

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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To Marjorie, Andy, Tom, and Amy, and future adventures together

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Preface

Human resources management, or personnel management, is an exciting subject to study because it deals with the basic human issues facing all people who work. Every working life has been touched, at some point or another, by concerns about selection or rejection, promotion or demotion, retention or termination, rewards or penalties, fairness or unfairness, safety or injury, teamwork or conflict. Studying the ways in which human resources management deals with these issues will certainly help students to prepare for the complex and evolving world of work.

This book is written for students enrolled in the basic, overview course in human resources management. I personally believe this course to be one of the most important that students will ever take because human resources policies and practices will affect every day of their working lives. Further, students taking this course now are the future supervisors, managers, professionals, and executives who will help create the kind of work environment that will exist in tomorrow's organizations. For students who are currently employed, the course—and this text—will have immediate relevance.

I use the plural "human resources management" in contrast to "human resource management" to emphasize that everyone in the organization is important and that people bring an unlimited array

of talents to a given organization. As will be explained in Chapter 1, the terms human resources management and human resources director (or human resources manager) are used interchangeably with the still very respectable and much used terms personnel management and personnel director (or personnel manager).

Organization

The text is organized so that students will be able to move from one subject to another easily and smoothly. Part 1 is an introductory section covering a general description of the field of human resources management, the history and evolution of the field, and contemporary issues facing all human resources managers. Part 2 considers the organizational factors that affect human resources management. Factors such as an organization's financial, technological, and physical resources are discussed along with management philosophy, leadership style, and organizational culture and climate. Discussions on motivation and performance focus on the ways in which individuals and groups can naturally contribute to organizational effectiveness. The complex and vital nature of human resources planning is also examined as an integral part of human resources management.

Part 3 focuses on job design and staffing, covering topics such as job design and analysis, work rules and schedules, recruitment and selection, and orientation and career transitions. Part 4 deals with employee development and appraisal with chapters on skill training, management and career development, and performance appraisal and review. The important topic of compensation is discussed in Part 5, with chapters on wage and salary administration, incentive plans, and employee benefits. Part 6 focuses on employee protection and representation by discussing the role of labor organizations and the dynamics of negotiating and managing the labor agreement; the issues of employee rights, responsibilities, and justice; and health and safety management. Finally, Part 7 discusses the future of human resources management, focusing on the importance of employee participation in organization improvement, the directions the field appears to be taking, and its current status today.

Features

The text presents an overview of current procedures and practices that are in general favor in the field. I have strived to present a

balanced treatment of the dilemmas and pros and cons surrounding the application of these various techniques and programs. For example, the concept of flexible working hours—flextime—is appropriate to some situations, but not all; even under the best of circumstances new problems can be created.

My view is that human resources management is at the center of organizational life, interacting with such important factors as leadership philosophy and style, organizational culture and climate, group and intergroup behavior, technology, and strategic planning. For example, the compensation system can affect the level of cooperation and teamwork within and between small work groups, departments, and divisions. Top management philosophy about how people should be treated has tremendous influence on the human resources policies and practices of the total organization.

Much attention is paid both to the origins of modern human resources management and to the directions in which it seems to be heading. There have been numerous incremental changes and some dramatic occurrences in the past that have helped shape contemporary human resources management, and we can anticipate many changes in the future.

It should be noted that the book displays a point of view about a number of matters. Themes that run throughout the text include the following: (1) Effective management of human resources is central and vital to organizational effectiveness; (2) All supervisors and managers, including human resources specialists, must work cooperatively in the management of human resources if the organization is to be optimally successful; and (3) The modern organization, to be highly effective over the long run, must involve all organizational members in improving the way the organization functions, including improvements in the way that people work together.

Obviously, attention to these human matters must occur at the same time as careful attention is paid to other extremely important matters like technology, financial resources, markets, inventories, and government regulations, to name only a few. Effective human resources management makes dealing with these matters all the more effective.

Pedagogical Aids

Several elements of the text are designed to aid in the learning process:

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- Each chapter begins with a set of chapter objectives and a chapter outline to help orient the student to the material to be presented.
- · Each chapter closes with a summary of key points.
- Discussion questions at the end of each chapter are designed to reinforce the student's understanding of the subject matter.
- Numerous in-text examples show how human resources management is practiced in real-life organizations.
- Cases at the start of each chapter ease the student into the text content by presenting situations that face human resources managers in many organizations. These cases present realistic characters and problems that students will immediately understand. Opening cases are referred to within the chapter text to highlight a certain point or illustrate a certain concept. At the end of each chapter, discussion questions relate the opening case situations to the chapter content.
- Boxed extracts, called Perspectives, from relevant and contemporary articles, present real-life applications of human resources practices and policies, provide up-to-date information on personnel topics, and highlight different points of view on human resources issues.
- Cases at the end of each chapter deal with real-life applications of personnel concepts. Many of these cases focus on well-known organizations and the ways in which personnel policies and practices have affected their overall operation and effectiveness.
- A comprehensive study guide/activities manual, entitled Experiencing Human Resources Management, by Robert Lussier, is also available to students.

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