

# Human resources role in recruitment and selection



Firstly, one of the most important HR policy carrying out by Tesco is recruitment. In order to establish demand for new employees and to recruit right people, Tesco generates workforce planning. The most crucial elements in workforce planning are clearly identified job descriptions and person specifications. Tesco uses these two elements as the basis for job advertisements and they send these to the applicants. A job description includes the title of the job, description of roles and responsibilities, and to whom they will be responsible if they get the job. Besides this, a person specification includes skills, characteristics that the applicant needs for a specific job. An example is seen below:

[http://www.thetimes100.co.uk/images/  
company\\_images/132/323/12150206223.jpg](http://www.thetimes100.co.uk/images/company_images/132/323/12150206223.jpg)Source:  
thetimes100.co.uk

For the new vacancy, Tesco first of all looks at its internal talent plan. This is the process that Tesco looks for the current employees who can be moved either at the same level or different levels by promotion and then if they can not find suitable people within this plan, Tesco makes an advertisement internally on its private network for two weeks. For external recruitment, Tesco makes advertisements on its website [www.tesco-careers.com](http://www.tesco-careers.com) or boards in the stores. For in store based jobs, people can appeal to Tesco stores with their Curriculum Vitae (CV) or they can register by Jobcentre plus. Tesco prepares a list for waiting applicants and calls them as a job become available in accordance with their roles. However for managerial positions, applicants apply online. The chosen applicants by Tesco are called for an interview for the final stage of the process. For more specialist jobs, such as

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pharmacists, Tesco makes its job advertisements externally through its website and media; television, radio, on Google, and in magazines.

Under its recruitment policy, Tesco aims to ensure all the staff works together in order to drive its business objectives. By its recruitment policy, Tesco aims to have a right number of people working in the right jobs and time. By developing an effective recruitment policy, Tesco ensures that all the vacancies are issued on their website and the application process for the applicants is simple. By accessing the Tesco's website, people can find out any information related to new jobs, and new store openings and they have a chance for making application online by filling the application form which they can find in its website. Although it is costly for Tesco to advertise on TV, radio and in magazines, Tesco aims to reach the right people for its special job vacancies.

Tesco has an important role in regenerating UK communities as the organisation first started to open Regeneration Partnership stores in 2000 in Leeds. Regeneration Partnership stores are the part of recruitment process of Tesco. The target group for this Project is local people who have been unemployed for at least 6 months. Tesco includes people with low levels of skills and people with disabilities as well in its project. By the success of this project, Tesco is one of the first companies that works with the UK Government in employment partnerships. The company won a Best Practice Recruitment award for the new store opened in Birmingham and they also won two North West Local Employment Partnership Awards. (investis. com)

The standard HR approach in recruitment involves producing job descriptions and personnel specifications. Job recruitment can be either internal or external. Sometimes organisations consider internal candidates rather than people outside the organisation. As Torrington stated many organisations give a chance to internal candidates before they search for external labor market for new job facilities. As stated above, Tesco implements internal recruitment as well. Giving preference to internal candidates has a great advantage of providing current employees motivation, increase their morale and commitment. On the other hand, according to research carried out by the Institute of Employment Studies (2002), internal recruitment can create serious problems if the internal candidates are not selected. (Torrington, 2008. p. 150) This is because they have higher expectations of being selected for the position than the external candidates.

In addition to internal recruitment, organisations follow methods for external recruitment. The standard approach of external recruitment includes methods of advertisements, recruitment agencies, corporate website, journals, jobcentre plus, employee referral scheme, newspaper advertisements, posters/billboards, radio, TV, etc. (Torrington, 2008. p. 150) Tesco uses some of these methods such as advertisements, website, jobcentre plus for recruitment. In addition to these, Tesco also makes advertisements in some magazines, TV and radio for more specialist vacancies.

## Selection

Secondly, selection is the crucial HRM activity of Tesco which is related to choose the most suitable candidate from the applicants for a specific vacancy. Screening candidates is the difficult part of the selection process. The selection process in Tesco starts with checking the CV's of applicants. The company looks for person specifications by analysing the CV's whether the applicant has the proper personal skills, and characteristics for the job. Tesco also ensures a job type match tool on its website. (tesco-careers. com) This tool helps applicants to find out which job they may fit in before their application. Tesco selects external management candidates in several stages. The process of selection is shown by the table below:

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An applicant who passes screening stage is invited for an interview. If they pass this stage, the next stage will be attending an assessment centre that occurs in stores. The aim of this stage is to provide consistent selection process. In an assessment centre, the candidates participate in several exercises such as team working activities and problem solving exercises which they might experience at work. After this stage, the candidates who are selected have an second interview. The line managers of the job attend the second interview to ensure that the applicant fits the job.

While choosing its employees, Tesco select people regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, and disability. In particular, people of all ages are selected at Tesco and they won the Personnel Today 2004 Age Positive Award for supporting both younger and older employees. For instance, Tesco targets an older age group over 50s as they are more loyal, reliable and they have better

relationships with customers. Regarding age, although % 57 of the employees are female in the UK, the company aims to select more women employees for management positions in the future. (tesco. com)

The standard approach of selection includes three perspectives for determining the selection criteria: organisational fit, functional fit and job fit. Torrington suggests that during the selection period, organisations should consider the organisational criteria, functional criteria and individual job criteria. (Torrington, 2008) According to Standard approach, some selection methods can be used by the organisations such as application forms, self assessment, telephone interviewing and testing at different stages in the selection process. As stated above, Tesco uses methods such as screening of candidates' CV's, interviewing and assessment.

## Training

Thirdly, another HRM activities of Tesco is providing training and development programmes to their employees. Training and development is a top priority for Tesco, therefore there is a high commitment of training programs in the organisation such as trainee management programmes, apprenticeships in retail, and graduate opportunities for their staff. The retail director, David Pott said: 'training is a key at Tesco and developing our leaders of the future is a fundamental part of our success.'(hrmagazine. co. uk)

Tesco trainee management programme is designed to initiate employees career in 12 months. They start as a team leader in a local store and within the first six months they will work up to line manager. The second six

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months of the programme will promote employees to their first proper management position. Tesco also provides 17 different graduate programmes for employees in order to develop their skills and technical knowledge. (tesco-career.com) By graduate programmes, Tesco gives a chance to its employees to develop their personal development plan that requires both training and skills for their role. Depending on the programme, this may include technical skills in areas from using spreadsheets, to professional skills like leadership, negotiation or presentation skills. There are also core company skills such as; personal effectiveness, communication and time management. (tesco-graduates.com)

The main reason for offering training and development programmes for organisations is to achieve the best return in its investment by its most important source: employees. For achieving its objectives, Tesco focuses heavily on customer needs, expectations and effective customer communications, because meeting customer needs is an important route to achieve competitive advantage. Besides achieving business objectives, Tesco pursues training programmes in order to help employees to achieve their career objectives. In order to achieve this objective, Tesco uses training as a tool. In 2008, 97.4% of employees were trained to bronze level (competent), 94.2% of employees to silver level (experienced) in UK and these numbers show that they exceeded their target. 80% of the apprentices who graduated in 2008 said the training programme helped them with their career path and made them feel more confident. (investis.com)

Torrington argued that organisations in UK give less support for training and development when compared with other European countries and employers

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make their own choices for participation. HR development strategy suggests that organisations should develop business strategies in order to have an effective training and development. The abilities of people that developed should be relevant in achieving the objectives in the organisation and they may be used as a source for future competitiveness of the company. As if stated Tesco provides training and development for its employees in order to achieve its objectives and they use this as a tool for attaining competitive advantage in the retail market especially in UK.

### HRM models

When assessing the Tesco approach, theoretical approaches to HRM can be used. First of all, the Harvard model of HRM which is produced by Beer et al (1984), identifies the stakeholder interests which have an impact on employee performance. The model includes six components which are: situational factors, stakeholder interests, human resource management policy choices, HR outcomes, long-term consequences and a feedback loop. The situational factors, business strategy and conditions, workforce characteristics, labour market, laws, management philosophy, have an influence on choice of HRM policies. The stakeholder interests recognize the different interests of shareholders, employees, government, the unions, and the community. According to Beer, the situational factors and stakeholder interests may constrain the creation of HRM policies. He also argued that these HRM policies have both organisational HR outcomes and long-term consequences. The number of factors that can be affected in the organisation including, commitment and competence of employees, the degree of congruence between employees' goals and organisation objectives

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and cost effectiveness. The long-term consequences can be analysed in three levels: individual well being, organisational effectiveness and societal well being. At the individual level, rewards that employees received for their success comprises individual well-being. At the organisational level, increased effectiveness ensures the survival of the organisation and at the societal level the organisation achieves some of its objectives. The six component of the model, feedback loop, indicates that long-term outputs can also influence the HRM policies, situational factors and stakeholder interests as the model has a two way relationship.

<http://www.projectmanagementmantra.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/softHRM.png>

Source:  
projectmanagementmantra.com

Secondly, the contingency approach of HRM can be identified. This approach is based on the assumption that different types of HR strategies can be applied for different business strategies. The model is composed of two forms of fit. The first one is vertical integration that relates to external fit. It refers the HR strategy will be suitable for the demands of business strategy. The second one is horizontal integration, internal fit, which states all HR policies fit together for organisation to act coherently as a whole. The model shows how selection, appraisal, development and reward activities of HR can lead to required employee performance.

When we compare the two models of HR, the universal approach: Harvard model of HRM, gives an evidence that there is a direct relationship between HR policies and performance. However the contingency approach suggests

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that the organisation's strategy will have an impact on HR policies and performance. For instance, when we compare the reward policies, there will be two different perspectives. The contingency approach requires that organisation's reward system should be formed in accordance with the organisation's business strategy for achieving competitive advantage. However, Harvard model claims that there are several HR policies that includes reward as well. By these policies the organisation can acquire highly motivated employees who will be the resource for achieving competitive advantage.

Tesco's HRM approach can be examined under each model. Tesco has a policy that is more universal. They think all employees are important and they should be treated same. According to Tesco, employees should be chosen carefully and they need to be satisfied, because they are important sources of the organisation for achieving competitive advantage. It is clearly stated by Tesco on its website: 'Our people are our most important asset, and a key objective is to select and retain the best. We therefore offer our staff an attractive benefits package, including flexible hours and leave, profit-share, an award-winning defined benefit pension, subsidised meals and childcare vouchers.' (tesco. com)