

8.22: Challenges in Human Resource Management

Learning Objectives

- Summarize the main challenges in retail human resource management

Regardless of the size or type of retail store one is managing, human resource management will face unique challenges that are exclusive to their division of the organizational structure. Besides just turnover being a challenge, HR might face some other issues such as organizational change, compliance with laws and liability issues, and employee development duties such as determining qualified candidates and employees passing background requirements.

Organizational Change

Retail organizations must continuously improve and change in order to keep up with their competition. As with any division of a retail business HR management should plan for the long-term and implement strategies which are conducive with the evolving times. “To succeed in the market, organizations need to develop strategies and organizational practices that allow them to be truly ambidextrous—to pursue both incremental and radical change—on all platforms”^[1] For HR teams, change can sometimes lead to lower morale, employee engagement and productivity. Thus, transformation must be balanced delicately for the benefit of the company’s employees. One of the solutions for HR management is to regularly communicate the positive aspects of these changes to their workforce. By applying the benefits of change within training exercises and holding frequently detailed meetings, HR can help to give employees a better understanding of why change can be advantageous and give the retail store’s personnel an explanation of what is expected of them.

Liability and Compliance with Laws

One of the other components of HR management that is ever-changing is employment laws. Ignoring changing employment laws can mean liability on behalf of a retail company. This could lead to lawsuits, poor corporate image or even the downfall of a retail business. Regardless of the type or size of a retail organization HR must make compliance with labor laws on every level a priority. One of the tools HR management can use to circumvent liability issues with their employees is a personnel handbook which is typically given to an employee at the outset of their employment. “Personnel handbooks can be considered contracts . . . policy, procedure and administrative manuals, can also be considered contracts.”^[2] HR management might practice the usage of broad terminology in clauses for such manuals for instance “other inappropriate behavior” or “for any reason as deemed by management” in order to reduce future liability issues with their employees. Some of the pertinent laws to which HR should stay abreast of are equal employment opportunity laws, health and safety laws and sexual harassment laws, all of which will be further addressed later in this module.

Employee Development

Regular human resource administrative duties include recruitment and training of new employees and keeping up to date on development for current employees. One of the issues faced by HR at the outset when hiring a new employee could be that a chosen candidate may not make it past the background requirements. In this case HR will likely have to start from scratch in the recruitment process again. Development of current employees might consist of keeping up on certifications or training courses for promotional candidates. Training can be costly and time consuming. In order to provide the proper balance HR might consider using training which can be provided online or even enlisting senior management to provide instruction and guidance.

Practice Questions

<https://assessments.lumenlearning.co...sessments/9222>

1. Järventie-Thesleff, R., Moisander, J., & Villi, M. (2014). The Strategic Challenge of Continuous Change in Multi-Platform Media Organizations—A Strategy-as-Practice Perspective. *JMM: The International Journal On Media Management*, 16(3/4), 123–138. doi:10.1080/14241277.2014.919920 ↩
2. Shaughnessy, Mary Angela, SCN,J.D., PhD. (2016, Spring). Legal issues in human resources management. *Momentum*, 47, 48–51,13. ↩

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