



UNIT-1

The Basics of HR Management

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Discuss current issues in the human resource field and the changing role of supervisors and managers in terms of HR functions.

Unit 1

The Basics of HR Management

What is human resources? There are many definitions. The one we will use for this course is, “The department responsible for employee sourcing, hiring, and management.”

As you can see, it’s a very broad definition. Almost all of us have some type of human resources responsibilities built into our job. After all, people are the key in any organization. Our goal for this course is to help you understand the responsibilities you currently have and to prepare you for tasks you may have to undertake in the future.

Test Your Knowledge

What is your HR role?

In your position, can you be a strategic partner with the organization?

What are some of the things you might do to have a more active role in recruiting, hiring, and growing your own staff?

What are some of the trends and issues facing HR professionals?

Performing a Skills Inventory

The Role of Emotional Intelligence

One of the difficult topics that supervisors and managers need to learn about is emotional intelligence, sometimes called EI or EQ. Emotional intelligence is not the same as overall intelligence, or IQ. **In simple terms, emotional intelligence means applying skill in perceiving, understanding, and managing emotions and feelings within an atmosphere that is very high in trust. It is a way of understanding and making the most of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of your employees.**

Skills Inventory Checklist

How do we know what our staff has to offer? We start out by completing a skills inventory. **A skills inventory evaluates an employee's:**

- Knowledge
- Skills
- Abilities
- Qualifications
- Interests
- Motivation to learn new skills
- Future plans (such as retirement or advancement)

Sample Skills Inventory Form

Identification
Name:
Job Title:
Experience
Years with Company:

Years on Current Job:			
Years on Similar Jobs in Other Companies:			
Education Type	Yes	No	Level Achieved/Type of Course
High School			
Vocational School			
University			
Job Training			
List Skills Used on Present Job			
List Skills Possessed But Not Used on Present Job			
Readiness For Promotion			
To What Job(s):			
Current Deficiencies:			
Actions Needed to Correct Deficiencies:			

Forecasting Techniques

Forecasting is an important function within human resources as we try to **predict the organization's demand for employees**. If you know your department is going to grow, you'll want to pay attention to these tools and learn how they work.

Forecasting techniques can vary from an informal review of the existing situation and some interviews with hiring managers, to sophisticated use of metrics, data analysis, and demographics. Neither approach is ideal or gives all information required, but both and everything in between can provide you with decent approximations.

One helpful forecasting technique is to look back at past trends, where you can apply the methods of extrapolation and indexation.

Extrapolation

For this technique, you must have data for the same time period that you're forecasting. Let's say we want to predict how much our company is going to grow over the next four years. We'll say our current year is Year 4.

Year	Revenue	Employees
1	\$10,000	10
2	\$15,000	10
3	\$30,000	20
4	\$90,000	20

We can easily see a trend: revenue grew by 50% in Year 2 and employees stayed the same, while revenue and staff doubled in Year 3. From Year 3 to Year 4, revenue tripled but staff stayed the same.

Let's use the same chart and fill in the known data for the current year, Year 4.

Year	Revenue	Employees
4	\$90,000	20
5		
6		
7		

If we look at the first table of actual data, you can see that from Year 1 to Year 2, our revenue increased by 50%, but our employees stayed the same. If we presume that the same thing will happen in the next four year period, we can apply that formula to Year 4 to come up with figures for Year 5.

Year	Revenue	Employees
4	\$90,000	20

5	\$135,000	20
6		
7		

If we continue applying the trend, we can extrapolate the remaining years.

Year	Revenue	Employees
4	\$90,000	20
5	\$135,000	20
6	\$270,000	40
7	\$810,000	40

This shows us how our staff should develop (if the past trends continue) and how the revenue stream should also flow. Of course, this isn't guaranteed to be accurate, but it may help you plan for the future.

Indexation

Indexation matches employee growth with another factor (such as sales or revenue). Let's say that the Acme Widget Company indexes its employees by sales: they know that they need ten employees for every hundred thousand widgets sold. So, if they forecast that they are going to sell 400,000 widgets next year, they know that they will need 40 employees. Then, you can look at that number and determine what hiring and recruitment processes need to be put into place.

Test Your Knowledge

Do you know what is expected of your company in the next 12 months?

Are you growing, downsizing, or expecting to stay the same?

What will you do in order to meet your objectives?

Job Analysis

What is a Job Analysis?

A job consists of a group of tasks that must be performed if an organization is to meet its goals. A job may be held by only one person or by many people.

A job analysis is the process of systematically determining the skills, knowledge, and duties required to perform jobs in an organization. It is performed by obtaining answers to six questions:

- What physical and mental tasks does the worker accomplish?
- When is the job to be completed?
- Where is the work to be accomplished?
- How do the workers do the job?
- Why is the job done?
- What qualifications are needed to perform the job?

When Should Job Analysis Be Performed?

There are at least three different times when a job analysis should be performed:

- When new jobs are created
- When jobs have changed because of new technology, methods, etc.
- When they have not been analyzed for a period of time and a new worker is required for the job

The information from a job analysis is used to identify competencies, prepare position descriptions, and develop job specifications.

Who Should Be Consulted in Job Analysis?

Who should you go to if you are doing a job analysis? Who do you think will give you the most accurate description of the job?

- The incumbent?
- Their supervisor?
- Senior management?

The answer is the supervisor. Depending on the size of your organization, the supervisor may be assisted by someone from human resources. The incumbent may know what the job is, but that may not be precisely what the supervisor wants done. It is not senior management's job to get into the specific details of a job, just the purpose for which that job was created.

This means you need to know the ins and outs of the positions you supervise. Managers who understand what a job involves do a much better job and have a much lower rate of hiring error than those who are not well prepared for the interviewing process.

The Purpose of Job Analysis

An occasional job analysis can serve another very useful purpose. Sometimes we don't really stop long enough to take stock of a position, especially if it's a position that has been in place for a long period of time. Occasional job analyses will help you evaluate positions and any new tasks or requirements that have come into play.

Hiring the best person for an open position takes a lot of work, including a solid application of planning and preparation. You'll need to:

- Understand what tasks and duties take the majority of time (job skills)
- Know the technical and performance skills required to do the job
- Understand the circumstances (are they working under stress, deadlines, problem solving, dealing with frequent change, having trouble anticipating next steps, etc.)
- Describe skills in objective, behavioral terms

Job Analysis Methods

There are several ways of doing a job analysis.

Direct Observation

Often used by a first line supervisor or manager. However, this method has serious limitations, particularly if the job requires mental effort or specialized skills/knowledge, so is best supplemented by additional methods.

Interviews

A step beyond observation, as there is an exchange of information.

Combined Observation and Interview

This can make for a complicated process, but depending on the job it can be quite effective, even if it's time consuming.

Questionnaires

They can be customized to the job and they are relatively inexpensive to do.

Performing an Analysis

This form is designed to help define the qualities and talents needed for a particular job. The questions are designed to give data useful not only to determine technical requirements (can do), but also the motivational factors (will do) and the interpersonal/environmental factors (fit).

Use this form to analyze a job prior to an interview by completing it yourself or use it as a guide when gathering job information from others.

Basic Information

Job Title:

Grade/Salary Level:

Position Reports To (Title):

Job Information

List the most important duties and responsibilities.

Describe key involvement with others; superiors, subordinates, peers, vendors, customers, or other contacts.

What are the potential sources of satisfaction? (List up to 5.)

What are the potential sources of dissatisfaction? (List up to five.)

What jobs or career opportunities might be available? (Indicate even if limited.)

What education and prior experience is necessary to perform the job?

What physical and environmental factors impact the job? (Examples: Physical working conditions, levels of fitness, material such as chemicals, medications, use of vehicles, and equipment required.)

What are the reporting relationships (direct and indirect) for the person in this position? Where does the job fit on the company's organizational charts? What positions report directly or indirectly to this job?

Is there travel? If so, how much?

What is the work schedule (days, hours, shifts, etc.)?

Is this a unionized position?

Fit To the Job

Test Your Knowledge

Can the individual do the job? Do they have the combined specific experiences, skills, equipment knowledge, abilities, prior training or education, physical requirements, etc., required or desired for successful job performance?

What specific behaviors are required or desired in order to be sure that individuals will apply themselves and behave in ways that are associated with success on the job?

Will the person fit into the specific environmental circumstances of the job? Include information about the type of industry or business, atmosphere of your organization, circumstances of work at department or area level and the circumstances of the specific job.

Knockout items: What specific situational factors such as long hours, overtime, shift work, weekend work, travel, relocation, physical demands, are required on this job? What circumstances would eliminate the person from consideration?

Job Analysis Formats

There are many variations of the basic job analysis format that we just looked at. Here are a few of the most popular.

Functional Job Analysis (FJA)

This involves analyzing the functions of the job. There are many versions of FJA, but they generally rely upon the following elements:

- Things to do
- Data to use
- People
- Worker instructions
- Reasoning skills
- Math skills
- Language skills

Although there is a formal system involving weighing factors for each area, you can also develop your own informal Functional Job Analysis by evaluating the criteria that apply to your employee.

Factor Evaluation System

In this system, points are assigned for various areas of the job:

- Knowledge

- Supervisory controls
- Guidelines
- Complexity
- Scope and effect
- Personal work contacts
- Physical demands
- Work environment

This makes the job analysis a more uniform process, and makes it easy to compare two positions that may appear very different.

Critical Incident Technique

This system uses a more practical approach. Critical incidents for the position are identified, allowing the analyzer to identify skills and knowledge that would be needed to resolve that incident. This could be a helpful format for staff in emergency response services.

Further Reading:

- ✓ *Human Resource Management: Basics, By Ronald R. Sims, (2007)*
- ✓ *Fundamentals of Human Resources Management, By Diane ARTHUR, (2004)*