

United Animal Health Transforms Performance Management into Centralized and Meaningful Business Conversation

"They developed a great partnership with our team and that continues on today!"
- Doug Erla, Director of Human Resources & Organizational Capability, United Animal Health

Overview

Founded in 1956, United Animal Health offers livestock nutrition and health products globally directly or through affiliate brands. The company operates a premix and base mix nutrition and technology company and sets itself apart from the competition by intimately getting to know customers and understanding what they need to be more successful. That guiding principle has been the foundation of United Animal Health and has allowed it to grow from a one room office company to an organization employing over 340 individuals in over 22 countries, including the United States, South Korea, the Philippines, and several locations in South America and Africa.

Performance Management Challenges at United Animal Health

Prior to implementing emPerform, United Animal Health was using paper-based performance appraisals with many variations of forms and content being used throughout the different operating groups. The process was time-consuming and did not allow the organization to align human capital or talent development initiatives to company strategy or easily identify potential. To further this, the agriculture sector in North America is facing a considerable talent shortage over the next 5-10 years, with less skilled workers available to replace those retiring.

"We simply were not leveraging the human capital piece of our business adequately."

- Doug Erla, Director of Human Resources & Organization Capability, United Animal Health

Given these challenges, United Animal Health knew that in order to move its talent management efforts from an inconsistent and passive process to an active business conversation, they needed a better performance management foundation including revised processes and a system to support the company's performance management goals.

With the help of emPerform, United Animal Health has been able to:

- Streamline its performance management process across the entire organization.
- Create a unified competency architecture to better align and track performance objectives.
- Reduce the time needed to complete performance management tasks by more than 50%.
- Integrate performance results directly into talent identification & succession planning.
- Track high-potential employees in a meaningful way and in real-time.

Out With The Old, In With The New

United Animal Health began their search for a new performance management system by determining their top needs and system requirements. These included:

- A system with a rich feature-set which would automate and facilitate performance appraisals, succession planning, development tracking and integrated compensation management.
- A user-friendly platform which would be easy for managers and employees to access and would engage users on timely and continuous performance dialogue.
- A solution that was simple to administer and would require minimal time for HR to configure and maintain.
- A pricing model that is cost effective and would accommodate long-term goals and needs.
- A system which could synchronize data from its ERP System, Microsoft Dynamics® GP™.

United Animal Health began evaluating a broad array of talent management systems included the major players in the space. They felt that most other systems could not address all of their needs, were too administrative in nature, and would result in significant costs considering the modules the company needed to implement over time.

For assistance in their search, United Animal Health turned to their Microsoft Dynamics GP Partner, Sikich, leading accounting, advisory, technology and managed services firm. Sikich recommended emPerform for its feature-base, low cost of ownership, and out-of-the-box integration with Dynamics GP.

They narrowed their search to 5 different vendors and in the end, selected emPerform. "We chose emPerform for many reasons including the fact that the software included several performances features all in one," continued Erla. "We knew we could gradually launch those features to the workforce in a calculated fashion without worrying about increasing costs by purchasing additional modules. Plus, the look and usability of emPerform was equal if not better than any system we reviewed."

Hitting the Ground Running

United Animal Health wasted no time getting started with emPerform and was able to plan, implement and train all users within their desired timeframe. By spring 2016, United Animal Health had transformed their performance management processes and platform with emPerform.

"The emPerform implementation was well executed. The implementation team that was here on-site or at the tech help desk was knowledgeable and helpful," said Erla. "They developed a great partnership with our team and that continues on today!"

Beaming Results with emPerform

Revised Approach to Competency Management:

Before the move to emPerform, United Animal Health did not use a centralized list of competencies to evaluate employees. "emPerform allowed us to utilize their competency library to re-engineer our performance foundation to create a competency architecture that is housed in one location for the whole company," said Erla.

"United Animal Health now has a unified competency-based assessment model to better align and track job-specific performance skills and objectives."

Consistency in Performance Management:

By working with emPerform to create a process and content that is centralized and streamlined across the entire organization, United Animal Health was able to achieve consistency in their performance management efforts. All divisions and departments now access the same forms, are on the same process, and have use of the same resources. This ensures employees are being evaluated fairly across the entire organization.

Reduced Time Completing Appraisals:

Using emPerform, United Animal Health has been able to reduce the time needed to complete performance management tasks by more than 50%. "This is time we are putting back into driving business results across the company," said Erla.

Better Talent Identification & Development:

Using emPerform, United Animal Health is now able to integrate performance results directly into talent identification & succession planning efforts. "We can now track high-potential employees in a meaningful way and in real-time," continued Erla. United Animal Health will use this visibility to plan for long-term talent shortages in the industry as well as track, develop, and retain United Animal Health's valuable workforce.

We honestly believe that emPerform will allow us to position talent and performance management more clearly in the forefront of our business— plain and simple! It catapults us years ahead from where we were," said Erla.

United Animal Health has worked with emPerform to develop a planned phase approach to launch additional features to their workforce in a way that will make sense for front-line employees while simultaneously securing the needed leadership buy-in for the new processes. This includes, among other things, automated compensation planning where performance scores that will have a direct link to recommended merit increases and variable compensation adjustments using emPerform's [Compensation Manager](#).

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