



Shift in HR Professionals Role: Critical Trends in HR Management Practices



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Abstract

The business world is concerned with the improvement of organizational performance. Consequently, Human Resource Management (HRM) practices outcome on organizational performance has been the major concern of the previous scholars. Therefore, any organization that fails to improve its performance would not be able to meet up with trends in achieving competitive advantages. HR means understanding the implications of globalization, workforce diversity, changing skill requirements, corporate downsizing, continuous improvement initiatives, re-engineering, the contingent workforce, decentralized work sites, and employee involvement. Organizations today are also witnessing a change in the system, management cultures, and philosophy due to the global alignment. There is a need for multi-skill development and the role of HRM is becoming all the more important.

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1. Introduction

Armstrong & Taylor (2014), Beardwell & Claydon (Eds.), human resource management is a process of bringing people and organizations together so that the goals of each other are met. The role of HR manager is shifting from that of a protector and screener to the role of a planner and change agent. Personnel directors are the new corporate “heroes”. The today focus in business is personal. Nowadays it is not possible to show a good financial or operating report unless your personal relations are in order. The major purpose of HRM is to increase and improve the productive contribution of personnel to the organization in more ethical, social, and administratively responsible way.

Running a successful business involves more than just making money; it also means being able to manage the people that make it all possible – the employees. Having a well-defined set of Human Resources (HR) practices in place makes this an easier task to accomplish. Practices that are legally and ethically sound will produce greater results in business than attempting to manage employees in a haphazard fashion. The best human resources practices create the most effective and efficient method of achieving any objective or task for a business. When aligned with the company mission statement and goals, these practices can address many of the personnel issues that can come up for

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a business. It is far better for a company to move forward towards meeting goals as one unit, collectively working towards a common goal and having a plan to get there.



Human Resource Management (HRM) is the term used to describe formal systems devised for the management of people within an organization. The responsibilities of a human resource manager fall into three major areas: staffing, employee compensation and benefits, and defining/designing work. Essentially, the purpose of HRM is to maximize the productivity of an organization by optimizing the effectiveness of its employees. The world of work is rapidly changing. As a part of the organization, Human Resource Management (HRM) must be prepared to deal with effects of changing world of work.

Literature review

Bratton & Gold (2017), Conner & Ulrich (1996), Farndale *et al.*, (2010), a general & comprehensive system of human values with reasonable conceptual clarity can be created on the basis of four foundational values: Freedom, Creativity, Love, and Wisdom. In the past, there were the arenas for cutthroat competition and vigorous promotion of self-interest with no concern for others. Guest (1987), Storey (2007), Ulrich (1998), one was expected to grab opportunities and seize power to stay ahead to manipulate others. However gradually it is being realized that sustainable progress in any field cannot be achieved without due regard for human values and secondly success achieved through mercenary attitudes and practices is of little meaning and purpose even for those who come out at the top in the rat race. These sentiments are getting stronger in the modern times of globalization in the business environment.

2. Research Methods

The present study applied the qualitative methods. All data is analyzed descriptively. It is used a paraphrase to explain, elaborate, and explore regarding the phenomenon belonging. The conclusion is the last remarked based on the previous discussion and result.

3. Results and Analysis

3.1 Some of the trends in HR management practices:

Some concepts and facts are shown below, through which can easily understand the emerging trends in human resource management and they are:



HR practices are evolving but need work, says Whirlpool's David Binkley

NEW DELHI: For the past four years, American home appliance manufacturing company Whirlpool, which has on its rolls over a lakh of employees and about 8,500 in direct and indirect employment in India, has been trying to regain its market share by innovative HR practices and tweaking of the bell curve. The company's senior vice president, global human resources, David Binkley feels global HR practices have changed significantly and the HR market in India is evolving as well. In 2011, three years on from the financial crisis, the company laid off close to 5,000 employees. It believes how it managed attrition then, has paid off. "We did not back off from hiring from universities, in fact, it was doubled because the market was so attractive," he says.

Binkley said they did not make short-term panicky decisions. "The actions we took then, have made us a leaner, faster and more agile company today," he said.

Last year, the company made two acquisitions in Europe and China: Italy's Indesit and 51% of Hefei Rongshida Sanyo Electric of China. Due to this, the company's employment base has grown. There are about 8,500 people in India, of which 1,500 are on the rolls.

While the company is ready to hire in India, it doesn't have a business case to do so — the economy isn't conducive enough, he said. "We are increasing our hires at our front end but they are third-party hires. Those have gone up to 2,800 this year from 2,000," he added.

Nevertheless, business and HR practices have changed in India, said Binkley, who has been with Whirlpool for over two decades. "I'm very impressed by the quality and it's fundamentally important for HR practices here to be dynamic because the market is so competitive," he added. Today, the company has started to focus on brand leadership, business leadership, operating excellence and HR excellence. This means unified HR practices across all its offices globally. "We have largely aligned our India practices with our global practices and with that comes accountability and recognition. The measuring axis is also aligned and trackable at a global level," he said.

The move is part of an over \$50 m, three-year project that attempts to create a better HR delivery service for the company. This system, he says, makes it less dependent on what office an employee ends up in or who the boss is. An interesting feature of the new tool is that it allows employees to evaluate themselves as team members. In addition, the company is using a tweaked version of the bell curve that is more flexible and allows it more discretion with its employees.

Source: ET Bureau|16 Oct 2015, 04.06AM IST

a) Organizing Talents Strategically

Many companies are now realizing the advantages of a diverse workplace. As more and more companies are going global in their market expansions either physically or virtually (for example, E-commerce-related companies), there is a necessity to employ diverse talents to understand the various niches of the market. With this trend in place, an HR Manager must be able to organize the pool of diverse talents strategically for the organization. He/She must consider how a diverse workforce can enable the company to attain new markets and other organizational goals in order to harness the full potential of workplace diversity.

b) Control and Measure Results

An HR Manager must conduct regular organizational assessments on issues like pay, benefits, work environment, management and promotional opportunities to assess the progress over the long term. There is also a need to develop appropriate measuring tools to measure the impact of diversity initiatives at the organization through organization-wide feedback surveys and other methods. Without proper control and evaluation, some of these diversity initiatives may just fizzle out, without resolving any real problems that may surface due to workplace diversity.

c) Motivational Approaches

Workplace motivation can be defined as the influence that makes us do things to achieve organizational goals: this is a result of our individual needs being satisfied (or met) so that we are motivated to complete organizational tasks effectively. As these needs vary from person to person, an organization must be able to utilize different motivational tools to encourage their employees to put in the required effort and increase productivity for the company. In our changing workplace and competitive market environments, motivated employees and their contributions are the necessary currency for an organization's survival and success. Motivational factors in an organizational context include working environment, job characteristics, and appropriate organizational reward system and so on.

d) HR goes soft on performance ratings

In 2015 some big organizations proudly announced that they were reforming their performance management processes. Deloitte started a very nice marketing campaign with the article "Reinventing Performance Management" in HBR of April 2015. "I have very mixed feelings about this trend. Yes, the frequency of feedback should be a lot higher than once per year. Yes, nobody benefits from a patronizing and unequal approach. Yes, assigning people a crude performance rating is not very helpful. But: measuring performance is very important, and the redesign or abolishment of performance management should not mean that one stops with measuring performance as well. Hopefully, Performance Consulting will emerge as a trend in 2016.

e) Individualization

Treating employees as individuals and not as part of a group or segment will be more visible as a trend in 2016. The way organizations deal with employees is still far behind the way organizations deal with clients, but there is movement. HR can learn a lot from marketing.

Today most organizations still segment in simple ways. Young versus old, Gen X, Gen Y, and Gen Z, Managers and non-managers and so on. Many untested assumptions are used to design policies and career tracks. "Gen Y wants more work-life balance". "People above 55 want to slow down". With big data analysis and with sophisticated algorithms, it has become easier to detect and predict individual preferences of employees, and organizations can act on the insights with tailored programs and interventions.

f) Artificial intelligence

Artificial Intelligence is growing up and also entering the HR arena. 2016 will probably not be the year of 'Machine Learning', but the developments are going fast. Example: Personality Insights, powered by IBM Watson. Feed the machine with text written by the person you want to analyse, and Personality Insights gives you a sound personality profile within seconds.

g) Moving away from Big systems

Big global companies can afford to invest in big expensive core HR information systems. Even these big companies are struggling to implement at a speed that is necessary to follow the changes in the organization, and are struggling to deliver on the high expectations that were set at the time of the investment decision. Other organizations are reviewing if it is wise to invest in big systems. They might be better to select best-of-breed solutions in different areas and to find a solution that enables HR reporting and people analytics using the available data out of the different systems. There are many clever solutions on the market. Focused applicant tracking, onboarding, performance management, and online training SAAS solutions.

- h) **Maturing of people analytics**
People Analytics is maturing. Last year many HR teams were making the first steps. We saw that some teams lack credibility with their top management, and have some difficulty to get funding to accelerate people analytics. Data analytic capabilities are scarce, even more so when you are looking for people with the necessary analytical capabilities who also have some HR domain knowledge. Sharing capabilities with other functions (marketing, IT) can be a solution. Learning a data analyst something about HR can be easier than learning an HR professional about data analysis.
- i) **Real-time succession management**
Technology and the smart use of HR analytics enable a far more effective succession management. In the past, the succession management process was too slow, too late and too limited. If you need good connectors to implement the strategy of your organizations, it is not very helpful to ask senior management: “Who are the good connectors in your business unit?”. The line of sight of senior management is too limited, and it takes too much time to gather the information anyway. You better analyse the data you have and look for certain patterns to detect possible good connectors. A social network analysis, for example, can be very revealing.
- j) **Community management as a recruitment tool**
Recruitment has to make the shift from reactive to proactive. The practice to create communities around your organization, a kind of “fan clubs”, is growing. The communities are connected to your organizations and through the community, you can give people a real experience of what it means to be part of your organization. When opportunities occur, candidates from the communities can very organically become part of your organization.
- k) **Health and Wellness**
Experts who look at health care claims note that underlying demographic trends are affecting claims. The general population of workers is more prone to obesity and being overweight: this not only affects performance, but it also makes certain injuries—either on the job or off—more likely. There are many new ways that workstation design, health plan incentives, and wellness programs can help employees become more educated about healthy activity and nutrition.
- l) **Workplace flexibility enters organizational agendas**
The first, a study by Gallup, indicates that the duration of an average week has moved to 47 hours in developed countries, while the second - a study by Workplacetrends.com - notes that 64% of managers now expect employees or team members to be accessible outside the office and during personal time after hours. Telecommuting, shrinking office spaces, a growing body of literature around unproductive open-plan office spaces and new computer-mediated communication technologies are shifting employee preferences to flexible workplaces.
In fact, in view of the talent shortages, we believe that organizations with flexible working policies and arrangements will become the most attractively positioned companies for top talent.
We believe that this year organizations will begin formalizing workplace flexibility policies. It is a big shift, but outputs, outcomes, creativity, productivity, and profitability may just take off in the most unexpected way for those who are open to change.
- m) **Training programmer duration gets shorter**
The days of a nose-to-the-grindstone executive education and training are perhaps numbered - especially when we consider factors such as extended working hours and the challenges of rapid change and volatility in emerging markets. What is required is short and powerful in-house executive education programmers. Programmer with longer study durations should offer study flexibility, allowing students to work at their own pace but within the timeline requirements of the organization and the learning establishment
- n) **Leadership development, wider talent recruitment and the panacea for talent shortage**
Senior management; specialists in Medicine, Engineering, and Law and the Accounting fields, as well as people trained in artisanal vocations, rank highly on South Africa’s skills shortage list. The latest findings of a leading South African labor shortage survey reported a 31% skills shortage in South Africa. However, on a global scale, we are still fairly safe. In the Manpower Group Talent Shortage survey, 10% of South African companies reported difficulties in filling jobs. Out of 42 countries, South Africa was ranked in 39th in talent shortages. Japan leads the race in the first position where 81% of companies were struggling to find human resources.
- o) **Outsourcing**
Freelancers and contracts provide an attractive way to augment your company workforce skills and abilities, without the need to permanently hire new staff. This is particularly relevant to projects and contracts that require

specialist knowledge, but which are unlikely to become a routine part of your company requirements. However, outsourced employees present new challenges when trying to ensure they meet internal standards and requirements. Do they hold qualifications or industry body memberships? Have they undergone standard company induction training? You may need to know this kind of information at some point in the future, even if it does not seem particularly relevant at the start of their contract.

p) Payroll

Responsibility for payroll falls between the remit of the accounts and HR departments, often leading to problems with accurate payments to staff. HR maintains records about salary, benefits, bonuses, and attachments of earnings, whilst accounts are tasked with actually making the payments. This creates a potential disconnect that can lead to the payroll being run late or employees receiving the wrong sums in their wage packet. To maintain morale and prevent future pay problems, your business should investigate the potential of using a dedicated payroll solution that interfaces directly with your HR software and account system. By uniting both departments electronically, most of the manual headaches associated with pay can be resolved automatically.

Dedicated payroll software helps ensure staffs get paid what they are entitled to when they expect it. Your HR department will also benefit from a reduction in queries, helping to better spread the workload throughout the rest of the month.

q) Learning and development: Into the spotlight.

This year's third most important challenge⁶ was the need to transform and accelerate corporate learning, up from No.8 in 2014. The percentage of companies rating learning and development as very important tripled since last year. But even as the importance of this issue arose, the readiness to address it went down. Only 40 percent of respondents rated their organizations as "ready" or "very ready" in learning and development in 2015, compared to 75 percent in 2014.

r) Reinventing HR: An extreme makeover.

The fourth biggest issue was the need to re-skill HR itself.⁷ This area also shows little progress since last year. Both HR and business leaders, on average, rated HR's performance as low; furthermore, business leaders rated HR's performance 20 percent lower than did HR leaders, showing how important it is to accelerate HR's ability to deliver value as the economy improves.

Perhaps because of these dim views of HR's performance, we found an increasing trend of CEOs bringing in non-HR professionals to fill the role of CHRO.

s) Performance management: The secret ingredient.

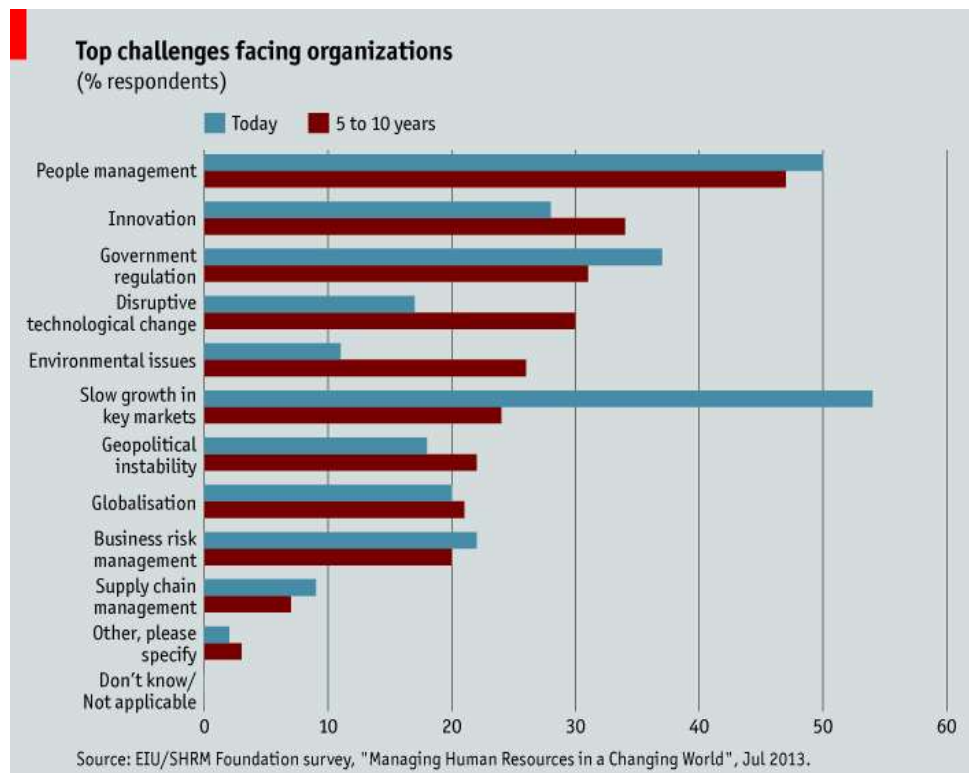
One of the biggest needs in the new world of work is the need to rethink how organizations manage, evaluate, and reward people. New, agile models for performance management have arrived, and we see these new performance management models as a core component of this year's focus on engagement, development, and leadership.

3.2 Today's Challenges for human resource management

HR challenge: Adapting to a rapidly changing worker profile.

Sweeping demographic changes across both the developed and developing world will place greater pressure on both the government and private sector to initiate and implement creative solutions to educate, integrate and retain a rapidly changing and diverse working population.

With hundreds of millions of women predicted to pour into the global workforce in the coming years, and temporary and part-time workers a significant and seemingly permanent fixture, companies need to adapt further to a new breed of employee. When you add the issues of a multi-generational workforce and growing cultural diversity, it is no surprise that people management is cited to be by far the most substantial challenge facing companies over the next five to ten years, according to a 2013 survey of 636 C-level and senior executives by The Economist Intelligence Unit, sponsored by the SHRM Foundation.



Aging populations across the globe will continue to pose a challenge for businesses. On the one hand, experienced employees are departing the workforce, leaving a leadership void. On the other hand, many older workers, particularly those in the US and other industrialized countries, plan to carry on working well past the traditional retirement age. Many will simply need to continue earning, as social safety nets, pensions and other benefits will no longer be adequate or available. But HR will need to establish more targeted incentive structures to keep less committed older workers in the workforce. Companies will also need to anticipate and assess which new skills and training older employees will require, particularly in the realm of technology where they may feel less comfortable than many of their younger colleagues.

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4. Conclusion

Several business trends have had a significant impact on the broad field of HRM. Chief among them were new technologies. These new technologies, particularly in the areas of electronic communication and information dissemination and retrieval, have dramatically altered the business landscape. Satellite communications, computers, and networking systems, fax machines, and other devices have all facilitated change in the ways in which businesses interact with each other and their workers. Telecommuting, for instance, has become a very popular option for many workers, and HRM professionals have had to develop new guidelines for this emerging subset of employees.

Changes in organizational structure have also influenced the changing face of human resource management. Continued erosion in manufacturing industries in the United States and other nations, coupled with the rise in service industries in those countries, have changed the workplace, as has the decline in union representation in many industries (these two trends, in fact, are commonly viewed as interrelated). In addition, organizational philosophies have undergone change. Many companies have scrapped or adjusted their traditional, hierarchical organizational structures in favor of flatter management structures. HRM experts note that this shift in responsibility brought with it a need to reassess job descriptions, appraisal systems, and other elements of personnel management.

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Statement of authorship

The author(s) have a responsibility for the conception and design of the study. The author(s) have approved the final article.

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