

## **Case Study: South African Airways** **(Competency Identification and Development)**

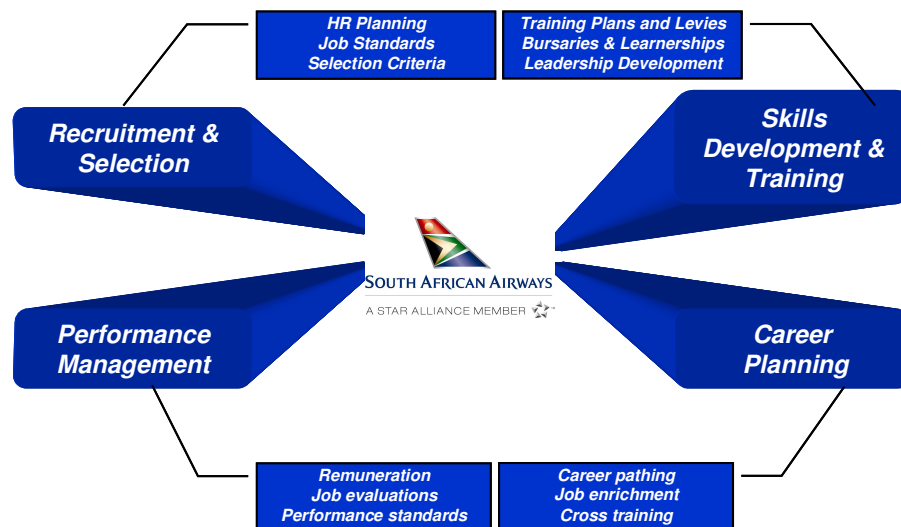
### **About the Company**

South African Airways (SAA), is South Africa's largest domestic and international airline company flying to over 700 destinations throughout the world and carrying 6.5 million passengers each year. SAA employs close to 12,000 people worldwide and is one of the few profitable African airlines. It's mission is 'To be a carrier of choice in the markets we serve'.

### **Business Challenges**

South African Airways operates in a highly competitive and changing business environment. It has embarked upon a corporate goal of 'Perfecting the Basics' of its business in order to realize its mission of being the airline of choice in its chosen markets. To achieve this, the following initiatives have been identified by the airline:

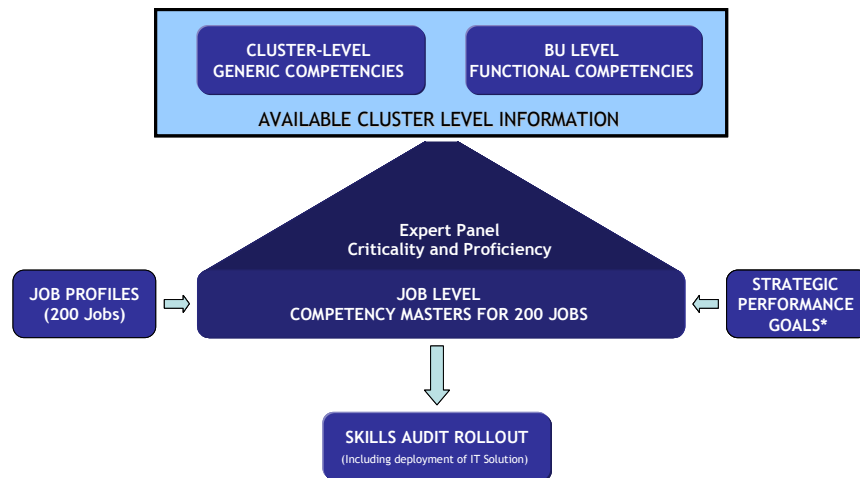
- Develop an integrated framework to align the needs of business and HR to capture complete information on all positions
- Create a central repository of managerial and non-managerial competencies with desired proficiency levels
- Maximize the potential of its people resources in delivering on strategy of the airline
- Develop an assessment tool for the management to identify organization wide competency gaps and strengths
- Integrate the various HR initiatives under one location for future reference





## Nihilent's Role

- Nihilent first designed a Job Charter framework to encapsulate all aspects of a position during its entire lifecycle
- Standardized charters for all jobs in SAA, from the CEO to the cabin crew members were created based on existing documents and interactions with various job experts, line and HR managers
- An appropriate job level Competency Master Basket was designed in a context that is unique to the airline. This was derived from structured inputs including, job profiles and strategic performance objectives
- The Competency Assessment Tool was implemented at SAA to logically arrive at personal development plans for all staff
- Nihilent ensured active involvement of line managers and Human Resource Business Partners (HRBPs) in validating all the information during the project. This ensured seamless coverage of all types of employees including absentees



## Business Benefits Delivered

- A central repository of jobs & job profiles across SAA has been created with a clear definition of key functions and competencies along with required proficiency levels
- A clear foundation has been laid for every employee to define his or her competencies in line with job requirements
- Well defined personal development plans have been drawn for individuals through an objective approach
- The project has enabled SAA to have a transparent and scientific method for HR processes such as recruitment, training, career development and succession planning
- Workspace Skills Plan (WSP) has been created based on a scientific and structured process that promises quick return on investment on training and skills development

## Customer Speak

*"Nihilent undertook Competency Identification and Development at SAA and implemented their Competency Assessment System. The consultants had in depth knowledge and skill base. Their inputs in the process and guidance were well received from all levels of staff. The project was well managed, professionally pitched and all concerns were dealt with efficiently."*

- Nambita Mekane, Senior Manager - Corporate Development, South African Airways