

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT



A
Managerial
Tool for
Competitive
Advantage

2ND EDITION

LAWRENCE S. KLEIMAN

Human Resource Management

A MANAGERIAL TOOL FOR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
Second Edition

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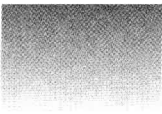
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In loving memory of my parents, Vivian and Harold Kleiman

Preface

This book addresses the educational needs of management students at the undergraduate, MBA, and executive MBA levels who are enrolled in an introductory human resource management class. As managers, these individuals will be called on to solve important business problems that involve significant human resource issues. Unfortunately, their needs have all too often been ignored by traditional introductory HRM books that provide a detailed coverage of HRM techniques used by HR professionals. Traditional HRM books, however, fail to stress those aspects of HRM most relevant to managers. This book attempts to fill this void.

The theme of the book is that the effective management of human resources, like the effective management of all other organizational resources, leads to competitive advantage. The book thus visibly and continuously highlights the importance of HRM and its potential contribution to a firm's competitive advantage.

Organization of the Book

The notion of competitive advantage is introduced in Chapter 1. The chapter defines the concept, presents evidence that links HRM practices to competitive advantage, and proposes a model that explains this linkage. The remaining chapters are organized around this model and help reinforce the importance of this link.

Each chapter in Parts I through IV is divided into three sections: (1) Gaining Competitive Advantage, (2) HRM Issues and Practices, and (3) The Manager's Guide.

Gaining Competitive Advantage

This section begins with a real-life case. The write-up describes the HRM problem faced by a firm, presents the firm's solution, and explains how the solution enabled the firm to enhance its competitive advantage. The case serves as an attention-grabbing device designed to both sensitize the student to the information that follows and to increase the information's applicability in the student's mind.

This case is immediately followed by a discussion of how the HRM practices addressed in the chapter can be used to enhance competitive advantage. For example, Chapter 8 discusses how an effective performance appraisal system can enhance competitive advantage by improving job performance, by helping employers make correct pay raise and promotion decisions, by ensuring legal compliance, and by minimizing job dissatisfaction and turnover.

HRM Issues and Practices

This section describes the various HRM practices (e.g., job analysis, recruitment, selection, performance appraisal) and how they can be developed and implemented to achieve competitive advantage. Although this section covers the “traditional” HRM topics found in other books, they are presented in a nontraditional way. Traditional HRM books take either a “micro” approach (presenting an overwhelming amount of technical detail) or “macro” approach (covering a vast number of topics, but at a superficial level). This book tries to find the middle ground. Its premise is that, as future managers, students need a *conceptual understanding* of the important HRM issues and practices, but do not need all the technical details (HRM majors can get these technical details when taking advanced HRM courses). For example, when discussing the topic of validity, a nontechnical description is given, emphasizing why validity is important and how a firm’s HR professionals and managers can achieve it when selecting employees.

Because this text avoids discussing many micro issues, it is not necessary to follow the path laid out by other books regarding to the number of chapters needed. For instance, it is unnecessary to have three chapters on compensation and two on unions. As a result, this book can be more easily covered in a single semester: 15 chapters in 15 weeks.

The Manager’s Guide

This section is designed to help students understand the manager’s role in the HRM process and the relationship that exists between managers and HR professionals. The section consists of three parts. The first examines the manager’s HRM responsibilities. The second part, entitled “How the HRM Department Can Help,” discusses the HRM department’s role and how HR professionals can help managers carry out their HRM responsibilities. In the third part, the HRM practices covered in the chapter are highlighted as part of a hands-on, how-to guide for managers. The purpose here is to teach students the skills necessary to implement the manager’s HRM responsibilities. Among the skills covered are these:

- Writing job descriptions for subordinates’ jobs
- Giving realistic job previews
- Interviewing job applicants
- Assessing subordinates’ training needs
- Conducting performance appraisal conferences
- Dealing with the overtime provisions of the FLSA
- Conducting disciplinary conferences
- Handling employee grievances
- Performing safety audits
- Investigating accidents
- Managing employees within the Mexican culture



Changes in the Second Edition

In addition to updating each chapter to reflect current practices and research findings in the HRM field, the following topics have been added to the second edition:

- The controversy surrounding affirmative action programs (Chapter 2)

- How companies are incorporating the Internet, intranets, and extranets in their human resource information systems (Chapter 3)
- On-line recruiting (Chapter 5)
- Provisions of the Fair Credit Reporting Act of 1997 (Chapter 6)
- The use of the Internet as a training tool (Chapter 7)
- 360-degree feedback systems (Chapter 8)
- Continuous improvement programs (Chapter 10)
- The implications of the Supreme Court's recent decisions on sexual harassment (Chapter 11)
- How managers should handle employee grievances. (Chapter 12)
- The Drug-Free Workplace Act (Chapter 13)
- Understanding the Mexican culture at the workplace (Chapter 14).



Pedagogical Tools

Many pedagogical tools are included to help instructors create a flexible learning environment that best suits their needs as well as the needs of their students. A brief synopsis of the learning tools provided as part of the book follows.

Writing Style

The book is written in a nontechnical, conversational tone. It is crisp and to the point and does not get bogged down by side issues. Many examples are used to illustrate key points.

Legal Emphasis

Because of the importance of legal issues in the HRM area, students need to fully understand employment law and how it applies to both HRM and management. Consequently, the book has a very strong legal orientation. The basics of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action are covered in Chapter 2. Workplace justice laws that affect employee rights (e.g., sexual harassment, wrongful discharge, employee privacy) are covered in Chapter 11. Each of the other chapters covers HRM laws as they apply to the topic under consideration. For example, the legal ramifications of employee selection techniques are described in Chapter 6.

Chapter Outline and Objectives

Each chapter begins with an outline of the topics to be covered, followed by a list of objectives. This gives the reader an overview of the chapter's content.

Objectives Revisited

The chapter's objectives are restated at the end of the chapter with "bullets" indicating the main points concerning each objective.

Key Terms and Concepts

All key terms and concepts are identified by bold print. Definitions are provided in the margins.

Boxed Features

Each chapter contains two types of boxed features. The “On the Road to Competitive Advantage” features provide examples of how actual companies have used HRM practices to gain a competitive advantage. The “Taking a Closer Look” features provide students with a more detailed description of certain topics without interrupting the flow of coverage in the text.

Review Questions

Approximately 10 review questions are presented at the end of each chapter, testing the students’ understanding of the chapter’s main points.

Experiential Exercises and Cases

Each chapter (except Chapters 1 and 15) contains one or more experiential exercise and case that relates to the topics covered in the chapter.

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Lawrence S. Kleiman is a professor of management in the College of Business Administration at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He received his Ph.D. in industrial/organizational psychology from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in 1978. Prior to joining the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, he worked in human resources at the Metropolitan Police Department of Washington, D.C., the U.S. Department of Agriculture (Science and Education Administration), and the New Jersey Department of Civil Service. He has published more than 35 articles in such journals as *Personnel Psychology*, *American Psychologist*, *HRMagazine*, *Personnel Journal*, *Journal of Business and Psychology*, *Today's CPA*, *Applied HRM Research*, *Public Personnel Management*, *Journal of Social Psychology*, *Social Work*, *International Journal of Management*, and *Equal Opportunity International*. He was awarded the title of Distinguished Teaching Professor, was a recipient of the "Innovation in Curriculum" award for his work on the school's MBA program, and was elected to the university's Council of Scholars. Professor Kleiman has consulted for numerous organizations including Sathers Corporation, Tennessee Valley Authority, McKee Foods, Salem Carpet, Union Carbide, and AT&T, and has testified as an expert witness in numerous employment discrimination cases.

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