

THE ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING IN RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

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- **ABSTRACT:**

Human resource planning is used by organizations to ensure that they have the right number and the right kind of people at the right place and at the right time. Where this process is carried out properly, it brings maximum long-run benefits to both the organization and the individual employee.

However, increasing environmental instability, demographic shifts, changes in technology and heightened international or global competition have created imminent role for Human resource planners considering the fact that recruitment and selection process have become more complex in the present time.

The article takes a theoretical view of the concept of HR planning in the context of recruitment and selection process; highlights the challenges facing the HR planners and their role in recruitment and selection process. It concludes with recommendations aimed at making HR planning more effective and result-oriented when tied to recruitment and selection process in the organization.

Keywords: *Catchment Principle, HR Planning, Interview, Labour Market, Recruitment, Screening.*

• **INTRODUCTION**

Human resource management is the strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets, that is, the people who individually and collectively contributes to the achievement of the objectives of the organization.

At the start of the 21st century, there were increasing claims that the route to competitive advantage is achieved through people. In a situation where identical non-people resources in the form of finance, raw materials, plants, technology, hardware and software are made available to competing organizations

differences in economic performance between organizations must be attributed to differences in the performance of people.

For senior managers in an organization whose task it is to plan a response to the pressure for continuous changes, the attraction, recruitment and selection, utilization, development and future of the organization ought to be consistent with line functions such as finance, marketing and production etc. in the course of drawing strategic plans.

Either explicable or implicitly, all organizational strategies will contain human resource aspect. There are however, a long-run debate an whether human resource managers should have an input in the process of strategy making. A crucial element and the crux of the matter in this is the degree to which a link exists between human resource practices and performance of an organization.

In recent years, there have been growing efforts to test or establish a casual link between good Human Resource Management based on high trust, high commitment and high productivity. Furthermore, it might be argued that the management of people as a strategic asset provides an opportunity to embrace the high performance paradigm of human resource management actually based on high trust, high commitment and high productivity (Godard & Delancy, 2000).

Human resource inputs might emphasize the importance of integrating policies and procedures with a business strategy in which people are seen as a factor of production required to ensure that the business plan is fruitfully implemented. The more business plans are based on figures and mathematical models, however, the greater is the need for information about people to be expressed numerically and also for plans about people to be designed to fit into the business plan. The growth of what is Human resource planning techniques through the 1960s provided such information and incorporation of same into comprehensive computer models were a key

factor in the development of human resource functions.

In this regard, this article is geared towards establishing the importance and role of human resource planning as a corporate activity that drives other human resource functions notably recruitment and selection process.

• CHALLENGES, PROBLEMS AND ISSUES WITH HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING

Human resource planning involve projecting how many people will be needed to fill position in an organization. This planning occurs in a changing environment. Organizations study their short-term and long-term needs in hiring new employees. Uncertain economic conditions such as trade competition and changes in technology are example of contingency that can make an organization to adjust its hiring needs.

Hiring new employees can be a challenging part of human resource planning. People can be complicated elements and working with them could portray horrifying experiences. Furthermore, one has to navigate through state and corporate rules, policies and procedures, and also deal with different types of personalities, needs and crises. Understanding some of these challenges one many face in the course of human resource planning could help for hitchfree HR planning when problem(s) arises:

1. **Employee Attitude:** The unfortunate side of human resource planning is dealing with difficult and problematic employees. As in life situation, workplace is staffed with different kinds of people coupled with other negative tendencies which employers must contend with. Human resource personnel are often called to assist with mediation, coaching and even disciplinary actions to foster harmonious and orderly work environment. To prevent hiring problematic employees, human resource planners must use valid and reliable screening instrument. However, it is important to keep documentation of the hiring process and clearly define expectations from the potential applicants.

2. **Workplace Diversity:** Companies must encourage absorption of different talents and skill sets from all spheres of life to promote expansion, globalization and progress. Diversity can help foster a productive and innovative work environment as blending of new ideas, different perspectives, as well as different approaches to work and problem-solving will not only be

result-oriented but also rewarding to the employer.

3. **Mismatch Between Applicants' Skills and Jobs:** An organization may find it difficult to fill vacant positions and consequently engage the services of an consultant. This might be due to pressure or more demand within the organization and not because there is no available talent in the job market. Another reason is likely to be that the organization's recruiting strategies are not attracting the right talent. Being unable to fill positions necessary to achieve operational goals leaves an organization in a weak business position. Consequently, forecasting human resource needs should be supported with effective recruitment, replacement and retention policy framework.

4. **Environmental Factors:** Environmental issues are domiciled in an organization. Demographic changes affect the internal work climate. Differences in work value between generations, such as Baby Boomers and Generations X and Y, mean that employees have different preferences, motivations, interests, aspirations etc and these diverse inclinations have to be satisfied or addressed by the employer.

• **ROLE OF HR PLANNING IN FACILITATING RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCESS**

HR planning has an important role in facilitating the entire recruitment and selection process particularly:

a. **Facilitating the Pre-Recruitment Review:** The facilitating of the Pre-recruitment review involves providing advice on whether any internal staff should be considered for filling the new staffing need and if so, what process should be used in considering them; or providing advice on whether the new staffing need should involve giving opportunity to both internal and external applicants.

b. **Providing Expert Advice and Guidance:** This focuses on providing expert advice and guidance in the early stages of the recruitment particularly with defining the position, drafting the advertisement, identifying and advising on suitable channels for advertisement, arranging for the announcement to be placed through the agreed channels, and advising on the composition of the selection committee and allied matters.

c. **Functioning as an Expert Adviser to the Selection Committee:** The HR planner functions as an expert adviser to the selection committee throughout the entire selection process particularly, by briefing the committee members on interview techniques and providing expert advice on the modalities, screening, short listing, and making final decision.

d. **Ensuring That Short-Listed Candidates Have Briefing Materials:** the focus is on providing materials prior to the interview about the venue, employment conditions and when appropriate, lifestyle issues, and ensuring that all their questions on these issues are resolved after the interview for successful candidates.

e. **Pre-Interview Briefing Materials:** HR planners should ensure that all shortlisted candidates are provided with an appropriate briefing package prior to their interview. The contents of the briefing package will depend on the nature of the position. All briefing packages should include information about the salary range for the position and a summary of key employment conditions and benefits.

2) Candidates will need to make decisions and tradeoffs regarding the relative importance of these factors if they are offered the position. HR planners must ensure that interviewees have the required information so that the candidate who is offered the position is able to make a fully informed decision whether to accept the offer or otherwise..

3) **Regional Stations' Capability for Recruitment:** HR planners may not be able to provide the full range of services needed for recruitment purposes across all duty stations in an organization, particularly in smaller regional and field locations. In such circumstances, it is important for HR planners to identify which services can be provided and which cannot, all in a bid to ensure hitchfree implementation of the programme.

4) **Ensuring that all Post-Interview Procedures Are Managed Effectively:** The HR planner manages post-interview process effectively including those that affect the appointee's transition into her/his new role, workplace and duty station, and those that will sustain unsuccessful candidates' interest for future employment opportunities with the organization. HR planner adds value to the hiring process by tapping from the experience of other recruiters of consultants providing interview training on recruitment and selection process, and also looking at perceptions on the needs of the organization or department from the perspective of other experts outside the department or organization.

- 5) **Post Interview Issues:** Addressing candidates' personal issues are critical to successful recruitment. Some candidates may wish to raise some of the issues already discussed during the interview and other issues after the interview.
- 6) HR planners should also ensure that all post-selection formalities are conducted effectively for unsuccessful candidates to guarantee future interest in the organization's recruitment and selection process.
- 7) **Future Practice in the organization's Recruitment and Selection Process:** HR planners need to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of each selection process, develop necessary procedural changes for future recruitments (including pre-recruitment action), and provide suggestions to the selection committee to make their task more objective and rewarding.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following are recommended to ensure an effective and efficient human resource planning:

1. Human resource planners/managers must go beyond recruitment and selection process. They must perform other personnel functions. They must address employees' training and development needs. They must source for resources inside and outside the organization to ensure that employees develop the required skills and competencies. Effective communication and co-ordination between line managers and human resource planners could result in identification of training and development needs that exceed current requirements and thereby forecasting the number of personnel that may be required at any given time and this may in turn necessitates recruitment and selection process.
2. By tying performance reviews, promotions and salary increases to specific corporate goals, human resource planners may truly measure employees' competency level, and alignment which requires a strong relationship between human resource management and business plans. This focus or paradigm should be reinforced when the company is recruiting and selecting new employees to ensure there is a balance between HR planning and corporate plans.
3. Once qualifications and skill sets are determined, the next step is to identify the availability of workers in the labour market that possess the required skills. Attracting, recruiting and selecting applicants are components of the overall employment process. Effective recruitment and selection process saves time and money.

Turnover is costly for both startup and established business. Therefore, the essence of these processes is to make wise and effective recruitment and selection decision that should guarantee higher levels of employee retention. HR planners should strive to get it right in order to add value to organizational development and progress.

4. The employment conditions of an organization should be flexible.
5. There should be suitable working conditions, good and enticing remuneration package offered by the organization.
6. There should be a recruitment policy in the organization which must be based upon corporate goals and needs. The criteria for selection and preferences should be based on merit.
7. Performance Management system – including performance appraisal, improved productivity and competencies should therefore be made integral part of human resource planning.
8. There should be practice of equal opportunity in recruitment and selection policies devoid of discrimination.
9. HR practitioners should align organizational values with employees values upon selection.
10. Internal employees should be given priority in recruitment and selection process to avoid exhibition of negative attitude to work.
11. The process of recruitment and selection must be thoroughly assessed under both stable and unstable economic environment and labour market conditions.
12. The organization must put good transition programme (succession planning) in place to make recruitment and selection process flawless.
13. It is essential for HR planners to adhere to “catchment principle” by recruiting and selecting eligible indigenous applicants from the organization’s host communities to minimize conflict situations. (e.g Niger Delta Region in Nigeria).

• CONCLUSION

Recruitment is the phase that immediately precedes selection. Its purpose is to pave the way for the selection process by producing ideally the smallest number of candidates who appear to be eligible either in performing required tasks or developing the ability to do so within a period of time acceptable to the employing organization.

The crux of the matter is that the employing organization should not waste resources in examining the credentials of people whose qualifications do not match the requirements of the job. This is clearly in the interest of both the employing organization and the applicants. The objective of a recruitment procedure is to attract genuinely suitable candidates and carefully

examine their credentials in order to produce a shortlist for further screening in the selection process

Equally, the HR planners are committed to ensuring that the workplace is a fair and just environment for all employees. This means that access to employment within the organization and subsequent training and promotion will be made available to all applicants on an equal basis. The HR planners positively strive to eliminate all forms of discrimination and promote equality of opportunity when recruiting the workforce. In sum, a consistent systematic approach giving equal opportunity highest priority is likely to lead to equality of access and fair treatment in the selection of the most suitable candidates for each post in an organization.

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