

31.19: Putting It Together- Human Resource Management

Synthesis

Since the 1900s, American society has evolved, and the working conditions of employees have improved dramatically. Workplace discrimination and inequities still exist, however, and human resource professionals play an important role in reducing and eliminating them. How can such efforts impact your work life?

If your position in a company gives you human resource management responsibilities, then it is essential that you understand the employer-employee relationship from both a legal and ethical perspective. Failure to properly apply laws, regulations, and policies in your management of the workforce can result in high turnover rates, grievances, and even worse—lawsuits. A discrimination lawsuit can potentially be a death blow to a company, displacing hundreds or thousands of workers and negatively impacting the economy.

If you are an employee, then it's crucial for you to understand your rights under employment law. Knowing and exercising your rights is important not only for your own protection but for the general progress of improving conditions, pay, and benefits for other workers. Human resource managers are skilled in these areas and are a resource for employees should they experience discrimination, unfair treatment, or unsafe working conditions.

Recall the nineteenth-century workers you read about at the start of this module—they didn't have a human resource manager to act as their advocate in the face of dismal and dangerous conditions. Today, the work environment for most employees is certainly better—not perfect, but better. Just how much has it improved? Take a few minutes to watch the following video to see just how far we've come.



A YouTube element has been excluded from this version of the text. You can view it online here: pb.libretexts.org/afm/?p=768

You can view the [transcript for “Office Space – Jansen”](#) (link opens in new window) or the [text alternative for “Office Space – Jansen”](#) (link opens in new window).

Summary

Human Resource Management

Human resource managers are responsible for the activities needed to recruit, hire, train, develop, and retain a workforce that meets the requirements of the companies strategic human resource plan. At all levels within the organization, the process of hiring workers results from a process of job analysis, operational planning, and the careful crafting of job descriptions that set out clear requirements for job performance.

Human Resources and Laws

Federal and state legislation have been enacted to prevent discrimination, set minimum wages, establish maximum work hours, and set standards for health and safety. Laws such as the ADA, EEOC, and the Civil Rights Act combine to create a work environment that affords workers protection from discrimination and exploitation.

Recruitment and Hiring

HR professionals manage the recruitment process in order to identify the pool of qualified applicants. Both internal and external candidates are selected based on job specifications, which are the result of an analysis of the job/position.

Training, Development, and Rewards

Once employees are hired, the HR managers must manage the process by which employees are trained and compensated, and also evaluate their performance. Performance evaluations involve setting goals, completing a formal written evaluation, communicating the results to the employee, and then taking corrective action where needed. HR professionals also oversee employees' professional development.

Termination

Terminations can occur for a range of reasons, both voluntary and involuntary. Types of termination include layoffs, being fired, attrition, mutual-agreement termination, and forced resignation. Some states allow at-will employment, which means that an employee can be dismissed by an employer without warning and for any reason—without the employer having to establish “just cause” for termination. Of course, the flip side is also true: employees can quit without notice or cause.

Challenges in Human Resource Management

The future holds many challenges for HR Managers. An aging workforce, increased diversity, working from home, and advances in technology all create an environment that brings new challenges to human resources.

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