

## INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

### WEEK ONE - INTRODUCING HRM - *WHAT IS IT? WHERE DID IT COME FROM? WHERE'S IT GOING?*

#### READING – CONCLUSION: REALITY, IMPACT AND PROFESSIONALISM - *Michael Losey*

- ❖ HR professionals often declare value without knowing why → new reality is about looking outside HR
- ❖ HR adds value because it meets essential needs in any organisation, regardless of the profession – *corporate, not for profit or governmental*
- ❖ Must go beyond accepting or responding to change, and anticipate, appreciate and master change
  - **Demographics**- the labour force is changing -*aging employees, diversity, global heterogeneity and social/ economic changes*
  - **Technology**- quick advancement of technology forces organisations to change their strategies, and the way HR is organised and delivered
  - **Globalisation**- organisations compete globally for products, and now globally for employees
  - **Competitiveness**- customer expectations have risen dramatically, with flexibility forcing firms to respond quickly and dramatically
- ❖ Talented employees have choices → HR needs to be competitive to attract them
- ❖ HR is becoming about collaborating and working with others → interdependence through the key functions – *financial experts, sales, manufacturing, PR etc.*
- ❖ There are two targets of HR outcomes → employees and organisations
  - Investments in HR (staffing, training, communication, performance management) allow organisations to better compete globally – *increase employee abilities*
- ❖ HR defines the culture of a company, representing firm brand, norms and values of a company → shaped by HR practices around hiring, training, paying and communicating with employees
  - People need to make the company culture part of their identity for it to thrive
- ❖ Collaboration → information and people must be shared – *can occur vertically, horizontally and personally (between individuals in a team)*
- ❖ Firms must learn to adapt to change → types of relationships, talent flows, sense of purpose
- ❖ Organisations must create value to continue to exist → value is created through practicing values
  - Ethics need to be absorbed in HR practices
- ❖ The roles of HR are changing e.g. diversity manager, chief of productivity; can't rely on specialists
- ❖ HR professionals need new competencies (e.g collaboration, rethinking organisation, learning to play new roles) and traits (courage, curiosity, caring nature) to ensure impact → RELATIONSHIPS
- ❖ HR professionals must also evolve → training, development, selection and performance accountability
  - Not only do they test others on these, but they will be assessed on them themselves; to ensure the profession can respond to changes
- ❖ New changes also include a newer focus on creating sustainable impact

#### READING- BECOMING AN EVIDENCED BASED HR (EBHR) PRACTITIONER – *Denise Rousseau*

- ❖ EBHR developed because of faulty practices and faulty decision making in HR
  - Companies have been using a standardised approach in their policies; even though there is evidence that flexible programmes are beneficial
- ❖ The key problem is not that a practitioner lacks scientific knowledge, but the absence of a questioning mindset, and being poorly informed → need to think critically
- ❖ Critical thinking needs to be about actively exploring alternatives, and testing assumptions
  - The opposite of critical thinking is imitation – *relying on 'copycat practices'/ standardisation*

- ❖ Managers need to be realistic about what can and cannot be learned from past practices → how to respond better to uncertainty by pursuing greater flexibility
- ❖ Research in scientific journals must be vetted according to evidentiary criteria – *measurement reliability and internal validity – these also look at bias*
- ❖ It is important to know what kind of evidence is being used and what the advantages/ drawbacks of relying on that evidence could be
- ❖ Knowing the facts of the situation is important to identify what kinds of research findings are likely to be useful → can identify explanations for a problem *e.g. organisational culture, workload, productivity, management styles, education level/ skills, departmental turnover rates*
- ❖ People are prone to bias in decision- making → analysis of the situation can lead to more accurate assessments of the problem and interpretation of facts
- ❖ Despite this, HR practitioners must often act regardless of what evidence there is
- ❖ EBHR is about questioning assumptions, particularly where someone asserts belief as a fact
- ❖ EBHR means being more mindful of the opportunities you have, to choose courses of action, regardless of whether you will act – *about paying attention to how a decision is made*
- ❖ Peer review is central to establishing the credibility of scientific evidence
- ❖ Different types of research questions require different types of research designs
- ❖ You should integrate evidence with your own expertise, context and stakeholder concerns

## LECTURE NOTES

- ❖ Companies rely on the availability and effectiveness of resources → capital, technology and people
- ❖ HR are the most valuable but the most difficult to manage → people are unpredictable so managing them in unpredictable – *workplaces are dynamic, and people change with it*
- ❖ **HRM** – *the policies, practices and systems that influences employees behaviour, attitudes and performance*
- ❖ Centres on behaviour and specific company performance – *not about employee control, micromanaging, and it is not perfect*
- ❖ It is behavioural - dealing with the complexity of humans; with an added social element, concerning the culture of an organisation; exists between all stakeholders and employees
  - **Accommodative** - *HR strategies follow organisational strategies*
  - **Interactive** - *HRM contributes and reacts to overall strategies – in the strategic plan*
  - **Fully integrated** - *total involvement in overall strategic process in both formal and informal interactions*
- ❖ HRM involves setting policies, recruitment, advancing workplace safety, aligning work with organisational goals, administering benefits, ensuring wellbeing of staff
- ❖ HRM can also be counterproductive → e.g. creating a hypercompetitive environment (Microsoft)
  - Opposite effect of what the effect was supposed to be --> undermines team work and outcomes - *can be counterproductive*
- ❖ Workers were motivated through strict monitoring and the drive system in the industrial period
- ❖ Early 1900s - Taylorism; production process became more complicated; factories were more complex
  - Scientific management – *workers were just cogs in the machine*
  - Saw to find the one best way to do any job --> standardise the tasks
- ❖ There is now a new set of assumptions - workers are motivated by money, but they want to do it in the most efficient way
  - Who knows the most efficient way - managers
  - They have psychological needs and differences --> evolution not only in practices but also ideas
- ❖ People management strategies change overtime --> ideas matter as much as practices
- ❖ 1970s-1990s --> strategic HRM
- ❖ 2000s responsible HRM --> diversity, compulsory government policies, EBHRM
- ❖ Globalisation is an issue so international HRM is a challenge
- ❖ HRM - an integrated set of personal management activities, linked strategically with organisational objectives → rise of specialisation has led to a more tailored model needed to source workers

- ❖ A lot of HRM policies and codes of conduct are very similar to each other --> drafted by solicitors
  - Best practice HRM - idea that one way to do it is the best way (1990s)
- ❖ Moved now towards a best fit scenario --> work forces look best in different ways
  - As work models became more complex, we needed a different model - HRM
- ❖ Hard HRM - focuses on organisational goals, whereas soft HRM focuses on training, development etc.
- ❖ **Employment relations**- *study of the formal and informal rules that regulate the employment relationship; and the social processes that create and enforce these rules*
  - Employers and employees should have common and conflicting interests
- ❖ Ethics and HRM --> unethical management practices helped contribute to the GFC and many organisations have now adopted a 'full- spectrum performance' today
- ❖ Underpayment of workers --> conscious decision to use that type of outsourcing strategy
  - By outsourcing, you lose oversight of what is happening to employees
- ❖ If head office is reasonably expected to know about these conditions, they are liable for them
- ❖ Sexual harassment, gender diversity, gendered language, dating co- workers etc. are examples of HR policies – *policies can be either formal or informal*

## PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT VERSUS HRM

	Personnel	HRM
Time and planning	Short term, reactive, ad hoc, marginal	Long term, proactive, strategic, integrated
Psychological contract	Compliance	Commitment
Control systems	External	Self-control
Employee relations	Pluralist, collective, low trust	Unitarist, individual, high trust
Structures and systems	Bureaucratic/mechanistic, centralised, formal	Organic, developed, flexible
Roles	Specialist/professional	Largely integrated in management
Evaluation Criteria	Cost minimisations	Maximum utilisation

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### WEEK TWO - THE HRM LENS - HOW DO HRM MANAGERS SEE THE WORLD?

#### READING – ARE GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN WORK VALUES FACT OR FICTION?

- ❖ The definition of 'quality of life' varies by generation → becoming increasingly age diverse, with likelihood of an older employee reporting to a younger manager increasing
- ❖ In organisations with 500 or more employees, 58% had conflict between older and younger workers
- ❖ Differences in expectations and motivators across generational cohorts → Gen X/Y have an entirely different view of the world of work to older generations
- ❖ Younger workers think differently → will be employed by 7 organisations in their first 10 years in the labour market, and they change careers 3 or 4 times
- ❖ Intrinsic motivation positively affects behaviour, performance and well- being → associated with enhanced performance, improved thinking and willingness to engage in subsequent tasks – *only to the extent that it is valued by the employees; if workers do not appreciate the reward, then they have no reason to strive for it*
- ❖ Often managers will assume that HRM practices used for older employees will be equally effective for younger employees → they find that new entrants into the workplace have different values and thus practices do not yield expected response
- ❖ It is important for employers to be aware of age dissimilarities within their organisation
- ❖ It is argued that people who grow up in different time periods have a very different set of beliefs, values, attitudes and expectations
  - E.g. those growing up in war or insecurity learn rationality and respect for authority
  - Those growing up in periods of socioeconomic security learn diversity, egalitarianism

