

Human resource planning research paper sample

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Human resource process involves a process that human resource managers follow in determining the required staff in order to meet customer demand and the organizational needs. Traditionally, organizations used Human Resource Planning (HRP) to make sure that employees got the right job, and at the right time. Initially, the conditions were certain and relatively stable. This is why organizations focused on management concerns that were short term. However, today there is a lot of instability, technological change, increased competition, and demographic shifts, which are necessitating for changes in Human Resource Planning. Therefore, HRP has become the responsibility of human resource line managers and planners. It involves four steps, which include determining future human resource requirements, determining human resource availabilities, determining shortages, and developing the plan of action to fill the gaps. Organizations are nowadays developing both long term and short term plans so as to address human resource requirements adequately.

Human Resource Planning can be defined as the process and activities carried out in forecasting requirements of an organization, in terms of labor demand and supply. These two projections are later compared so as to know the employment gaps in order to develop action, to address the gaps. Action plans involve planning how to staff so as to achieve the required level.

Rothwell & Kazanas (2003) define HRP as the process followed by organizations in determining the needed staffing support so as to meet customer demands and the needs of the organization. Several considerations affect the HRP, which include retirements, employee availability, and environmental changes.

HRP is the responsibility of human resource line managers and the other. It involves four steps, which include determining future human resource requirements, determining human resource availabilities, determining shortages, and developing the plan of action to fill the gaps (HR PAPER PDF). Organizations are nowadays developing both long term and short term plans so as to address human resource requirements adequately. This paper discusses the process of human resource planning.

Process and example

HRP involves four steps. These are: determining future human resource requirements, determining human resource availabilities, determining shortages, and developing the plan of action to fill the gaps (HR PAPER PDF). For example, an organization can have two units (customer service and finance). The same company can have two managers in the hierarchical level and one entry level. A shortage of 140 employees may be forecast, which are unevenly distributed in the four categories. One of the categories could be having a surplus. An action plan will, therefore, be designed to cater for the shortage and the surplus.

Initial decisions

Several decisions ought to be made before undertaking HRP. These decisions are necessary because they determine the end results of the whole process. The outputs of the process, which include the gap process, are also influenced by these decisions. This means that the quality of action plans depends on the initial decisions.

Strategic planning

Human resource managers should ensure that a close link exists between human resource plans and the organization's strategies. The involved managers must consider environmental factors and the goals, which are likely to affect the size of various business units. HRP that takes place as part of the organization's process of strategic planning is usually called plan-based HRP. This approach should be used by managers while undertaking HRP. Important to note is that all organizational developments do not get captured in all business plans. Legal requirements, for example, would require a change of business plans. This necessitates planning for special projects in the organizations instead of affecting the whole business plan. In addition, HRP should be carried out, away from the formal cycle of planning. Planning can focus on a certain group of employees. This is referred to as population based human resource planning. Planners must always be aware of what is going on within their organization. They should hold informal meetings with other managers to understand issues such as absenteeism, accident rates, among others (HR PAPER PDF).

Planning time frame

It is very important for an organization to know how long the planning should extend. Plans are either short term, intermediate, or long term. Short term plans last for one year or less while long term plans go for three years and beyond. Intermediate plans, on the other hand, range between one to three years. Planning varies from organization to organization depending on the type of plan. Plan based HRP takes the same time as the business plan, usually three to five years for strategic plan. Operational planning, however,

takes less than three years. The nature of the project also affects the time frame. For example, a plan intending to solve the problem of shortage of employees will take less time, say three months. Another plan like building an apartment will require two to five years. Plan based HRP will also have different time frames. This depends on availability of labor supply, both internal and external (HR PAPER PDF). For instance, dealing with top executives usually requires, lengthy, time frame.

Job categories

HRP unit comprises job categories and levels. Internal labor comes from the job categories as well as from the hierarchical levels within the organization. Another important element is the movement paths by the employees. In managing HRP, managers are required the best job categories and hierarchical levels to use. In job categories, the planning managers may be required to choose between finance and customer service. Two levels may also be used such as a manager and the new entrant in the organization. Job categories help in investigating the category that is experiencing either shortage or surplus. Hierarchical levels ought to be consistent with the formal hierarchy because promotion, transfers, and demotions depend on these levels (HR PAPER PDF). Promotions use the up -levels, transfers use across -levels while demotions follow downward-levels. Enough information on the gaps in terms of levels helps managers in planning movement programs internally when it comes to acquiring internal labor. For instance, it would be hard to have smooth promotions without knowing the available vacancies at the various levels of the organization.

Head count

During HRP, it is necessary to know the number of employees in an organization. This is referred to as the current workforce. The number of employees can be obtained easily by counting the number of employees using the payroll. However, at times it becomes necessary to use other assessing methods in order to obtain the total number of employees. One such assessing method is where an employee's scheduled time is accounted for. In this case, the employee's head count is stated depending on a full time equivalent, usually referred to as FTEs (HR PAPER PDF). First, the hours that determine full time work must be defined, for example, per week or any other unit. If, for instance, full time is 40hrs/week, a person who is working for 10 hours per week becomes . 25 FTE, the one who is working for 20 hours becomes . 50. This process continues until all employees are considered. During assessment of head count, human resource planners are advised to put into consideration the current, authorized, vacancies.

Roles and responsibilities

Line managers and other specialists from the human resource department are usually involved during HRP. Therefore, roles and responsibilities of these individuals ought to be determined before starting the process of HRP. In most organizations, line managers are given the responsibility of ensuring quality, as well as completion of HRP. However, the Human Resource staff must assist the line managers during this process. Human resource staff proposes the type of HRP to be undertaken. They also make suggestions regarding the time frame, comprehensiveness, and hierarchical levels, among other important decisions. However, the line managers are

responsible for making the final decisions after listening to staff suggestions. After agreeing on a particular approach, both human resource managers and the staff design the forecast and the plan of action, plus any other preliminary work. Having put the processes in place, the human resource staff starts collecting data for alternative action plans, such as staffing plans. Action planning is the responsibility of both human resource managers and staff. Eventually, they get to understand and trust each other, which allows for smooth HRP process.

Focusing Human Resource Requirements

This is necessary in organizational planning, for any organization. It comes due to factors such as change in technology, regulatory by the law, among others. Statistical techniques, among them Ratio analysis, and regression analysis can be used in forecasting Human Resource (HR PAPER PDF).

However, these techniques have both strengths and weaknesses. For example, ratio analysis helps in predicting the head count. It is also used in integrating Human Resource plans. However, this technique fails to account for technological changes. Historical predictors can be used with regression analysis to give precise future expectations. The weakness comes in that it becomes hard to collect enough data because the method is time consuming. The second technique used in forecasting Human Resource requirements involves judgmental techniques. This involves the decision maker collecting and weighing information so as to forecast Human Resource Requirements. The approach used can be either bottom to up approach or top to down approach. Some significant difference will always be noted when the two methods are used to forecast.

Forecasting availabilities

Three approaches can be used in forecasting availabilities. These include Markov analysis, replacement & succession planning, and manager judgment (HR PAPER PDF). Under manager judgment approach, the individual managers make use of their own judgment to forecast the respective units. However, this method is only applicable in small businesses. This method has weaknesses because it can be possible that the manager lacks enough information in order to give viable estimates. Markov analysis bases its prediction on historical patterns in relation to employee movement. The main limitation comes when the planner is choosing sample size. Small sample sizes will give different estimates from large estimates. Multiple employee moves are also not considered while using Markov analysis. Replacement and succession planning involves noting potential employees for promotion. The managers also focus on the employees' capabilities, as well as their deficiencies. Training plans are also put in place to do away with the deficiencies. The main focus in this approach is, therefore, availability quality and quantity. This method requires that the managers have time and the necessary skills.

Reconciliation and gaps

During this phase, future implications of the plan begin coming in the process. It involves coming up with plans for action, which must be based on the data that has been gathered. It also involves analysis and evaluating the alternatives. These plans must be accepted by both employees and management. Plans must be put in the order of priority. The key players

should be identified, and possible barriers identified. Among these plans include human resource supply plan and appraisal plan.

Conclusion

HRP has been discussed in the above discussion. Several definitions have been given by different authors, but they all give the same meaning. Human resources must be managed properly to ensure that there are no shortages or surpluses of employees. This involves a process. Human resource managers and the staff are responsible for human resource planning.

Strategic planning is vital whereby these two, the managers and staff must work closely together. Human resource staff comes up with HRP suggestions, but the line managers of the department make the final decision. Roles and responsibilities must be specified to ensure smoothness of the process. The time frame must be considered while making HRP decisions. Some plans will last for less than a year, others between one year and three years, while other will last between three to five years depending with the involved activities. The number of current and required employees must be determined for effective planning. Ratio and regression analysis are among the techniques use to determine human resource requirements. Markov analysis, replacement & succession planning, and manager judgment are the commonly used techniques in forecasting availabilities. Finally, future implications of HRP ought to be put into consideration.

References

Armstrong, M. (2009). *Armstrong's Handbook of Human Resource Management Practice*. Kogan Page.

HR PAPER PDF

Rothwell, J., & Kazanas, C. (2003). Planning and Managing Human Resources: Strategic Planning for Human Resources Management. HRD Press.