

Learn and Study, Human resource management philosophies and objectives!

Human resource management (HRM or HR) is the strategic approach to the effective management of organization workers so that they help the business gain a competitive advantage, it is designed to maximize employee performance in service of an employer's strategic objectives. **HRM Philosophies and Objectives! PDF, PDF Reader, and Free Download.** The responsibilities of a human resource manager fall into three major areas: staffing, employee compensation and benefits, and defining/designing work. **Also learned, [Guide to Theories in HRM!](#) Human Resource Management Philosophies and Objectives!**

As Philosophies of human resource management:

The Harvard and British human resource management schools and the two definitions cited from John Storey and Michael Armstrong and others suggest that human resource management is not without philosophy. There are six elements on which human resource management philosophy and practices are based;

First is ownership. Human resource management is and has to be owned and driven by the top management in the interests of the key stakeholders. The stakeholders include shareholders, the managing board, the workers, clients and customers. This is unlike the old tradition in which personnel management functions were mostly vested in designated officers under a personnel department. Under human resource management, the philosophy is that the top management owns and drives the agenda for effective people management in an organisation.

Second, business or organisational strategies form the basis for human resource strategies, and there should be a strategic fit. This opposes putting emphasis on routine activities, reactive decision making and limited vision which seemed to characterise traditional personnel management. The implication is that an organisation cannot have a strategic approach to managing the workforce without organisational and business strategy. Here, an aspect of flexible human resource planning comes in, and the ability to use the best forecasting techniques is a precondition for human resource acquisition, utilisation, development and retention.

Third is considering employees as assets rather than liabilities. Under traditional personnel management philosophy, training and development of employees was quite often seen as a cost that should be avoided whenever possible. Now this doctrine has been turned on its head. Investment in people, like any other capital investment, is necessary for better returns in the future.

Fourth is getting additional value from employees. Employees are capable of producing added value. It is the role of the management to obtain such added value through human resource development and performance management systems. The concept of added value is borrowed from production economics. It stipulates that an employee can be utilised to produce marginal output if properly trained, does the right job and is rewarded accordingly. Work measurement and

matching jobs with the right people as well as measuring performance against the set targets and standards stand out clearer under human resource management school of thought.

Fifth is employee commitment. Organisational success comes from the employees' total commitment to the organisational mission, goals, objectives, and values. Employees' understanding of the future of the organisation and their own future in the organisation triggers commitment and hence sustained productivity. It is the task of the management to induce and encourage that commitment.

Sixth is also based on employees' commitment. Building a strong organisational culture gives managers an advantage in stimulating employees' commitment. Effective communication, training, coaching, mentoring and performance management processes are effective tools for building a strong corporate culture.

These philosophies have been accused of being insensitive to the human face of working relationships because they are, in many ways, about tightening the nuts and bolts in every aspect of employment. As a strategy to reduce what seemed to be extreme hard-nosed human resource management philosophies and practices (that is employers were becoming too selfish, individualistic and greedy – trying to maximise whatever possible benefits at the expense of employees), the focus in the 1990s changed somewhat. The direction changed more towards team working, employee empowerment; organisational learning and competence based human resource management. Human resource management debates of the 1990s and 2000s became focused on trying to understand these new concepts and how useful they are in improving human resource management functions in modern organisations. Other areas are the internationalisation of human resource management and the impact of globalisation in human resource management, particularly in the developing world.

As Objectives of human resource management:

The objectives of human resource management are derived from the philosophies which tie the emergence and development of human resource management together, both as a discipline and profession (Beer & Spector 1985; Cuming 1985; Armstrong; 1995; Dessler 2005).

First, the whole aim was on trying to achieve an organisational mission, vision, goals and objectives using people as valuable resources. Unlike with the traditional personnel management theory whereby employees were seen as instruments needed to accomplish work in organisations, human resource management managers recognise and appreciate the need for putting people at the top of the agenda in achieving organisational objectives. As the power of the organisation depends on the nature of the workforce, putting employees first in all human resource management functions in the organisation and making them feel that they are at the top is seen as a step further in putting the organisation first among competitors.

The second objective concerns the utilisation of staff capacity. Successful organisations are those that can fully utilise the potential of their employees. This manifests itself in different approaches used in job design, recruitment, and placement. This includes redesigning jobs so that related jobs can be done by one person, recruitment of multi-skilled employees, part time work arrangements, sub-contracting etc.

The third objective involves ensuring that employees are committed to their jobs, teams, departments and the entire organisation. Striving for total employee commitment is intended to minimise unnecessary conflicts between the employees and the management that could result in low morale among the employees, high employee turnover and ultimately low productivity. Commitment is fostered by using various strategies including employees being nurtured through coaching, mentoring and the provision of lucrative reward.

The fourth objective is to ensure that organisational systems, processes and activities are integrated and synergised through a strong organisational culture. Organisational culture is made up of values, attitudes, norms, myths and practices that is 'how things are done around'. Different categories of jobs, professions and departments are seen as a 'whole' rather than disjointed. Organisational symbols, songs, artefacts etc. are used to foster a culture of uniqueness, which makes employees feel proud of their jobs and the organisation.

The fifth is optimal utilisation of available resources. In the language of economics, resources are always scarce. Organisations cannot succeed if resources (employees, finance, machinery and equipment, energy) are over utilised, underutilised or are utilised at the wrong time or in the wrong place. Each of these scenarios would suggest that there is a waste of resources because some will be easily depleted, unnecessarily leaving them idle or are being used unwisely. In this case, matching resources with performance is a mechanism for monitoring organisational efficiency. Quite often time/activity/outcome and budget schedules are used to match resources with performance. Any observed underutilisation or over utilisation of resources has implications in terms of how the human resources were used and measures are taken accordingly.

The sixth reason for embracing human resource management practices is derived from organisational cybernetics and systems theory whereby the underlying principle is that 'the sum is less than the whole'. From a human resource management perspective, each job, organisational unit, section, department and all categories of staff are seen in their totality. Working together instead of as an individual is a method for improving synergy at all levels. Departmental outdoor training programmes are some of the initiatives used to improve synergy at functional level.

The last but one objective covers the utilities of creativity, innovation, teamwork and high quality management as key drivers in organisational excellence. Matching with changing customer needs and expectations requires the presence of an environment for creativity, innovation, team working and an obsession with quality. These ideas are largely borrowed from Tom Peters and Robert Waterman on an ideal situation for effective organisations in search of excellence, Joseph Schumpeter on the power of creativity and innovation, Joseph Juran, Edwards Deming and Ishikawa Kaoru on the emphasis of 'quality in the first time and zero

defects' as part of organisational culture in high quality management. These are cited as key explanations for the excelling of Japanese and other East Asian companies. Decentralisation of decision making to the lowest levels in the organisation structure, adaptation of flatter organisational structures, open office layouts, team building exercises, encouragement, support and reward for innovative ideas, and the use of quality circles in job performance are some of the strategies used to keep the organisation at the cutting edge.

The last objective is to enable managers to be flexible and adapt to changes required in pursuing excellence in human resource management functions. Fast-tracking a change in an organisational environment requires the ability to take prompt decisions and take the right measures before it is too late. Flexibility and adaptation seeks to reduce bureaucracy and inflexible working rules and regulations. What matters most is not 'how the job is done but what is achieved'.
