

MBAB822

## CRITICAL DISCUSSION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS AND COMPETENCIES OF LINE MANAGERS.

V.V Simmons  
MBAB822

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## **Table of content**

### **Executive summary**

For any ~~organization-organisation~~ to run effectively, it has to have certain structures in place and key people in key positions to execute these functions.

In the working environment there had been a dire need for fairness and ~~standardizing~~ ~~standardising~~ of certain things thus the Human Resource department was ~~mobilized~~ ~~mobilised~~. With the increasing need for HR to improve and not just to manage the situation some of their roles were shared to Line Managers especially with the implementation phase.

According to Nehles et.al (2006) line managers are responsible for executing HR practices on the operational work floor on a day to day basis, thus it makes sense to delegate HR management responsibilities to them.

It is recommended that the HR team and Line managers work together for the sake of the ~~organization-organisation~~ to be efficient, thus a partnership should be formed; also to prevent ambiguity policies, working arrangements need to be clearly demarcated so that each unit function effectively complementing each other to ensure no encroachment would take place.

### **Introduction**

According to Rodriguez et. al (2002:309) high-performing individuals are cardinal for an effectively performing institute. The need for Human Resource (HR) arises from the fact to create an environment where employees could be treated fairly (Ulrich, 2007)

Human resource (HR) function in a particular ~~organization-organisation~~ assist in the effectiveness of all human resources and other related unites in the ~~organization-organisation~~: individuals, roles, teams, inter-teams unions and the total ~~organization-organisation~~. Alone HR cannot fulfil the task of effectiveness in the ~~organization-organisation~~ it works in partnership with various structures like Top Management, HRD (Human resource development), HRM (Human Resource Management) or personnel, IR and Line Managers (Pareek, 1997)

The structure which in an ~~organization-organisation~~ functions in starts from the Top management that outlines the vision and mission and hands it over to the HR that formulate systems and surveys. HR submits these formulations to the Line Managers who then see to it that it is being implemented. After implementation the Line Managers than give feedback back to HR.

### **Literature review**

#### **Discuss the devolution of HR functions to line managers:**

Previously Human Resource ~~major~~ ~~primary~~ task was to supply employees with information whenever they would need them; later HR evolved competency models within the

working environment to ensure the correct individuals are placed in the correct position. HR works closely with the Line Managers to execute certain tasks within the ~~organization~~organisation. Recently more responsibility had been given to Line Managers because the increase demands on HR especially where it is viewed that the HR specialist is incompetent to perform the duties (Pareek, 1997). Thus the delegation of HR duties from HRM to line managers is an increasing phenomenon worldwide (Perry & Kulik, 2008)

De Beeck et.al (2015) recognised the importance of line managers in HR management, certain operations previously done by HR has been allocated to line managers, also called HR devolution. Furthermore it is the line manager's task to bring HR policies to life.

**Critically discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the devolution of HR-related functions to line managers:**

- Advantages:  
The task at hand will be completed through delegation of authority, thus HR managers can focus on key areas that are more urgent for the success of the ~~organization~~organisation. HR and line managers may complement a basic task that needs to be done by assisting them with various key views in areas concerning HR (Cunningham & Debrah, 1995: 80). According to Renwick (2002) the logic behind involving line managers with HRM role is that there is more line managers compared to relation specialists; furthermore there is five additional advantages for the incorporation: it is ~~cost~~cost-effective, more comprehensive approach to HRM, the line managers are responsible for HRM thus they should manage it, assist with ~~decision~~decision-making process faster, and it is an alternative for ~~the~~ outsourcing HR function.
- Disadvantages:  
The increased involvement of line managers in the HR management issues may create and escalate the ambiguity in the role / expectation of HR management, also increasing duplication or omission of work if there is no proper form of communication. That may lead to pointing of fingers whose task it actually was to complete, especially when policies are not clearly defined. It may lead to the diminishment of the authority and influence of the chief HR manager in the institute also confusing the employee to whom should they actually abide to when asked to perform certain tasks and leads to confusion and the institute may look ~~disorganized~~disorganised. The ambiguity in the HR management function may be attributed to the complex and fragmented nature of the HR management task that had been ~~authorized~~authorised to line managers to intrude and work on HR issues. Line managers may involve themselves with HR management dilemmas because in their opinion they are better

equipped than the HR management specialist in terms of knowledge, authority and influence to carry out the task to success; such problems of encroachment arise regularly in situations of labour scarcity and high turnover (Cunningham & Debrah, 1995: 89). According to Perry & Kulik (2008) in organizations organisations that don't supply adequate support or training to line managers will not successfully fulfil their task with the additional delegation of duties from HR and is thus set out for failure. Furthermore HR specialist may not be willing to assist with the training of line managers; this may be due to fear of losing their functional role within the organization-organisation and being replaced. The vision of partnership between HR managers and line managers may not see the light of day because line managers may be reluctant to ask for guidance from the HR department. According to Nehles *et.al* (2006) line managers may be reluctant to perform HR duties on the already duties that they are supposed to execute, they may also not be having adequate competencies to implement the HR practices. Conway & Monks (2009) highlighted that there was still stagnation in decision making processes caused by HR, which would not share vital information systems that would assist line managers to perform the task at hand.

#### **What are the HR-responsibilities and practices of line managers?**

- HR-responsibilities:

The main responsibility is to develop systems and instruments for the development and sustainment of all the units within the particular institute. Supply data based feedback on the implementation of the systems designed, develop competencies needed at various levels, and evaluate organizational organisational practices if in line with the HR department. Further broken down

i) *planning*: assist in the forecasting and planning.

ii) *Recruiting*: HR plays a vital role in setting up a critical attribute profile of the roles for which selection is done, also formulating selection tests, systems of the interview or discussion, equip employees to use them and to selectively take part in some selections.

iii) *Compensation*: develop compensation packages, approach and rationale, arrange discussion for final presentation to top management, and suggest modification based on survey feedback.

iv) *Placement*: provides the induction process, manual, organise induction training and socialization-socialisation and develop job rotation plans.

V) *Work planning*: develop work planning and review (WPR) systems and modify it periodically. Monitor appraisal and review discussion, conduct surveys and make the necessary adjustments.

vi) *Promotion*: retrieve information from line managers of potential employees who qualify for promotion.

vii) *Career planning*: develop and monitor career-counselling services for employees.

- vii) Development and training: encourage employees to learn on the job by providing the necessary equipment/ infrastructure.
- ix) Facilitation and establishment: provide support through supplying surveys.

- Practice of line managers:

The function of a line manager is to ensure that the objectives provided by HR are implemented, provide feedback to the relevant HR department and also use the feedback given to the HR department. Broken down further

i) *planning* line managers translate the ~~organizational~~organisational long- and short term vision into HR requirements.

ii) *Recruitment*: actively assist in the recruitment process.

iii) *Compensation*: supply input to personnel for compensation to relevant persons, also assist in the implementation of it.

iv) *Placement*: ensure effective induction of newly recruited employees, station them where the need arise and allowing them to rotate for adequate exposure.

V) *Work planning*: play a dominant role in this sub-system.

Vi) *Promotion*: Periodical potential appraisals of the recommended employees are being submitted to HR.

vii) *Career Planning*: Identify career opportunities within the institute, also identify key attributes needed, and assist in associating their capabilities in relation to possible career paths.

viii) *Development and training*: evaluate each employee's role and list the requirements needed.

ix) *Reward system*: is implemented by the acknowledgement of the contributions done by subordinates, rewarding teamwork and collaboration, encourage interaction between supervisors and associates. Than give feedback on the system to HR department.

x) *Facilitation and establishment*: convey employee dissatisfaction with administrative/ personnel matters.

Commented [PB1]: references

### What competencies do line managers need to implement HRM functions?

- Rodriguez et. al (2002:310) defines competency as a measurable pattern of knowledge, expertise, abilities, behaviour and other attributes an individual needs to execute work functions successfully, this definition forms the basis of "whole-person assessment".
- Line managers should be provided training how to embark HR responsibilities also the necessary support system should be in place for line managers to be efficient, in ~~organizations~~organisations where the necessary support and training was supplied it was found that there was greater impact on perceived effectiveness in the ~~organization~~organisation (Perry & Kulik, 2008).
- Expertise is needed in terms of people management, technological knowledge, conceptual and analytical skills. The line manager needs to

demonstrate familiarity, understanding of the technological, financial and strategic issues affecting the ~~organization~~organisation. The line manager needs to capacitate him/herself to avoid becoming obsoleted and keep track of innovative practice. Also, the need of interpersonal skills remains very valuable (Cunningham & Debrah, 1995: 87).

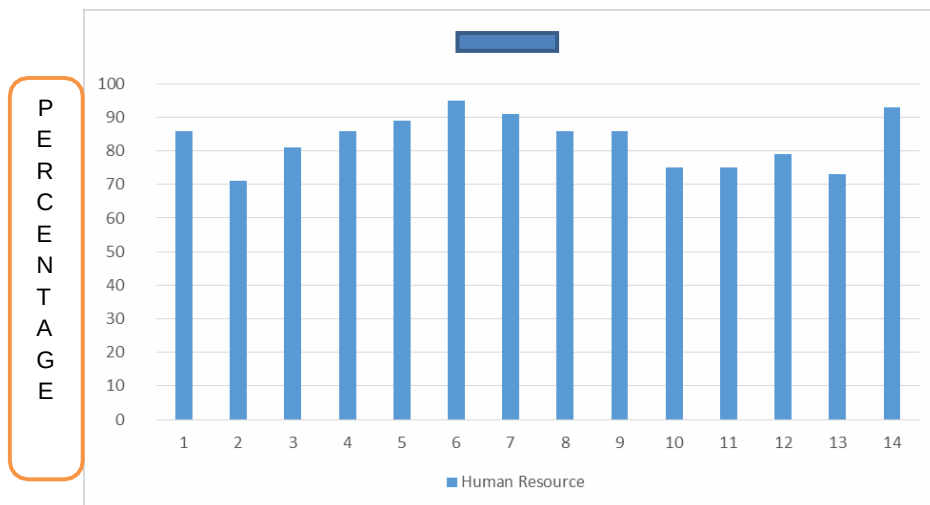
### **Data analysis**

|                                                     |             |
|-----------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| 1)IMPLEMENTATION EFFECTIVENESS SURVEY               | 13/15 (86%) |
| COMPETENCY.ASSESSMENT SURVEY                        |             |
| -HR.Knowledge:                                      |             |
| 2)HR.practices.knowledge.related business knowledge | 20/28 (71%) |
| 3) HR practices knowledge                           | 17/21 (81%) |
| 4) HR Competency                                    | 6/7 (86%)   |
| HR communication                                    |             |
| 5) HR delivery                                      | 25/28 (89%) |
| 6) Interaction with HR department                   | 20/21 (95%) |
| 7) Coaching and mentoring                           | 19/21 (91%) |
| 8) HR related feedback                              | 12/14 (86%) |
| 9) HR related teamwork and cooperation              | 18/21 (86%) |
| 10) HR conflict resolution                          | 21/28 (75%) |
| 11) Compliance with HR regulation                   | 18/21 (75%) |
| 12)HR fairness                                      | 19/21 (79%) |
| 13)HR motivation                                    | 26/28 (73%) |
| 14)HR Responsibility                                | 13/14 (93%) |

## Results

Table

| No. |                                                   | Percentage |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 1   | IMPLEMENTATION EFFECTIVENESS SURVEY               | 86%        |
| 2   | HR.practices.knowledge.related business knowledge | 71%        |
| 3   | HR practices knowledge                            | 81%        |
| 4   | HR Competency                                     | 86%        |
| 5   | HR delivery                                       | 89%        |
| 6   | Interaction with HR department                    | 95%        |
| 7   | Coaching and mentoring                            | 91%        |
| 8   | HR related feedback                               | 86%        |
| 9   | HR related teamwork and cooperation               | 86%        |
| 10  | HR conflict resolution                            | 75%        |
| 11  | Compliance with HR regulation                     | 75%        |
| 12  | HR fairness                                       | 79%        |
| 13  | HR motivation                                     | 73%        |
| 14  | HR Responsibility                                 | 93%        |



Kindly see that numbers 1-14 are specified in the results table.

### **Discussion of results**

I did fairly well score in all the units scored above 70%, which is above average and a good reflection of the type of individual I am. The areas where I didn't score above 80% are mostly about my knowledge about HR. This poses a serious risk for an employee as me, reason being that certain benefits that may arise and if the Line manager doesn't implement them I may forfeit it.

### **Plan for professional development and continuous improvement**

- According to the Oxford dictionary professional development it is a process of updating your knowledge and skills during your professional career.
- Continuous improvement is described as a systematic/ planned endeavour to seek out and apply new way of doing (Anand *et.al*, 2009)
- Setting short and long term time sensitive goals with the vision in mind on paper with a succession plan of how to achieve it broken down in smaller attainable pieces. The reason why I say time sensitive because in the journey of life there is a lot of things that call for our attention that can be classified as emergencies and urgencies, thus in our daily schedules we need to make time to achieve these goals not just thinking about it but actively working on it.
- Do weekly reflections of one's growth by writing it down and see how far I am from my objectives. Also a succession plan should be adapted in relation to changing circumstances if it wasn't achieved.
- To engage with other thought leaders in the industry some on a once off basis others will be on longer bases regarding the agenda of the development to be achieved. A mentor should be adopted to assist in guidance. To be impactful one will require not only your own effort but a collective, thus the correct/ proper acquaintances should be formed, thus creating the opportunity if there is nothing.
- Besides the mentors and acquaintances one would need an accountability partner for those who are married it can be their spouse or the person who you doing the project with. Thus it is important to develop a good sustained support system because anything worthwhile in life would not come easy, by having this support would make your journey more bearable.
- Read up on the particular field pertaining new trends, attend seminars/ webinars so that one remains relevant and not out-dated leading to be replaceable.
- We all have something to offer in the current field one is in you can avail yourself to be a mentor for someone, the benefit of being a mentor to a mentee is that it will require for you to read up, think of certain concepts you might not have thought off through the questions the mentee will ask
- Innovation should be part of development as we project to the past big companies came to a demise because they failed to be innovative and move the trend off time.



## **Conclusion**

There is always room for growth; a holistic approach should be applied. There should be thought out of the box.

HR cannot function alone in isolation; it needs support from different structures in ~~organization~~ organisation.

There is an improved perception regarding people management effectiveness according to results when the line managers get adequate support and training to do the task. (Perry & Kulik, 2008)

## **Resource/ References**

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| ASSESSMENT RUBRIC INDIVIDUAL ASSIGNMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                       |                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Student name:</b> VV Simmons                                                                                                                                                                                                               | <b>Student number</b> |                        |
| <b>Assessment criteria</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Result</b>         | <b>Mark allocation</b> |
| <b>Structure:</b> Title page, table of content and executive summary                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>2</b>              | <b>5</b>               |
| <b>Literature review.</b> The comprehensiveness of reading, pathways to ideas and understanding. Independence and evidence of ability to translate theory into practice.                                                                      | <b>23</b>             | <b>40</b>              |
| Devolution of HR functions                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 5                     | 10                     |
| Advantages and disadvantages of the devolution of functions                                                                                                                                                                                   | 6                     | 10                     |
| HR responsibilities of line managers                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 6                     | 10                     |
| HR competencies for line managers                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 6                     | 10                     |
| <b>Data analysis</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>9</b>              | <b>20</b>              |
| Descriptive statistics of results                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 5                     | 10                     |
| Discussion of results                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 4                     | 10                     |
| <b>Professional development plan</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>8</b>              | <b>20</b>              |
| Self-evaluation                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 4                     | 5                      |
| Gap analysis                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |                       | 5                      |
| Detailed plans                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 4                     | 5                      |
| Perceived awards and benefits                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                       | 5                      |
| <b>Conclusion</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>3</b>              | <b>5</b>               |
| <b>Writing</b> – style and coherence of arguments, referencing, and presentation of ideas, range and quality of material included.                                                                                                            | <b>5</b>              | <b>10</b>              |
| <b>Total mark</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>50</b>             | <b>100</b>             |
| Plagiarism Report. Marks deducted for plagiarism infringements                                                                                                                                                                                | -00                   |                        |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-10 (5 % - 20 % out of single source)</li> <li>-20 (21 % - 40 % out of single source)</li> <li>0 (41 % - 60 % out of single source)</li> <li>Disciplinary steps (anything higher than 60 %)</li> </ul> |                       |                        |
| <b>Total Mark</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <b>50</b>             | <b>100</b>             |
| General Remarks / Comments: Assignment                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                       |                        |
| Remarks / Comments: Plagiarism (If applicable)                                                                                                                                                                                                |                       |                        |
| Disciplinary Action to be taken (If applicable)                                                                                                                                                                                               | Yes                   | No                     |
| Prof PA Botha                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                       |                        |