


**STRATEGIC
WORKFORCE PLANNING**

ROUND TABLE 8TH EDITION - FEBRUARY 25, 2020
REPORT OF THE EXCHANGES

GUEST: ISABELLE LENICOLAIS, FNAC DARTY

INTRODUCTION BY **ANTOINE AUBOIS**



Akoya organized on Tuesday, February 25, 2020 its 8th round table, the opportunity to propose a new course on the territory of Strategic Workforce Planning. By approaching the subject from a different angle, we remind you that the SWP has this particularity to never take exactly the same form, to blend into a singular context, specific to each company. This is why we regularly address this topic, because this approach is not a standard one, it is built. And in order to build it, it is always interesting to draw on the experience of others.

For this new edition, we had the pleasure and the honor to welcome Isabelle Lenicolais, HR Project Director at Fnac Darty. The following pages show that there is no single formula for an effective SWP project. You first need to frame your thinking and understand the factors that drive a company's evolution before taking action.

However, a certain number of fixed points remain as key factors for the success of the exercise. The definition of the analytical framework as a prerequisite for any work is carried out in alignment with strategic business concerns.

The SWP involves all stakeholders depending on the progress of the project, including top management and HR Business Partners, operational, financial and strategic managers, HR centers of excellence and social partners. This cannot be reduced to the HR function alone, even though she is the facilitator. The SWP is a true strategic business exercise.

But foresight does not consist in looking into a crystal ball and guessing the future. Far from it. SWP is a constructed and reasoned approach that uses strategic thinking and tools to write trends and consider scenarios weighed by the different stakeholders involved.

Simplifying this work and facilitating collaboration between teams are the main assets of Albert, our SaaS tool dedicated to SWP. After an in-depth examination of the situations and data collected, Albert explores the evolution of the professions and prepares the HR teams "today" for what will be "tomorrow". He draws the population's possible futures and thus guides strategic HR thinking.

If the independence of spirit of Isabelle Lenicollais' speech seems indisputable, we think it is important to point out that to our readers that we accompanied Fnac Darty on their SWP project and that this exercise was conducted with the support of our Albert tool.

In addition to the discussions with Isabelle Lenicollais, we thought it would be relevant to share with you the remarks of Vincent Barat, Co-founding Partner and retail expert at Akoya, who accompanied Fnac Darty in the implementation of its SWP.

Finally, the firm has this conviction that we would like to share with you: other retail players will be able to find their way back into the history of Fnac Darty through similar challenges, particularly at the store level.

Of course, and whatever your sector of activity, you can either follow or free yourself from the practices that will follow. Your Strategic Workforce Planning belongs to you and will only be more relevant because it will be clean.



Antoine Aubois
Co-Founder & Partner
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1.1. The SWP takes part in a business context, specific to any organization...

What was the context of the SWP project for Fnac Darty? Why did you launch this project?

Isabelle Lenicollais: First of all, in the past, we have experienced many transformations, induced by external factors, with the arrival of *pure players* like Amazon, for example. So we wanted to anticipate future transformations and support the teams.

The second element to consider was the merger of Fnac and Darty. We wanted to respond to the group's new strategy and address the issue by adopting a common approach.

Finally, the SWP offered a response to trade unions who questioned the group on the impacts of Fnac Darty strategy for business lines and its proposals to support employees.

1.2. ...and requires the definition of a relevant analytical framework

How did you define the scope of SWP analysis?

IL.: Fnac Darty in France has 18,000 employees. We have decided to restrict the scope of our operations to the non-managerial staff of Operations and Exploitations in France. This choice was made because, on the one hand, these are less educated populations, for whom action plans were necessary. On the other hand, it was a broad scope in terms of employees - 70% of the population - but restricted in terms of professions - 26 professions.

Were you able to easily obtain quality data?

IL.: It was a real challenge because Fnac and Darty had different business references. We were afraid that the data wouldn't talk to each other, that it would be non-exhaustive and not accurate. It would have distorted the exercise.

However, the exercise was very well framed. We also managed to involve several players to help us build a common reference system. For example, we sent a survey to store managers so that they could indicate the expertise of their salespeople.

Vincent Barat: Let us note their commitment. The response rate to this survey, addressed to 140 Store Managers, was incredible: 100% of Store Managers responded! This result was then used to feed the strategy. It's a real source of pride when the HR function can communicate the business with enlightening and quality data.

2.1. Project stakeholders must be carefully selected...

Which stakeholders were involved and what choices were strategic for the SWP?

I.L.: We are convinced that SWP is not just an HR topic. Therefore, we have engaged different stakeholders in the project. Within the Steering Committee, the Strategy, the HR Directors and four members of the Fnac Darty Executive Committee have been involved.

HR and operational staff also took part in this project. All of these stakeholders then participated in action definition workshops in order to respond to the main conclusions of the exercise.

The biggest challenge for all of us was to align ourselves with the staffing needs, even though the right people were committed to this project and met regularly. This is why we had to remember that the SWP draws a big picture at an instant T.

V.B.: We have also defined several scenarios for staffing needs. This was interesting because we considered different hypotheses and pushed the cursor on certain professions. For example, we defined a scenario, where a product was a growth relay for the group, and another where this same product was going to disappear gradually.

I.L.: Indeed, we have constructed a scenario close to the strategic plan and a radical scenario. The scenario has not reversed workforce gap trends. On the contrary, it did justify the urgent need to implement action plans for some jobs.

2.2 ...and the purpose of the SWP must be clearly explained to them

Were business leaders mature on the subjects of workforce and skills?

I.L.: Business leaders were aware of the challenges within their scope. Our ambition was to get everyone involved in the project. However, it wasn't that difficult: as the SWP is a subject that concerns their teams, all the stakeholders were interested about the subject and got involved.

How did you manage to identify changes in the business lines? in terms of skills and workforce?

I.L.: We interviewed in-house experts. They gave us their vision of business transformation, confirmed by a benchmark and Akoya's expertise. Even though as HR we had a good idea of the trends, we needed these experts, especially to measure skills needs. So the challenge was to find the right business partners. However, you have to be aware that the SWP is not a crystal ball. and that experts can't predict everything.

V.B.: As an example, the explosion of *click-&-collect* has exceeded all predictions and has greatly changed the job of the storekeeper: previously in reserve, he now has to interact with a customer. This is why we recommend regularly updating the results. of the SWP, in order to best anticipate these new developments.

REPORT: AXIS 3 A STRATEGIC DIRECTION FOR THE COMPANY

3.1. The SWP reveals the human stakes of the company...

Were you surprised by some of the results of the exercise?

I.L.: The exercise was full of lessons. We thought we were anticipating decreases and were pessimistic. Thanks to the SWP, we have discovered several professions that are under great pressure to recruit because they are strategic for the group, and profiles in these professions are rare or training is almost non-existent.

The SWP has thus made it possible to prioritize topics and define common actions for the group, such as massive recruitment for professions or skills development. For example, tomorrow's technical delivery drivers will need to have IT skills to program the washing machines.

Finally, the SWP also highlighted issues that go beyond talent acquisition and talent management, such as health and wellness.

3.2 ...and allows prioritizing actions to answer these human issues

What long-term and short-term action plans have you defined?

I.L.: Several workshops were conducted with different stakeholders. Most of the defined actions can be started now. These actions, of different natures, will have long-term benefits.

Thus, compensation is one element in the response to our retention difficulties in certain professions. As for *onboarding* in the stores, it is an answer to our high turnover rates.

Finally, an additional budget has been allocated to training and initiatives already in place, such as the academies and internal career paths, will be strengthened. The SWP has therefore provided us with weighty arguments to launch and finance the actions.

V.B.: You have also defined actions to anticipate changes in consumer practices. For example, the trend today is no longer to throw away your television if it breaks down, but to repair it. So you have to train your teams to repair it. The lack of training in this area is a major challenge.

I.L.: Yes, indeed, that's how we came to develop an in-house Academy to train our technicians.

Do you use tools to measure employee skills?

I.L.: In Operations, we have product knowledge quizzes for salespeople. We would like to integrate these quizzes from *onboarding* to better understand their skills. In Operations, we are already measuring the skills of our employees because we have created our own academies, such as the Cooking Academy.

If you had to do the exercise again, what would you do differently? What are the next steps for Fnac Darty?

I.L.: Three elements were decisive in the success of this project. As one of the first Group projects (Editor's note: post-merger), we had to conduct a change management process in parallel with the SWP. In addition, it was important for us to involve different stakeholders in the exercise, beyond the HR teams. In this sense, the Strategy must be an actor and not a spectator. Finally, we did not rush into the exercise: we did not rush into any assumptions about headcount needs, since aligning with these assumptions takes time.

Thanks to the SWP, we wrote the beginning of the story. The exercise gave us a direction to define action plans and close the gaps highlighted by the SWP.

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