency and Percentage for demographic data
- Number, Mean, and Standard Deviation for each item in the survey

2. Cronbach's Alpha Pilot Test

The internal consistency of the quantitative items was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α), with values above 0.70 considered acceptable.

3. Spearman's correlation:

Strength and direction of relationships between growth mindset, motivation, empowering environment, supportive learning culture, self-efficacy, and employee self-development.

For qualitative data:

Content Analysis: The responses from the open-ended questions were examined to identify recurring patterns and insights. The answers of the respondents were reviewed, coded by three coders, and categorized into key themes that portrayed the insights and perceptions of the responding employees.

Demographic Information of Respondents

At Company ABC, males outnumbered females by a 2:1 ratio. Officers make up the majority with 40 employees (76.9%). The vast majority - 36 out of 52, or 69.2% - have a Bachelor's Degree. The largest age group is sixteen employees aged between 30-39 years. The '1-3 years of service' option has the highest number of employees of eighteen. 57.6% of the employees have been with the company for 3 years or less. 33 employees currently have or plan to have children under legal responsibility.

Results and Discussion

Table 2

Overall Rating by Mean Score

Variable	Components or Elements or Items	Overall Rating (1-5)
Growth Mindset	• Embrace Challenges • Self-driven • Consistent Effort • Constructive Feedback	4.5
Motivation	• Enjoy tasks for internal value and external motivators • Work with clear goals and outcomes • Confident on efforts while achieving objectives	4.3
Empowering Environment	• Autonomy and Decision-making • Psychological Safety • Growth Support - Professional Development • Resource Availability	4.3
Supportive Learning Culture	• Continuous Learning Opportunities • Mentorship • Collaborative Knowledge Sharing • Encouragement of innovation and initiatives	4.4
Self-Efficacy	• Enhance confidence • Motivation by observing Colleague's success and positive feedback • Perform effectively under pressure	4.3

Variable	Components or Elements or Items	Overall Rating (1-5)
Employee Self-Development	• Pursue learning to enhance skills and career • Set SMART goals • Regular self-assessment for improvement	4.2

Table 3*Descriptive Analysis of the Variables*

Variables (N = 52)	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Growth Mindset	4.53	0.5	Very High
Motivation	4.35	0.53	Very High
Empowering Environment	4.29	0.56	Very High
Supportive Learning Culture	4.42	0.58	Very High
Self-Efficacy	4.31	0.55	Very High
Employee Self-Development	4.18	0.57	High

For quantitative data, the mean scores were interpreted using the following scale:

- 1.00-1.80 = Very Low,
- 1.81-2.60 = Low,
- 2.61-3.40 = Moderate,
- 3.41-4.20 = High,
- 4.21-5.00 = Very High.

Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the responses.

Table 2 and Table 3 shows the results of the descriptive analysis of the variables of this study. There were relatively high mean scores across all the variables. This indicates that the perceptions of the respondents are strong and positive.

Growth Mindset received the highest mean score (mean = 4.53, SD = 0.5). This can be interpreted that the respondents strongly exhibit the enthusiasm to learn, see challenges as opportunities for growth, work hard when they encounter setbacks, put in consistent effort to reskill and upskill themselves, and use constructive feedback as a tool for improvement.

Motivation has a mean score of 4.35 (with SD = 0.531) and Supportive Learning Culture has a mean score of 4.42 (with SD = 0.58). The scores follow each other closely which highlights the presence of external factors that encourage learning as well and internal drive that contributes for personal development. This result aligns with the previous literature that found that a supportive learning environment and motivation are vital predictors of employee self-development.

Likewise, Empowering Environment and Self-Efficacy were also closely rated, with a mean score of 4.29, SD = 0.563 and mean score of 4.31, SD = 0.549, respectively. This result implies that employees feel relatively confident in their roles and the work they do, get inspiration from successful colleagues to improve self-performance, value positive feedback to boost self-confidence, and also feel fully capable to perform well under pressure. These conditions and mindsets are essential to achieve the desired outcome of employee self-development within the organization.

Employee Self-Development is the desired outcome of this study and has resulted in the lowest mean score (mean score = 4.18, SD = 0.569). Although overall, this falls under a high range, and can convey that employees engage in development and growth, seek opportunities for improvement, set goals, regularly assess their own performance, and seek constructive feedback from colleagues and managers, the low mean score may be indicating that there are some barriers that are preventing employees from adopting self-development practices at their full potential. This can be due to a lack of support from the organization, lack of resources, or lack of available time.

The standard deviations are all relatively low. This implies there is high consistency in the responses, hence most respondents share similar perceptions about employee self-development levels at company ABC.

Figure 3

Spearman's Correlation Scale Interpretation

Spearman ρ	Correlation
≥ 0.70	Very strong relationship
0.40-0.69	Strong relationship
0.30-0.39	Moderate relationship
0.20-0.29	Weak relationship
0.01-0.19	No or negligible relationship
This descriptor applies to both positive and negative relationships. (Adapted From Dancey and Reidy 2004)40	

Note: From "Pilot Validation of the Tuberous Sclerosis-Associated Neuropsychiatric Disorders (TAND) Checklist" by Leclezio et al. (2015). Copyright 2015 by Anna Jansen.

Table 4

Spearman's Correlation Results, Interpretation, and Ranking

Pairs	Correlation Coefficient (ρ)	p-value ($p < 0.05$)	Interpretation	Ranking
GM-SE	0.54	$p < 0.001$	Significant positive strong relationship	4
MO-SE	0.52	$p < 0.001$	Significant positive strong relationship	6
EE-SE	0.41	$p < 0.001$	Significant positive strong relationship	9
SLC-SE	0.44	$p < 0.001$	Significant positive strong relationship	8
SE-ESD	0.63	$p < 0.001$	Significant positive strong relationship	1
GM-ESD	0.45	$p < 0.001$	Significant positive strong relationship	7
MO-ESD	0.59	$p < 0.001$	Significant positive strong relationship	3

Note: GM = Growth Mindset, MO = Motivation, EE = Empowering Environment, SLC = Supportive Learning Culture, SE = Self-Efficacy, ESD = Employee Self-Development

The results of the correlation analysis as shown in table 4 revealed that all relationships between variables were statistically significant ($p < 0.05$). All Spearman's ρ values were positive, indicating strong positive correlations. This is interpreted using the scale shown in Figure 3.

Self-Efficacy emerged as the strongest driver of Employee Self-Development ($\rho = 0.64$). This suggests that employees with high self-efficacy are significantly more likely to pursue self-development activities. The company should therefore prioritize initiatives that

build employee confidence, such as mentorship programs, targeted training, and recognition systems.

Empowering Environment ($\rho = 0.62$) and Motivation ($\rho = 0.59$) also showed strong correlations with Employee Self-Development. Providing autonomy, recognition, and growth opportunities can foster employees' willingness to engage in development activities.

Significant positive correlations were also observed between Self-Efficacy and its predictors:

- Growth Mindset ($\rho = 0.53$)
- Motivation ($\rho = 0.52$)
- Supportive Learning Culture ($\rho = 0.44$)
- Empowering Environment ($\rho = 0.41$)

These findings suggest that employees' self-confidence is reinforced by both internal factors (e.g., mindset, motivation) and external conditions (e.g., empowerment, culture). Companies aiming to enhance self-efficacy should integrate growth mindset principles, foster a supportive learning environment, and cultivate empowering leadership styles. Additionally, Supportive Learning Culture was positively related to both Self-Efficacy ($\rho = 0.44$) and Employee Self-Development ($\rho = 0.52$), highlighting its dual influence on confidence and development. Establishing mentorship programs, regular training, and knowledge-sharing platforms could enhance the learning culture and promote sustained self-development. Overall, these quantitative findings suggest that for Company ABC, strategic efforts should focus on building an environment that empowers, supports, and motivates employees, thereby strengthening self-efficacy and promoting continuous learning.

From the quantitative analysis, it is evident that the strategic focus for company ABC should be building a culture that empowers, supports, motivates, and develops employees. Investing in self-efficacy and an empowering environment will yield long-term benefits in employee engagement, innovation, and organizational performance. This data-driven insight provides a strong foundation for HR and leadership teams to refine talent development strategies and create an organization that fosters continuous learning and growth.

Table 5

Final Themes from Qualitative Data

Variable	Qualitative Question from Survey	Final Themes	Frequency
Employee Self-Development	How does the organization support your personal development?	Learning opportunities	10
		Flexibility and autonomy	7
		Understanding the strength and weakness	3
		Training & Development	24
Self-Efficacy	What has been your biggest source of confidence in your role? (e.g., past achievements, feedback, learning from others, achieving targets, customer satisfaction rate, performance appraisal, appreciative comments, etc.)	Customer satisfaction/acceptance	11
		Achieved target	17
		Recommendations from others	7
		Personal ability	12

Variable	Qualitative Question from Survey	Final Themes	Frequency
Growth Mindset	Can you share an example of a challenge or setback at work that contributed to your personal growth?	Sales Target	7
		Negotiation Skill	1
		Communication barriers	2
		Personal self-development	6
		Frequent plan changes	4
		Customer relation management	9
		Problem Solving	5
Motivation	Which motivates you more—internal satisfaction (personal fulfilment, recognition, sense of achievement, etc.) or external rewards (bonus, promotion, pay rise, career advancement, etc.)? Can you describe a situation where either played a key role?	Internal motivation - personal fulfilment, acceptance	37
		External motivation - bonuses, commission	17
Supportive Learning Culture	What learning opportunities at Company ABC have been the most valuable for your professional growth? How could they be improved?	Sales Skill/technique	4
		Training on new tools & techniques	27
		Language	2

To complement the quantitative findings, open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire to obtain qualitative results. After coding the qualitative data, final themes for each variable were produced. The final themes can be seen in Table 5. The qualitative data would offer more insights into the perceptions and experiences of the employees at company ABC regarding employee self-development.

Employee Self-Development

Four themes emerged: learning opportunities, flexibility and autonomy, understanding strengths and weaknesses, and training and development. The themes of learning opportunities and training and development reflect a positive organizational commitment to skill growth. Flexibility and autonomy highlight employees' appreciation for freedom and authority in decision-making related to their tasks and career paths. The theme of understanding strengths and weaknesses indicates a level of self-awareness among employees, serving as a foundation for self-development. These qualitative findings align with quantitative results, showing that employees perceive themselves as engaged learners with a growth mindset.

Self-Efficacy

The final themes for self-efficacy include customer satisfaction or acceptance, achieving targets, recommendations from others, and personal ability. They each represent sources of employee confidence. Confidence stems both from external validation, such as customer satisfaction and target achievement, and internal factors, like valuing feedback and belief in personal capabilities. This demonstrates that employees' self-efficacy is built through a balance of external outcomes and internal assurance.

Growth Mindset

Respondents identified several challenges that contributed to their growth, including sales targets, negotiation skills, communication barriers, personal self-development, frequent plan changes, customer relationship management, and problem-solving. Overcoming these challenges indicates high resilience. Employees reported learning negotiation and problem-solving skills, adapting to frequent plan changes, and managing customer relationships effectively. The diversity of themes reflects the complex demands employees face at work, shaping their growth mindset.

Motivation

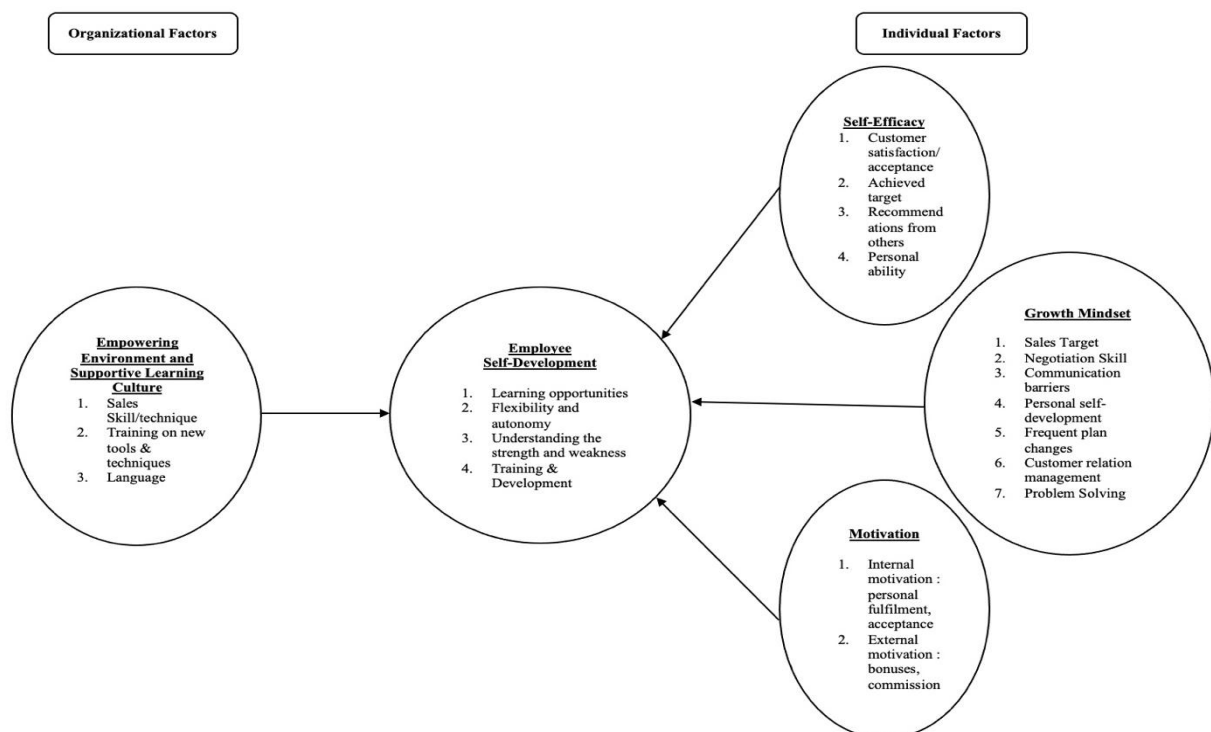
Motivational themes divided into intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic motivators include personal fulfillment and acceptance, while extrinsic motivators encompass bonuses and commissions. These factors represent key areas the organization can target to support and enhance employee self-development.

Supportive Learning Culture

Three themes surfaced: sales skills/techniques, training on new tools and techniques, and language. Employees recognize the importance of practical, work-related training for their professional growth. Suggestions for improvement highlight opportunities for the company to expand and diversify learning programs, fostering a culture where continuous learning and self-development are valued and pursued.

Figure 4

Integrated Model of Employee Self-Development: Individual and Organizational Influences



Note: Developed for this study by the researchers, 2025.

Figure 4 represents the integrated model developed from the final themes of the qualitative findings of the study. It illustrates how employee self-development is influenced by both individual and organizational factors. The individual factors reflect the employees' internal beliefs, attitudes, and drives toward self-learning and improvement. On the organizational side, it represents the external conditions required to provide resources, empowerment, and tools necessary for employees to grow. Together, these factors interact to shape the extent and effectiveness of self-development among employees at company ABC.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study focused on multiple factors that influence employee self-development at metalworks company ABC. The quantitative and qualitative data from the online questionnaire indicates that the organization values learning and development and is powered by a team of skilled employees. The descriptive analysis of the quantitative data indicates that the respondents hold a relatively positive perception regarding the employee self-development at the company. Growth mindset has the highest scoring mean of 4.53 which means the employees have the skills to learn from experiences and develop and refine their skills through effort. However, employee self-development had the lowest mean score which indicates that there is room for improvement in regard to this which can be improved by strategic actions taken to enhance development opportunities and transforming into culture where challenges are seen as opportunities for growth and development.

Spearman's correlation analysis assisted the quantitative data by demonstrating the strengths and relationship between the variables. All the relationships between the variables are significant, positive, and strong. This supports the speculation of the study that growth mindset, motivation, empowering environment, supportive learning culture, and self-efficacy are the key predictors for promoting employee self-development in the workplace.

The qualitative findings further supported the quantitative findings by revealing the themes for each variable. The final themes highlighted the recurring patterns that currently exist within the company and key insights into what is required at the company to enhance employee self-development. The thematic analysis presents that the employees at company ABC value learning, autonomy, feedback systems, challenges, recognition, and are motivated by opportunities for personal growth, personal fulfillment, and rewards. These findings support and align with the findings from the quantitative data and accentuates that fostering a supportive learning culture and having leaders who can create an empowering environment can significantly enrich the self-driven behaviours of the employees to learn and refine their skills and capabilities.

A workplace that advocates for autonomy, employee confidence and self-efficacy, learning and development opportunities, and employee motivation can create a workforce with consequential employee self-development.

Recommendations

For enhancing employee self-development :

1. Implement Recognition Programs : Develop and launch comprehensive recognition programs to acknowledge and reward employee achievements, enhancing morale and motivation, as well as self-efficacy.
2. Cultivate a Feedback and Appreciation Culture : Encourage an open culture where feedback is actively sought and valued, and appreciation is regularly expressed to foster a positive and supportive work environment.

3. Provide Self-Development Opportunities : Offer and promote opportunities for self-development, enabling employees to enhance their skills and pursue personal growth initiatives.

4. Train for Flexibility, Adaptability, and Resilience : Design and deliver training programs focused on building flexibility, adaptability, and resilience, equipping employees to thrive in dynamic environments.

5. Empower Employees through Autonomy : Grant increased job autonomy to foster self-leadership, encouraging employees to take initiative and assume greater responsibility.

6. Implement Regular Feedback Mechanisms : Establish a system of regular feedback to enhance employee self-awareness, facilitating personal growth, and professional development.

7. Introduce Employees' Choice Rewards : Establish and promote Employees' Choice Awards to encourage peer recognition, fostering a culture of appreciation and teamwork.

8. Organize Team-Building Activities : Plan and execute regular team-building activities to enhance collaboration, knowledge sharing, build trust, and strengthen interpersonal relationships among employees.

9. Foster Peer-to-Peer Learning : Encourage and facilitate peer-to-peer learning through mentorship programs, allowing employees to share and develop technical, communication, and language skills.

10. Optimize Knowledge-Sharing Platforms : Focus on integrating knowledge-sharing platforms into core operations to enhance efficiency and productivity and allocate time for employees to engage with these platforms.

11. Implement Hands-On Workshops : Develop and conduct regular workshops that provide hand-on learning experiences, fostering practical skills and innovation among employees.

12. Collaborate with External Academies : Partner with external academies to access cutting-edge knowledge, enhance employee skills, and drive organizational growth through strategic partnerships.

For improving performance under pressure :

1. Promote stress management techniques by offering mindfulness sessions, time management training, and resilience workshops.

2. Encourage a supportive work environment where team members and leaders provide guidance, reducing unnecessary stress.

3. Implement workload balancing strategies by setting realistic deadlines and distributing tasks effectively.

4. Provide coping mechanisms such as flexible work arrangements, mental health resources, and peer support programs.

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