

Chapter 3


Trends and Issues in Strategic Human Resources Management

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ABSTRACT

The key function of human resources will continue to play a key role in the process of firms' future planning. The chapter has highlighted, discussed, and explored key activities at the strategic levels of human resource management and planning including introductory comments and definitions of current understanding of HRM, the flexible firm, HRM planning and its benefits, HRM planning at the strategic levels, the role of individuals within their wider teams and organisations, and the development of technological advancement and its reflection in the planning process for HRM leading to further embedding of virtual aspects and activities. Furthermore, the chapter also included current practices of outsourcing and different key stages of workforce planning. The chapter aimed to enhance application by providing several practical discussions and case studies reflecting current trends in HRM at a strategic level.

INTRODUCTION

This Chapter is planned and designed to explore strategic human resources (SHR), key terms, activities and requirements in organisations. Using various activities and case studies to support the lines of discussion throughout the chapter. For over a century now, human resource, as a discipline and practice, has progressed into various areas of studies. This, for a time, had been through a process of trial and

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error – hitherto; using a model that largely relied on the development and testing of various ideas by academics and practice managers. The fundamental forces driving this advancement and growth in the field are profitability, efficiency, sustainability and the quest for the acquisition of new knowledge which supports the utilization of and development of staff as part of several resources organisations have at their disposal. It is highly essential for firms to enhance and management professionals to enhance their understanding and reflection of key trends in the process of planning for HRM activities at a strategic level in both the short and long terms.

The chapter is developed for students, professionals, managers, researchers that already have prior knowledge and experience in the field of HR or other associated field, and positions such as being a line manager for a small or large team, or even running own small firm where the aspects of HRM are highly essential and vital for the development and growth of the firm. The chapter is providing identification, exploration and in depth discussion of key strategic aspects of HRM such as the following:

- Forecasting External Supply
- Job Analysis and Workforce Profiling
- Job Descriptions and Person Specifications
- Competencies
- Job Families (market groups)
- Redundancy

Furthermore, the chapter is supported by key case studies and identification of current trends to enhance understanding of key changes and developments in the field. Also other associated activities are included across different sections of the chapter to enhance classroom discussions and reflection.

Summary of Learning Outcome

- Define and discuss some of the key terminologies and activities of HR
- Explain human resources requirements in organisations.

Chapter Objectives

By the end of this chapter readers should be able to:

- Define and discuss key terminologies and activities of SHR.
- Discuss and apply strategic HR requirements and undertake a job analysis for an identified position.

Before you start, make a note below of objectives you wish to set yourself for this chapter. After completing the chapter, you should hopefully be able to appreciate key terminologies associated with HR as well as the strategic HR requirements that aids managers undertake a job analysis.

Forecasting External Supply

In most organisations, a gap will exist between the demand for staff and the internal supply. This has to be plugged from outside.

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