

# HR Management

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Nature of Human Resources:

Human resource management is defined by Bratton as ‘a strategic approach to managing employment relations, which emphasises that leveraging people’s capabilities is critical to achieving competitive advantage.’ Human resource management includes the recruitment of employees, the development of policies relating to human resources, and the management and development of employees.

It also follows that human resources management is not carried out exclusively by the HR department. Line managers are involved in managing the human resources in their departments.

## Practices & Importance of human resources

The modern terms ‘human resources’ and ‘human capital’ reflect the increasing recognition of the strategic importance of employees. The terms actually refer to the traits that people bring to the workplace, such as knowledge, intelligence, enthusiasm, an ability to learn, and so on. Employees are seen less and less as an expensive necessity, and more and more as a strategic resource that may provide an organisation with competitive advantage.

In service industries such as restaurants, for example, where employees have direct contact with customers, having employees that are friendly and helpful has a large impact on how customers will view the business. In IT industries, having staff with good technical knowledge is essential.

The problem with human resources is that they require more management than other factors of production. We humans are complex, emotional creatures, and it can be challenging to ensure that we behave in the right way, remain motivated and give our best to the employer.

## Trends human resource management

Given that human resources are a strategic capability, many human resource practitioners talk about ‘strategic human resource management’. This means aligning the human resource management of organisations with the organisations’ strategy.

The human resources management process should support the corporate strategy by:

- ensuring that the organisation has the right number of qualified employees
- employees have the right skills and knowledge to perform efficiently and effectively.
- employees exhibit the appropriate behaviours consistent with the organisation’s culture and values.
- employees meet the organisation’s motivational needs.

A low-cost supermarket, for example, may have an HR policy of recruiting unskilled staff, who are prepared to work for low wages, but would not provide customers with excellent service. A more upmarket supermarket on the other hand would want to provide excellent customer care. HR strategies would include the recruitment of individuals who have excellent personal skills, and training of all staff in customer care.

## Recruitment and selection

'Recruitment is the process of generating a pool of capable people to apply to an organisation for employment.

Recruitment is the first stage in the process of human resource management. The organisation needs to recruit individuals with the right skills, and the right attitudes to contribute to the strategic goals of the organisation. Employees should also have the personality that will fit into the culture of the organisation.

When recruiting, the amount of time and effort spent in selecting the right employee depends on the amount of responsibility that the position requires. Managerial or problem-solving positions, where employees would be required to have deeper skills, a higher level of responsibility and greater commitment, thus contributing to the strategy of the organisation, would merit a much greater effort in the selection process. The selection process will need to ensure that candidates should possess the ability to acquire the skills needed, and the attitude that fits the culture of the organisation. Organisations may use psychometric tests to assess candidates for such positions.

## Appraisal system

An appraisal is the analysis of the performance of an individual, which usually includes assessment of the individual's current and past work performance. Broadly speaking, there are two main reasons for the appraisal process. The first is the control purpose, which means making decisions about pay, promotions and careers. The second is about identifying the development needs of individuals.

. Measurable targets are identified and set for employees, and their performance against the targets will be used as part of their appraisal.

Appraisal is, therefore, seen as part of management control. By measuring the performance of employees against targets, management is seen to be proactively managing the performance of employees and therefore improving the performance of the organisation.

## Difficulties in appraisal

In assessing employees, managers are required to make judgments about an employee's performance and capabilities. Such judgments are naturally subject to potential bias in favour of some and against others. prejudice may affect the promotional prospects of some groups.

## Measurement of performance

When measuring the performance of employees for the purpose of appraisal, three different approaches can be used:

- Measurement of inputs
- Behaviour in performance
- Measurement of results and outcomes.
- Attempts to assess traits of an individual.

leadership, commitment, ability to work within a team and loyalty are traits that are typically desired.

## Behaviour in performance

- This type of appraisal looks at the behaviour of the employee during work, and at how the employee applies his or her skills. Both quantitative and qualitative data is collected on a continuous basis relating to how the employee displays the expected behaviour for the position – for example, ‘gives praise where it is due to others on the team’ might be one of the behaviours looked for.
- Under these types of appraisals, individuals are assessed on quantifiable outcomes – for example, the amount of sales achieved by a salesman, the volume of production achieved, the number of customer complaints. Where competency frameworks are used, it may also be possible to measure the number of competencies achieved during a period.
- Frequently, targets may be set for individuals and their performance will be judged against these.

Personnel controls, also known as clan controls, are based on fostering a sense of solidarity in the people who work for an organisation.

- Personnel controls include recruitment of people with the right attitudes, training and job design. These are closely related to appraisal systems based on inputs.

Behavioural controls involve observing the employee.

- Such controls are consistent with appraisal systems that focus on the behaviour of employees.

Output or results controls that focus on measuring some aspect of work performed.

## Linking appraisal to the reward scheme

The appraisal process may be linked to a reward scheme whereby employees or managers earn some incentives, such as promotion or financial incentives if targets are met. Reward schemes were discussed in another article, ‘Reward schemes for employees and management’

### Suggestions:-

- 1) Appraisal and rewards
- 2) Motivation
- 3) In the recent survey of outstanding employees reasons of resignations were:-
  - 1) Loss of faith in management 74
  - 2) Feeling Unappreciated 67%
  - 3) Feeling bored or unchallenged 54%
  - 4) Feeling use on exploited 41%
  - 5) Retirement of close colleague 30%
  - 6) More flexible benefit package 25%
  - 7) What should an H R M do to solve this problem
    - Take time to show your employees their contributions have not gone unnoticed
    - You appreciate their efforts
    - Prevents duties from becoming routine by encouraging workers to suggest ways of making it more interesting
    - Cross training staff members to do a variety of jobs can alleviate repetitiveness and employee boredom.

## References

1. *Human Resource Management, Theory and Practice*, 4th edition, Bratton and Gold, published by Palgrave Macmillan, p3
2. Bratton and Gold, p239
3. Bratton and Gold, p285

