

Learn and Study, How to Sharing human resource management functions?

The traditional personnel management practice housed personnel functions in the department responsible for personnel due to the dominance of functional specialisation by the departments. Under functional specialisation, managers who were not directly involved in the production line were considered staff managers and their functions were categorised as 'staff functions'. Today, the distinction between line and staff managers seems to be overtaken by events in modern organisations because the concept was based on the assumption that functional specialisation was the best way to manage tasks; this is no longer the emphasis in some organisations today. **How to Sharing HRM Functions? PDF, PDF Reader, and Free Download.** Under functional specialization, managers who were not directly involved in the production line were considered staff managers and their functions were categorized as '**staff functions**'. Today, the distinction between line and staff managers seems to be overtaken by events in modern organizations because the concept was based on the assumption that functional specialization was the best way to manage tasks; this is no longer the emphasis in some organizations today. **Also learned, [HRM Philosophies and Objectives! How to Sharing Human Resource Management Functions?](#)**

However, the concept is still in use in some organisations, perhaps because old habits die hard and there is an inability among organisations to develop and manage a sufficiently multi-skilled workforce. Therefore, the use of the concept of line manager here is consistent with current thinking in our organisations. Human resource philosophies and objectives have also implied that human resource management functions can no longer be centralised in any one department. They have to be decentralised to various functional departments under line managers without avoiding duties and responsibilities at the human resource department level. In this case, some of the roles of line managers include the following.

Employee resourcing:

Line managers are responsible for developing operational and annual action plans and budgets for their departments. Such plans have human resource management implications in terms of their number and quality of which the line manager should be aware and actively participate in ensuring that the departmental objectives are achieved through people. It is the responsibility of the line manager to make sure that job analysis is effectively done, job descriptions and specifications are clear enough to be able to attract, recruit and select the most appropriate people to fill the available vacancies.

Employee utilisation:

Effective employee utilisation is critical, not only for the good of the organisation but also for the good of individual employees and their teams. Underutilised staff is a lost resource to the organisation in terms of opportunity cost because even if the employee has enough work to earn a salary, the added marginal labour value will not be realised. The employee will also not have the advantage of utilising his/her full potential and get extra rewards. However, over utilisation of staff will lead to stress, fatigue, and other health problems or even the risk of loss of life. It is the duty of the line manager to put in place job strategies, objectives and targets, which are challenging enough, but not overstretching the staff ability.

Performance and reward management:

This involves setting performance criteria, assessing performance and rewarding accordingly. Without performance assessment, it will be difficult to know whether the department is achieving its objectives or not and to what extent. It is the responsibility of a line manager to sit with employees and sign a performance agreement, which will be used as the basis of individual performance appraisal. The contract itself can be permanent, temporary, part time, but in a performance management system, the rewards are based on performance. This can be in the form of salary increment, renewal of contract, bonus, promotion, training etc.

Training and development:

Common wisdom tells us that the owner of the household knows better than the neighbour. Line managers are involved in day-to-day operations of the department. They are expected to know both general and specific knowledge, skills and attitudes required to effectively perform specific tasks by individuals, teams, and the whole department. They are also expected to know the kind of competencies that will be required in the future and help staff develop such competencies through career development programmes.

Handling of other human resource management functions:

Other human resource management functions may be routine or occasional and would be part of the jobs of the head of department. These would include coordination, building a departmental team spirit and culture of performance, staff promotions, transfer, leave, managing disputes, taking disciplinary measures and layoffs.

The emphasis that line managers should be responsible and accountable for human resource management in their respective departments does not deny the human resource department its central role in ensuring that strategic objectives of the organisation are achieved through effective people management. Also acknowledged by Terrington & Hall (2005), in working hand in hand with line managers, human resource managers play other important roles, which are not in conflict with what line managers do; such roles include:

- Formulation of human resource strategies:

Human resource managers play a pivotal role in developing human resource strategy and policies that fit the organisational and business strategy. The roles of human resource managers are as explained below.

- Provision of guidance to other managers:

The human resource manager as an expert is expected to provide guidance to other managers and staff on the interpretation of personnel strategies and policies in various areas which include human resource implications of organisational and business strategies, human resourcing, staff training and development, disputes and grievance handling, employment legislations, health and safety, layoffs etc.

- Facilitation of change management:

Organisations pass through various life cycles, which require change and adaptation. Human resource managers should be well placed to facilitate the required changes in terms of design, interpretation of the implications of change and how best they could be managed. They should also be involved in the process of introducing change, including creating staff awareness and putting conditions for facilitating a change process in place.

- Employee empowerment:

The concept of power is not value free. It depends on the individual perception of the source of that power and how it is interpreted and used to influence human resource management functions. The employer has many sources of power including the ability to reward and punish. Similarly, employees can reward or punish employers by deciding how and when to use their knowledge, skills and attitudes to build or destroy the organisation. It is the role of the human resource manager to ensure that there is no abuse of power and employees are empowered to make the right decisions on the shop floor in order to create an enabling environment for creativity and innovation.

- Support services to other departments:

The human resource department is a place where professionalism in people management is found, thus it should be well prepared and ready to provide support services to other departments as may be required. Some areas include, the design of different instruments for transacting human resources, designing and putting in place the appropriate organisational structure and jobs for each functional area, recruitment and selection, performance management system, training needs assessment, training and development, and employees services including pension, leave, transport, retirement, retrenchment and burial.
