

Amnick

HUMAN RESOURCES

Magazine

AN INSIGHT INTO
RECRUITMENT

How **SOCIAL MEDIA**
has Revolutionised HR.



Glass Ceiling in
LAW FIRMS.

What **STRATEGIES**
can be put in place
to bring the best in
people.

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Editorial message

Only a few months after I was appointed as a Human Resources team leader at Amnick Social Enterprise, I was assigned to oversee a team of talented and passionate people to write the 2nd edition of Amnick's HR magazine.

In our team, we believe that Human Resources constitutes the most important asset a company can possess, and I would go further to state that is the most valuable asset of whole economies. The magazine that I have the pleasure to present to you is guided by this central idea. We believe this magazine will provide readers with an insight into the HR world, as well as innovative solutions to improve our sector, which so often sees its influence and value underestimated and surrounded by misconception.

I would like to thank the management team of Amnick Social Enterprise for giving us such a platform to express our opinions and the opportunity to bring our contribution to evolving our beloved department. As well as this, I would like to say a massive thank you to the whole Amnick HR team, as through the entire production of this magazine, we worked in collaboration, everyone showing determination and commitment. Finally, I hope that you enjoy your reading and will be made aware of the challenges that HR is still facing, while keeping in mind that a generation of passionate people is ready to tackle them.

by Saleha Ali Khan,
Amnick HR Team Leader



Gender Disparities in the UK workforce

by Michele Ndedi



Gender inequality in the workplace is a subject hotly debated by professors, journalists and politicians in the UK. It might seem surprising that this issue is still considered so controversial even though since 1970, legislation in force in the UK actively promotes equality between the sexes. Successively, different laws have been adopted to ensure fair and equal treatments of all employees in any company: Equal Pay Act (1970), Sex Discrimination Act (1975), Maternity Leave and Pay Regulations (1975), Part Time Workers Regulations (2000), Flexible Working Regulations (2003), Paternity Leave and Pay Regulations (2003). Yet it appears that, on the ground, major inequalities remain between the sexes.

In 2016, the UK was ranked 11th out of 18 in Western Europe for gender equality by Glassdoor Economic Research, its lowest point on this list to date. The main concern regarding gender disparities in the UK is the widening pay gap. Statistics show that in more than 90% of sectors, women are paid less than their male counterparts, with the average difference in pay now fluctuating around 20%. Other inequalities are also noticeable such as the fact there are fewer women than men in the workplace, or that high ranking positions are mostly occupied by men. This is the case, despite the fact that nowadays in the UK, women are more likely to reach higher education levels than men.

People who advocate that gender inequality is a myth affirm that women are said to be less committed and less available than men due to family constraints. For them, this factor alone is the reason why women earn less, have less access to powerful positions, and are less

likely to be hired. They also refer to this idea to argue against the women who reported being sidelined once they had announced their pregnancy or being demoted at their return from maternity leave. I personally believe that it would be interesting to go deeper into the question and ask ourselves why it is still assumed by women themselves, and by society, in 2017, that family duties are only female responsibilities. Is it not proof that society still remains profoundly patriarchal? However, here we will not go further into replying to this question, but instead, we can observe that whether we are more sceptical or that we are fervent advocates of the existence of gender inequalities in the workplace, an efficient HR team in any company can assess measures that will help reduce the number of complaints from women about discriminatory treatment at work.

To start, a good human resources manager should determine the salary of its employees based on the responsibility that each person holds, and the value they bring to the business and not, as is commonly done, based on previous earnings, as this attitude can only help to perpetuate inequalities. Furthermore, a human resources manager should recommend people for advancement courses and trainings on a non biased basis, as those opportunities will allow employees to gain more skills which will enable them to have better access to promotions and receive more lucrative salaries in the future.

As well as this, companies should think more about establishing family friendly policies. Finding affordable reliable child care services is not an easy task in the UK; hence, especially for big companies, it is essential to

build their own childcare centre or to put in place work from home programs. The companies Google and EY have applied some of those measures and the results were immediate: women as well as men were more devoted to their work. Finally, all HR staff should avoid falling into the trap of taking any decisions about any employee based on their assumptions, but should only focus on the work that each member of the staff is doing for the company.

Making sure that policies promoting gender equality are adopted in every company does not only benefit the women working in those specific companies, but can tremendously benefit the business as a whole. If everyone feels respected and that their workplace is allowing them to flourish, it will help create a positive work environment. At the same time, with female employees feeling more comfortable at their workplace, they will produce better quality work, and it has been proven that such policies help increase talent retention. Last but not least, the businesses will gain a good reputation by insisting on these policies. People outside the business will admire the productive atmosphere that exists within such companies and people who values equality and fairness will want to work with or for the company.

It is not a simple task to guarantee that gender equality regulations be integrated into every business but one thing is certain. HR teams should do everything in their abilities to not allow inequality to emerge within the company. Businesses will only reach their full potentials from this attitude. Therefore, the ball is in your court, fellow HR workers.

How Social Media has revolutionised HR?



Social media is very much a part of all our lives, whether we realise it, or want it to be, or not. It has revolutionised Human Resources (HR) in various ways and its influence will only continue to grow. The digital age that we live in has drastically changed our thinking in the 21st century and if the technology is available, why not use it? This has allowed many organisations to thrive on social media, utilising it to attract talent for their business, rather than just using it for its more conventional social uses. This does not mean however, that companies cannot use its social functions too, in order to create a connection between employer and employee, or potential recruiters.

How Social Media has changed HR

There are a variety of ways that social media has affected HR for the better. Firstly, the way people are recruited has changed. As recruiters no longer have to wait for CVs to arrive, perhaps through a newspaper ad or corporate website, recruiters now have the option of actively searching for potential candidates without them even knowing. Recruiters may dig out information about different people and see if they would be a suitable fit for them. They may even approach them directly, especially if they find out somebody is actively looking for a job.

The way employers communicate has also changed. Many companies have created a Twitter or Facebook page, often making announcements via those platforms as well as in more traditional forms like press releases. It only takes a brief moment to compose a tweet for example, and it is easy to give recognition to employees through these platforms. Good feedback can constantly be used on social media, in cases where bosses cannot

always deliver feedback to everybody personally. A tweet saying "Well done on your presentation" can go a long way. The way employers can communicate to young people has also developed the scope of HR departments. It will come as no surprise that young people on average spend the most time on social media; therefore recruiters may feel it is easier to approach younger generations on these platforms rather than approaching them with emails, which they are less likely to check.

Social media platforms have also been used to monitor the way employees speak about their employers, or portray the image of their company. Sometimes we hear about cases in which an employee bad mouths their boss openly or publishes an inappropriate comment on social media for thousands to see. Usually these actions have serious consequences, as more often than not, these comments breach company regulations, notable cases in recent years being the inappropriate social media use, and subsequent sacking, of teacher Carly McKinney and senior communications director Justine Sacco. There are even laws that protect certain comments, so it is very important that companies monitor what is being said in general by their employees and that what employees publish is not damaging the company's reputation.

Main Social Media Transformers

LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter dominate the scope of HR in terms of recruitment. Recruiters like to search potential candidates even if they haven't applied for their role, to get a sense of the type of person they could be employing. These three platforms have all developed their use of HR in different ways.

LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the most useful tool for job seekers and employers, a virtual platform that has been revolutionising HR. First and foremost, candidates tend to have a higher level of education and the fact that the network is setup to encourage interactions and connections means it's well respected. A potential candidate profile is a great indication as to whether they would be suitable for the role, and it is clear whether somebody's claims to their abilities are true because others can endorse them. You are more likely to trust the information provided on someone's LinkedIn page, seeing as the connections and endorsements the person has makes them more reliable. For example, if a CEO has endorsed that you have good research skills it can really make you stand out. HR tremendously benefits from LinkedIn because it promotes the personality and style of potential workers, along with making recruitment easier when it comes to filtering through potential candidates. It has become so ubiquitous, that many companies post their job ads solely on LinkedIn. In addition, LinkedIn has facilitated the recruitment of high calibre candidates with profiles of candidates that are easily searchable and comparable and with its large database of candidate information that can be easily verified. As well as all that, LinkedIn is versatile enough that can be used for internal as well as external recruitment.

Facebook

Facebook is the most prevalent form of social networking to date, so it is hard not to mention its influence. Just by the sheer number of people using the site, your job posting has, with a financial marketing strategy behind it, the opportunity to be in front of a gargantuan audience. With 83% of job seekers active on Facebook, a professional's ad is bound to be visible to somebody who will have an interest. The other side of this is that

Facebook is also where many employees must be careful as to what they post, as it that may reflect badly on their employers. Because so many of us have it, it isn't hard to forget that anybody who is a friend of a friend or an acquaintance may see what you post. This is not to say that other forms of social media don't have the same caveats, but because Facebook has had the most incidents where bosses have had to terminate their workers' contract in light of comments made on the site, this makes HR warier of the negative effects Facebook can bring.

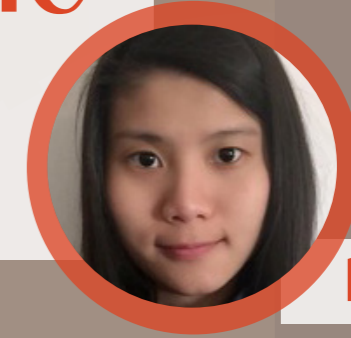
Twitter

Twitter is useful because it allows HR professionals to share updates and information with the community that follows them, be they interested parties or employees that follows the company's page. There are a variety of recruitment and job search tools that have been designed for this mobile-friendly, popular network, but Twitter is also not overly familiar to social site recruiters however, therefore Facebook and LinkedIn have a clear advantage when it comes for job openings. But Twitter is a great site for companies to post information and updates in a quick and easily digestible manner, allowing Twitter in that sense to deliver a real sense of professional purpose compared to a Facebook profile page, rather than as a dedicated recruitment tool.



by Oladeji Sorinola

How the Conventional Image of HR department can be changed to Strategic and Contributing HR?



by Garmen Zhang

Human Resources(HR) tasks are often viewed as monotonous and of questionable worth by many people. Moreover, HR departments can be seen as more general administrative departments in many organisations. However, many HR employees nowadays enjoy their work and believe that they, and their department as a whole, add a great deal of value to an organisation. HR plays a crucial role in a company and there is a direct link between HR activities and the development of an organisation, and the role and image of a modern HR department should reflect this.

The reason why an HR department may be considered as less beneficial is generally because there are many obstacles to HR teams achieving their goals. Human Resources Management (HRM) covers a wide field, such as recruitment and selection, talent management, performance management and so on. However, for HR workers, in numerous companies, this is only one side of their role. For many companies, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), HR departments are also set up to do basic personnel and administrative work, rather than HRM tasks, with set templates for all tasks which makes it easier for new entrants to adapt quickly to it.

The outcome of these HR practices is the prime reason the importance of HR departments in various organisations is often ignored. Although HR can have positive impacts on the performance of other departments, the outcome of HR practices are less quantifiable. Thus, it can be difficult to prove how an HR department can directly contribute to the profitability of a company. For example, talent management undoubtedly improves overall organisational performance. However, when the performance of other departments is improving within a company, they do not think it is due to the quality of work of the HR department.

Furthermore, although many organisations understand the importance of HRM practices in the development of an organization, their HR departments often lack support and recognition from senior management. Useful HR practices cannot be implemented because of insufficient allocation of funds, especially in SMEs, for example. In addition, transforming the role of HR in any organisation needs in depth planning and research, coupled with varied skillsets; as HRM refers to a wide range of activities, to implement it appropriately requires recruiting or using specific HR professionals, with specific specialities, which in turn requires more time

and resources. Another obstacle in transforming the role of HR within a company is the transformation of HR activities into electronic HR activities, dealing with use, management, and regulation of electronic information and processes within an organization. However, there is a gap between the available technology and HR activities in many companies, further compounding the difficulty of making the desired changes to a HR department happen.

Three ways to change the image of a Traditional Human Resources department

Firstly, HR departments themselves should better understand the value of HRM. Do not just follow the traditional and prescribed ways of working. Finding new processes and improving existing ones is a vital part of a dynamic and effective HR department.

Secondly, HR themselves should make efforts to let people in other departments know the importance and the benefit of their work within the company. As an HR worker, we should remember that what we do is always about people. Therefore, we should try to communicate and mingle with our colleagues more effectively. We need to proactively ask what their department needs, and afterwards evaluate how the HR department can provide them with what they are looking for. This will help them understand how the work of an HR team is vital to their performance in their jobs. This way HR can take a more effective role within a company, better reflecting the value they add to the organisation.

Thirdly, organisations, particularly upper management, should help the HR department to build links between them and other departments. Employees sometimes do not show a willingness to communicate with HR departments, although HR departments may seek to strengthen ties with them. Thus, executives should encourage leaders and senior employees to work with HR employees so that they are utilised more effectively, and their value is better understood and acknowledged by other departments.

Overall, for the image and role of a Human Resources department to change, HR professionals should be better recognized as strategic partners within the company, and HR departments should work towards achieving this. Development and adaption of Human Resource practices is far more useful than using HR professionals for basic administrative work. There is a move towards more strategic use of HR because of its often untapped potential in building a business, and by working alongside top executives and other management professionals to determine how to best use HR, the organization as whole will benefit.

DIVERSITY

in the workplace

by Je-Mele Britton



Diversity in the workplace is becoming increasingly important, imperative even, to the day to day operation and overall success of businesses, yet some commentators argue that too much diversity can be negative. One perception is that a diverse workforce can lead to staff feeling 'threatened or even annoyed by persons with views and backgrounds different from their own'(Barsoux, Strebels and Manzoni, 2010). In this view, instead of inclusivity, diversity can end up causing conflicts, as some staff are reluctant to change their viewpoints and are less adaptable to change. This style of discourse relating to diversity also applies to senior high-skilled professionals. There has been various efforts over the years to introduce quotas at board level, to assist those from underrepresented backgrounds, and some are of the opinion that if individuals are selected to become directors based on their background and not on their ability, then the boardroom may be 'associated with lower quality because it can lead to positions being filled by unqualified workers' (Herring, 2009). Additionally, 'a large number of corporations are reluctant to hire and promote female employees and ethnic minorities, especially for senior positions' (Shen et al., 2009) at all.

However, Blum, Fields and Goodman (1994) found in their research that companies with low levels of diversity 'tend to provide lower salaries and have a higher employee turnover'(Shen et al., 2009). A diverse workforce should remain a business priority, as 'companies with diverse executive boards, enjoy significantly higher earnings and returns on equity'(Barta, Neumann and Kleiner, 2012). In addition, 'the mean revenues of organizations

with low levels of racial diversity are roughly \$51.9 million, compared with ... \$761.3 million for those with high levels of diversity' (Herring, 2009).

There is a causal link between improved levels of racial diversity and gender diversity as 'the mean revenues of organizations with low levels of gender diversity are roughly \$45.2 million ... and \$644.3 million for those with high levels of diversity' (Herring, 2009).

It is crucial that diversity remains a priority, as the workforce should mirror society as a whole. The UK is multicultural, and individuals from minority backgrounds are important stakeholders within society, as they contribute to the workforce with their labour, and they contribute to the economy with their income. Excluding sections of society from the workforce will further ostracise them from society, which is not only regressive and divisive, but it would cause economic turmoil because of how diverse the UK is.

There is also a more practical business argument for a diverse workforce, with a lack of diversity leading to less innovative strategies, as different individuals from different backgrounds wield different experiences and viewpoints. It is argued that 'If an organization does not leverage the potent weapon of diversity, it risks limiting its creative potential and ultimately losing its competitive edge' (Ey.com, 2017).

The importance of diversity in the workplace has also been recognised at a political and legal level. To ensure that workplace diversity is not undermined, the

Equality Act was put in place. This prohibits positive discrimination, but it does allow positive action, which is when 'an employer takes steps to help or encourage certain groups of people with different needs, or who are disadvantaged in some way, access into work or training' (www.citizensadvice.org.uk, 2017). Positive action is beneficial as it enables marginalised groups access to employment, which they historically did not have access to, without being marginalising in and of itself.

The Equality Act also prohibits direct and indirect discrimination, harassment and victimisation towards individuals with a protected characteristic. The protected characteristics are age, disability, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, pregnancy and maternity, marriage and civil partnership and gender identity.

Additionally, Gender Pay Gap Reporting was implemented in April 2017. Gender Pay Gap Reporting will only apply to employers with more than 250 employees. Employers will need to publish the 'gender bonus gap ... Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus ... Proportion of men and women working at each quartile of the organisation's pay distribution'(M. acas.org.uk, 2017). The results will be then have to be published on the company website. Currently, 'The current gender wpay gap across full-time and part-time workers is 19% per hour' (UK Commission for Employment and Skills, 2015), signifying that the glass ceiling still exists and that measures such as Gender

Pay Gap Reporting and the Equality Act are crucial to ensure workers are receiving complete equality of treatment and pay.

So how is this relevant to the role of a Human Resources department? Primarily, HR's role within diversity management is to ensure adequate policies and practices are in place to ensure this workplace equality. One method of doing so is by paying close attention, and adapting to, employment law developments. Additionally, HR staff need to have commercial acumen because they will 'train line managers about diversity, aiming to help them understand the issues'(CIPD, 2015) and line managers will be most responsive if they can understand the practical business case for diversity. Finally, to establish and maintain a diverse organisation, HR should 'include diversity issues in induction programmes' (CIPD, 2015) as this will enable both line managers and their teams to be educated on the importance of diversity from the ground up.

How Human Resources Can Benefit from Facebook

by Norbert Ziembowicz



Facebook in these computerised days is reaching to have monthly users to about 2.2 billion, which is higher than in 2015 when it had 1.58 billion monthly active users. It reaches a larger number of people than the entire population of China and it holds influence over the media industry, too. This is why the investors are counting on them to double or even triple in size by the end of next decade.

In the US, the trustbusters had to give them a benefit of the doubt when they were looking for consumers' harm, which was really hard to establish when prices are falling and services are free. This is why many of their services appear to be free but users pay for them by giving away their own data.

On top of that many, people use their phones *rather than* their computers to access their most favourite topics, one of which is most likely to be Facebook. This is why Human Resources (HR) of many companies have been using Facebook to recruit people or to find out about them.

Facebook keeps buying firms which could lure users away. It has already purchased Instagram and WhatsApp, so it adds users of these software's on top of Facebook user count.

Statistics

Statistically, more than half of UK recruiters use social media to assist them in their job searches, according to online recruiter *Simply Hired*. In Europe, close to 100% of young jobseekers would like to interact with employers online (*Potentialpark*). In the UK, Facebook is favoured over LinkedIn as a good place for the employers to be present (*Potentialpark*). *On average users spend 1 hour a day on Facebook (Comparability) which would be true even for myself and many of those who are reading this article .*



Facebook Benefits for Human Resources (HR)

In the past, Human Resources managers were less likely to use the social media and Facebook. It was a time for organisations to limit use of sites like Facebook or other social media in the workplace. Nevertheless, the popularity of social platforms made the technology very important for Human Resources (HR). *Even if social media are so common*, there are still many companies that do not benefit from social media at all. These companies belong to the social sector and there are some small private companies that still do not even think about joining the majority.

Facebook and other social media have a significant role in the way recruiters are modifying their methods. Solid results are the reason why HR are implementing Facebook

and other social media platforms in less time and money than it takes to hire costly headhunting agencies and external recruitment consultants.

The Human Resources department can benefit from Facebook, since it can help to increase the speed of recruitment and reduce costs. The organisation that uses Facebook and other social media would hugely benefit from such strategy, since it could also reduce the communication and marketing costs for HR department.

Facebook gives a chance to employees to provide HR with useful and positive feedback. This is because no one would share the negative feedback since their name is mentioned.



Introducing Fan Pages

Creating a Facebook *Fan Page* is new way to promote your business, develop awareness for a cause, gather support for your group or to promote in multiple ways.

The target audience is already most likely to use Facebook, since these days the number of monthly users is reaching 2.2 billion users. A successful marketing strategy is the one that would include having Facebook 'Fan Page' which has also become very important. This makes it easier for the user to get in front of customers or **potential customers**. The Business is gaining more visibility in this way.

Having Facebook 'fan page' allows the HR people to interact with their fans in a way that is more engaging. Allowing the company to have deeper, more meaningful connection with their target audience.

The key is to be consistent, stay relevant and be punctual. This makes it easier for the user to get in front of your potential customers and the actual customers which in turn also gain more visibility of the company. Having a 'fan page' is very meaningful to add connections on Facebook, although it is very time consuming to have one.

Weaknesses of Fan Pages

There are still a couple of faults when creating Facebook 'fan pages' and upholding it, since business groups are difficult to create on Facebook. People that work for a company and who use Facebook may typically be concerned with their social lives or their home lives more than they would be with their professional life. This means that the Facebook page may need a member of staff who can take on social media duties and have enough time to manage the page well and create engaging content which often means after hours.

There may not be a specific market in regards to potential consumers, since it is in public. People maintaining their Facebook page may not have a specific target. Their followers are the likely consumers, so the page analytics will tell you little about your potential consumers.

The staff member who manages a Facebook page may need training to ensure they have the right skills. They should be able to plan and create content, respond to enquiries and complaints.





This is Mark Zuckerberg, the Founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Facebook.

His company was founded in 2004. He is responsible for setting the general direction and product strategy for the company. He leads Facebook's design of service and development of its core technology and infrastructure.

He studied computer science at Harvard University. More about how the Facebook was created could be viewed in the movie *The Social Network* (2010), which shows that it was not entirely his idea...

In Conclusion

Facebook is valuable to any company, regardless of its size, because it enables them to recruit people or to promote their company or products.

There are way too many users to omit the problem of promotion or recruitment. In the past, there were companies that did not like using social media. However, this has changed mainly through the number of people which mean additional market. The HR people were not able to keep their money not spent on such an activity. Especially because it costs less that costly headhunting agencies and recruitment consultants.

To benefit from Facebook, HR department should introduce the 'Social Media Strategy' in their company. This would be very beneficial, since they could support the corporate culture and open communication especially via web which includes many benefits for the company. In view of this HR

could introduce Facebook 'Fan Page' to gain more visibility and which would mean that HR people interact more with their fans, which allows the company to have more meaningful connection with their target audience. Anyway, there are a couple of inconsistencies, since the workers would not want to talk business online after work, but may be concerned with their social lives. On top of this, there may not be a specific market in regards to potential customers. The page analytics may tell you little about potential consumers. To have a successful 'Fan Page' the main action is to be **consistent**, stay punctual and be relevant. The admins need to post a lot of valuable content regularly to attract new members and to grow a **community**.

Mark Zuckerberg's Facebook Profile Picture ©
Social Media Blocks (photography) by Freepik ©
Working on Laptop (photography) by Freepik ©

Graphic Design by Gabriela Villar Mogollón

Self-Employment for disabled people in the UK

by Debbie Huang



SELF-EMPLOYMENT IN THE UK

In the UK, more men than women are self-employed as their main job - 14% of non-disabled men are self-employed as their main job whereas 6% of non-disabled women are self-employed as their main job. More specifically, the percentage of disabled individuals self-employed in both genders is greater than those who are non-disabled; where 18% of disabled men are self-employed as their main job and 8% of disabled women are self-employed as their main job (Boylan and Burchardt 2002).

SELF-EMPLOYMENT FOR DISABLED PEOPLE

It is clear from the above statistics that self-employment is a popular option for disabled people in the UK. This is sometimes because it is the only option for some disabled individuals who require the flexible working patterns offered by self-employment (Association of Disabled Professionals 2007).

FUNDING AND SUPPORT OPTIONS

In terms of the financial and non-financial support available for disabled people who are looking to go into self-employment, a few options are available. Firstly, a Disability Employment Advisor (DEA) can provide one-to-one support in a range of areas. This includes helping the individual consider self-employment to see if it's a viable option and locating sources of funding and support. Self-employment can offer a suitable working environment through factors such as work flexibility and matching with the skills of those disabled. Not only this, self-employment can be very rewarding and there are several schemes that can provide support.

The New Enterprise Allowance is a government scheme that helps people gain access to business advice and funding support. It offers a weekly allowance worth up to £1274 and people can also get a low-cost loan to help with initial start-up costs along with a mentor to help develop their business. To be eligible for the scheme, the individual must be aged 18 and over, have a business idea and receive one of the following benefits: jobseekers allowance (or their partner receives it), employment and

support allowance (or their partner receives it), income support (if they are a parent or are sick) and those receiving universal credit may be eligible.

Another scheme that offering funding and support is the Prince's Trust Enterprise Programme. This programme can give access to business skills training, planning, start-up loans, funding and support from a mentor to those aged 18 to 30 with a good idea for starting a business.

Furthermore, MiEnterprise is a supported self-employment that enables disabled people to set up their own business.

In summary, self-employment is evidently a popular option for disabled people in the UK and this is likely to be due to the advantages discussed such as work flexibility. There are a range of funding and support options available to those interested in going into self-employment, including a DEA, the New Enterprise Allowance, Prince's Trust Enterprise Programme and MiEnterprise.



GLASS CEILING

in Law Firms

ABSTRACT

This article illuminates the concept of the 'glass ceiling' that prevents women's progression from reaching the top positions in first-rate organizations.

This article is based on the research study that focuses on the aftermaths of glass ceiling reflecting gender biases and narrow approach in the law firms. Moreover, it will also shed light on the factors that are responsible for strangling and hampering women from advancing in their career to get senior posts of management within the firm.

For supporting the findings, semi-structured interviews are used and interpreted to get a profound understanding of subjects' mentality. The study will conclude that despite the fact that women are enjoying high prospects in the law firms, yet both men and women interviewee suggested that women do experience the glass ceiling that obstructs their career progression within the firm.

Women as compared to men take least risks and avoid working long hours because of the domestic responsibilities and personal limitations. The stereotypical orthodox culture of the business arena not only provides a flexible platform for women but also hinders their progress. The research will also highlight those factors that can enable women to progress in the firm.

These are the absence of dependent children, and if the female employee has young children, a nanny and extensive childcare arrangements usually act as a great aid. Along with it females working on executive posts play a part of role models and can motivate other women employees to work

industriously.

This research will explore a current picture of managerial working life and will give empirical evidence of the managerial work cultures within the firm.

PREFACE

A revolutionary change can be seen in the business globe of women's role in the present society, and the number of women reaching management positions is higher than before. The research aims at pinpointing gender discrimination that even in the current century is prevailing in the organization and occupying a prodigious status in the social norms.

This article will also highlight the sacrifices women have paid so far to progress in their career. The foremost one is killing the desire of motherhood. Moreover, the research focuses on the status enjoyed by women in law firms.

The issue Glass Ceiling captured my attention when while working as a part-time employee in the law firm I savoured the taste of anti-Feminist attitudes lowering the morale of women workers by attaching dubious labels to them.

In the mean, while I found influential women having higher ranks, acting as a legendary figure for other employees of the same gender.

An overwhelming desire hence arrested my mind to know the ground realities and to discover the percentage of prevailing glass ceiling in the organizations specifically law firms.

THE RESEARCH STUDY AND FINDINGS:



'The first step needed to detect the existence of barriers to access for women in management positions was the analysis of selection policies observed by the law firm when recruiting or promoting management staff. I, therefore, investigated the methods used with the aim of determining whether it includes factors which a priori exclude women.

Almost all the interviewees agreed that hard work, loyalty, having skills and qualifications relevant to job role, ability to lead the team, competence, excellent communication skills and extraordinary people skills are capital factors for the success of one's career in general and also of their job in particular. The method most used by the firm questioned for recruiting management staff is firstly internal promotion. As one of the female senior managers said: "In term of promotion we advertise internally and give a chance to our people to develop their career".

The building services manager expressed the same view and stated that: "the firm believes in the internal promotion so whenever there is a vacancy, there will be an email that goes around each member of staff that tell you what vacancies are available. We give the first preference to our staff unless it is something specialized and we don't have staff members having that particular qualification. Simply internal recruitment for promotion.

When both males and females interviewees were asked the question about whether selection procedures act as a barrier to access for women in management positions. It was considered that when selecting a person, it is of little importance if they are a man or woman, what one looks for is the excellent performance and suitability of the personal profile to the job.

One of the male managers said: "If you do your job well, it doesn't matter who you are! What age you are what gender you are. What race you are. If you do your job well, you are going to be successful everywhere".

Furthermore, the female director reported that: "For a company of our size, we have very structured performance review process. Each month everybody has the opportunity to sit down with their line manager and talk about their performance, progress and career structure and a part of that process

we have a process called development plan like if someone is keen to develop themselves so need to plan how to achieve that. We also have some schemes such as apprenticeship schemes which we have introduced first time this year for junior staff to be equipped with certain business skills”.

The data analysis proposes that firm acknowledges, approves and encourages employees having deftness blended with skills to flourish in the business world. The criteria for promotion is least affected by gender privileges instead is dependent upon employees’ capabilities and proficient understanding of the work.

It can be understood that correct field’s aptitude, the talent of managing official work and ability to perform well are the key elements leading to success in the management. However, Desvaux et al., (2007) study revealed that the fundamental aspects to progress depend on the rate to which the individual exposes his multi-dimensional talent and his assertiveness while dealing with difficult areas.

Females, on the other hand, seems to lessen their involvement as they are normally less inclined than males to recognize and be familiar with their performance resulting in more complexity for females to win acknowledgment in the firm and grab the chance for promotion. (Desvaux et al., 2007).

Moreover, (Brown, 1990) research findings also suggested that women’s career advancement prospects are limited by failure to apply for senior posts for which they are qualified.

One of the male managers believed that risk-taking is the crucial factor in career progression. He said that: “I believe that women do not take as much or as many risks about work and employment as they feel much more compelled than males to secure a steady income/stable job, to allow them to ensure that. If for instance, they wished to start a family during their career, they would not want to risk having such an important, high demanding job because at some point they know that they would have to take some time off work which they may think could hinder their role or possible progression in the future”.

The above views of the interview concur with, (Wajcman, 1996. cited by Ogden et al. 2006) observes that there are universal perceptions and beliefs in organizations that particular women (i.e., those attempting to combine career and motherhood) are limited in their managerial career

aspirations. Moreover, Ryan (2009) suggests that employees who are prepared to accept challenging and hard responsibilities involving risk are more likely to be promoted.

One of the senior managers stated that: “I don’t believe in the existence of any barriers to women progression because I have never experienced discrimination in this firm. As far as my career is concerned, anything I have always been able to do what I wanted. Sometimes I was chosen to be promoted even without applying for it. I always had strong work ethics; if someone asks me to do something, I do it. I am honest and never let people down.”

This view concurs with the findings of a research conducted by Ma- thur-Helm (2006) which indicates that the glass ceiling viewed a myth by many, is real and is nurtured by the organizational culture, policies, and strategies besides women’s inadequacies.

Only the most decentralized organizations, characterized by a culture that supports women’s top positions, will help in smashing down the glass ceiling, along with women’s own efforts to develop and empower themselves through academic and career development.

Career development opportunities were reported by the interviewees to be constrained by the size of the organisation. One of the male managers said: “The promotion policy is somewhat limited because it’s reasonably a small company”.

The above views of the interviewee concur with the findings of Hunter (2003 cited by MacMillan et al., 2005), a study which examined the experiences of Scottish women lawyers in private practice.

The research suggests that Gender impartial promotion decisions were believed as being possible to be attained in large-size, city-based legal companies than in small-size countryside companies

with relatively less number of legal practitioners and a scarcity of promotion opportunities.

Furthermore, one of the female managers presented his views about the promotion policies and said that: “There is a career path below management level from Filing clerk to Trainee to Assistant to Team Leader to Manager. Once you hit Manager, there is a huge skills leap (like one must be a qualified solicitor) to get to the next level of Executive Director, so there are no real promotion prospects after Manager Level”.

There is an indication from the data analysis that having a legal background and being a qualified solicitor enable the employees especially women managers to reach the executive level in the firm.

One issue that came out from the interviews is the idea of a “self-imposed glass ceiling” which prevents women in junior and middle management positions from advancing to senior managerial roles. It was found in the firm that one-third of the female managers were not willing to progress any further and the reasons they mentioned for not intending to do so were their unwillingness to obtain legal qualification, or accept new responsibilities.

The above situation agrees with this quotation: “Are the last barriers to our success subtly internalized ones; that is, not the attitudes of others, but our own?” (Taylor 1984 quoted by Turner, 2002, p.10).

One of the female managers said: “If you want to join as a young lawyer and progress to the higher role then you have to take managerial responsibilities, there are various reasons including like I am quite satisfied and not willing to go any further.” According to (EOC 2000a), women may have different ambitions, and different ideas of success: whereas to men, ambition is equated with higher pay, women define this more broadly to encompass career progression and having an enriching and enjoyable work.

A female manager stated her view about the promotion opportunities and said that: “If someone like me is perhaps intricate and perplexing then the reason behind this is I have the disadvantage of not being highly qualified, and therefore there is a limit to where I can go. For somebody like me it is very difficult because the only position I can go after that is partnership or the director level and that would be probably difficult if not impossible without qualifications. I don’t have that qualification and I have no inclination to have that. I am reasonably well-paid and happy and do not want to go back to university or acquire further qualification for further promotion”.

The analysis of Singh et al. (2002, reported by Kovacs .W.M.D et al. 2006, studies on the UK) also support the findings of interviews mentioned above.

They found that male managers flourish in the company by utilizing a compound of self-focused (self-promotion of ambition and success, and promotional conduct, i.e., work-focused image) focused managerial strategies (ingratiation) and series of job focussed maneuvers (unique performance, tireless dedication, and preparation).

Men show their utter devotion more than their women counterparts. Women, on the contrary, are inclined to look out such principles to avoid taking responsibilities of executive posts because of their uneasiness with the tradition and dynamics in senior management. They adopt such strategies only when they want to discover secret behind men’s progression. (Kovacs .W.M.D et al (2006).

One constructive thought emerged from the interviews which were that females holding the executive directors seat in the firm could become heroic figures for other women and motivate them to progress in their careers and to reach top positions.

One of the recently promoted female managers who re-joined the organization after seven years (2003) said that: “For me coming to this firm was quite refreshing because I had always worked in the companies where all managers and partners were male. Coming here when it was Julian (director of legal) and Laura (previous CEO) were the two partners, it was encouraging and refreshing, to see women on the top”.

Furthermore, Dreher (2003 cited by Ogden et al. 2006), in a long itudinal study observed that (after determining factors such as human resource policies) the ratio of women’s representation in the



tenure of 1982-1992 was positively linked up with the proportion of senior management positions governed by women in 1999. The reasons behind this are that managerial gender scale has become balanced and equivalent.

A question was asked in the interview do women are equally talented and skilful in comparison to their male colleagues to perform the management jobs within the firm? Adam replied: "Yes, but at the same time I think in this role, we come across angry people a lot of times, and I have noticed that some of the females feel it more personally than the males do. The males see it as a part of the job, but if the women are taking the calls and people start shouting at them, they feel like it's an attack on them. They do take it a lot more personally".

The above-mentioned view of Adam concurs with the analysis done by Hayes et al., (2003) that is a Gender-oriented view of women managers and women, in general, represent them as being more emotional and susceptible to psychological pressures than male managers and men in general.

These stereotypical gendered differences embrace approaches to problem-solving and decision making. Loden (1985, cited by Hayes et al., (2003) portrays male managers as unsentimental, inexpressive and analytical puzzle solvers and suggests that women face this logical approach with emotional behaviour and emotional conduct.

Green and Cassell (1996) refer to women managers as an incarnation of sentimentalism who implausible in their dealings and are more sexual aspects of organizations in contrast with men who embody gender unbiased rationality and are quick decision makers without working under emotional pressures.

Interviewees were asked if females are required to work harder than men in the legal profession. Linda replied: "Probably yes because it is like all judges and solicitors, you always think going to be a man. Even doctors and all these highly educated professions people expect them to be males. You probably need to work a little bit harder than males to get that recognition".

Boon (2003) similarly suggested that for women credibility is often derived from their skills whereas for men credibility is derived from their gender and their status in the company. Women need to work hard more to establish credibility and ability because of their gender.

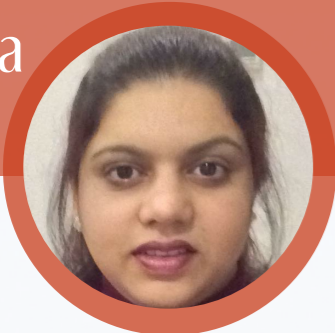
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Project Management Skill is a key competency of Human Resources

by Saleha Ali Khan



Project Management in Modern Business

In today's world, business enterprises are largely project driven when it comes to achieving objectives. This approach brings as many challenges as it does opportunities however. Due to intense competition and changes in the market, organisations have had to adapt to this new paradigm, with increased focus on project management, the allocation, tracking, and utilization of resources to achieve a particular objective within a specified period of time, being one such change.

Good projects start with a well-developed plan and vision, which progresses smoothly under the leadership of talented project managers, with a team that is efficient, skilled and professional. Using this team, project managers are required to handle situations which hinder the attainment of said objectives, and adapt to factors like rapid changes in technology, market, and government regulations. A project manager with a background in Human Resources will possess the vital ability to handle team, protocols, deal with stakeholders and act as an internal facilitator.

Project Management and HR

Traditionally, the HR office was viewed as a place to get an application for internal resources or get a time card edited. With the development in the technology and impact of social media in business however, HR has risen to a different level and is expected to actively contribute to a company's growth and strategy. This calls for a diverse set of skills in HR professionals. Every project is driven by human capital at its core, along with supply needs and requisite deadlines.

A project manager's major responsibility lies in forming a team with the talent needed for the specific project. Ability to handle a team and designate duties, convert data into usable information, resolve conflicts and analyse employee performance are some of the other skills needed to complete a project successfully where Human Resource managers play an integral role.

Role of Human Resources Project Manager for Different Projects

- **Performance Check:** Every project should have systems in place to check the project's performance at every stage, designed by Human Resources leaders along with upper management to ensure a given project's progress satisfies everyone involved.
- **Communication:** HR leaders can make sure data related to the project's task are collected in an appropriate way, saving the time of team members and give them the information required to complete their tasks.
- **Working within a company:** Every company has its own protocols and internal ways of working related to every aspect of a project. Human Resources project leaders can ensure that all the way through to implementation of the project on a wider scale, that the team follows the company protocol and observes company strategy.
- **Quality:** HR leaders can check the quality of service or product as per company standards, by implementing working practices that separate the need to find the cause of a problem from the need to make choices on action plans, such as having a common visible approach to resolving project issues, without impeding the progress of the project.
- **Selection of Team:** HR leaders play a key role in the formation of a team by selecting candidates with relevant experience in similar projects. Studies indicate the most successful corporate strategies are the ones that focus more on human capital.
- **Cultural and Talent touchpoints:** HR leaders help to develop and sustain the kind of culture required for project-driven work, as well as having the ability to navigate the demands and opportunities that arise during a project's lifespan. People, with all their complexities, are the key for innovation and progress in a business and HR understands that better than anyone. A HR project manager who has worked in diverse environments will be able to lead a diverse and talented team to greater success.

■ **Accommodating Different Working Styles:** There can be conflicting opinions and working methods within a team, caused by factors like generational or working background differences, which can lead to clashes, low contribution, staff turnovers and unaccomplished project tasks. A skilled HR manager must consider these possibilities while forming a team.

The Impact of Human Resources Management on Projects

Among the various success factors related to projects, studies indicate how competent team members, clearly defined roles and consultation with stakeholders play a vital role. Other studies conclude there is a strong correlation between performance monitoring of HR and the overall result of the project. They recommend that the HR management function of performance management, to the level of performance monitoring of HR within projects, should be considered as driving forces in the hands of a project manager to make or break the final outcome of the project.

Project Management as an essential skill

It's important to note the career implications of this specific skill set. For starters, it's something that HR professionals need to understand, especially as they advance up the career ladder. Being able to oversee successful projects is a significant career booster and can help to lead to new opportunities, particularly increased responsibility within a company. For experienced professionals in today's world, solid project management skills will increase the effectiveness and efficiency of your HR department, develop your staff, and provide an additional level of credibility within your organization. Project's ignite innovative potential within any organisation and inevitably, they also call for the unique skill set of today's HR professionals.

Research on the Conditions of Migrant Workers in the UK

Introduction

The issue of migrant workers and immigration as a whole has been a hot button topic in Britain in recent years, with many strongly held views on both sides. This piece will focus on the different issues that migrant workers face today in the UK. To paint an accurate picture of the problems that international workers have to overcome in the UK, I have used different methodologies; I have firstly done my own research on the internet, to learn more about the different conditions of international workers, then I have conducted a survey in which I asked a range of questions, which were able to develop and provide further, more personal, insight into my research. The topics ranged from gaining employment, working with home-grown workers and to the feasibility of obtaining promotions.

For my research, the two industries from which employees were represented were the IT and retail industry. The age group from which I was able to interview colleagues from, was 21-50 years old. The interviewees were from different regions of the world, migrants from Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East. Roles included, but were not limited to, sales assistant, cleaner, IT technician, IT Analyst, customer manager and recruitment manager. The workers from these roles were located from different parts of the organisational structure.

Findings

A majority of the workers had strong negative views regarding the recruitment process they undertook for a myriad of roles. Most of the workers felt that they were disadvantaged and that the recruitment process was much more strenuous for them, international

applicants, than for their native British counterparts. It was even more the case for workers that were occupying managerial positions. A key aspect of the recruitment process was that they felt they were being treated more harshly, by having to provide more evidence of their credentials compared to domestic applicants.

However, there are some stark differences between those applying for retail jobs and those applying for IT jobs, particularly in regards to the level of difficulty of the recruitment process. Those applying for retail jobs weren't as confused by the recruitment process compared to those applying for jobs in the IT sector. Although the people working in the retail sector felt they had been somehow unfairly interviewed, the employees working in the IT sector felt that they had to double their amount of efforts to prove themselves worthy of being recruited for the job in question.

The research has shown that those in the retail sector felt that it was more difficult for them to get promoted within the company despite their efforts. However, in contrast to those that worked in retail, the migrants employed in the IT sector felt that once they were able to showcase their abilities they would have a more natural progression to management positions and this was because they were able to showcase their abilities on the technical side and these skills are known to be taught better internationally. This distorts whether there is actually reluctance on the company's side to promote international workers even when they are the most deserving is difficult to prove on the ground. However, the feeling shared among many international workers of their work not being recognised and the value they bring to their respective companies, has to be taken into consideration.

In addition, the research of the intricacies of the work life of international workers, showed that for many of the workers in the retail industry, and for lower pay jobs in general, they feel that they get mistreated by their management team. This mistreatment consists of a lack of progression, more strenuous tasks than their British counterparts and a lack of flexible working hours.

In contrast, foreign workers in the IT industry have conflicting thoughts on domestic workers' behaviour towards them, as my research showed that the higher position the foreign worker is occupying in the organisational structure, the more respect they command. The findings show that when a worker begins in an entry or associate role they feel they are also mistreated.

In summary, both IT and retail workers believe they have to prove themselves in the recruitment process a lot more thoroughly than domestic employees. Moving on from recruitment to progression, retail workers find it difficult to move up in the organisational structure. Both retail workers and those in the IT industry get mistreated, however migrant workers have said that when they do move up in the ranks they start to feel that they are treated with much more respect.

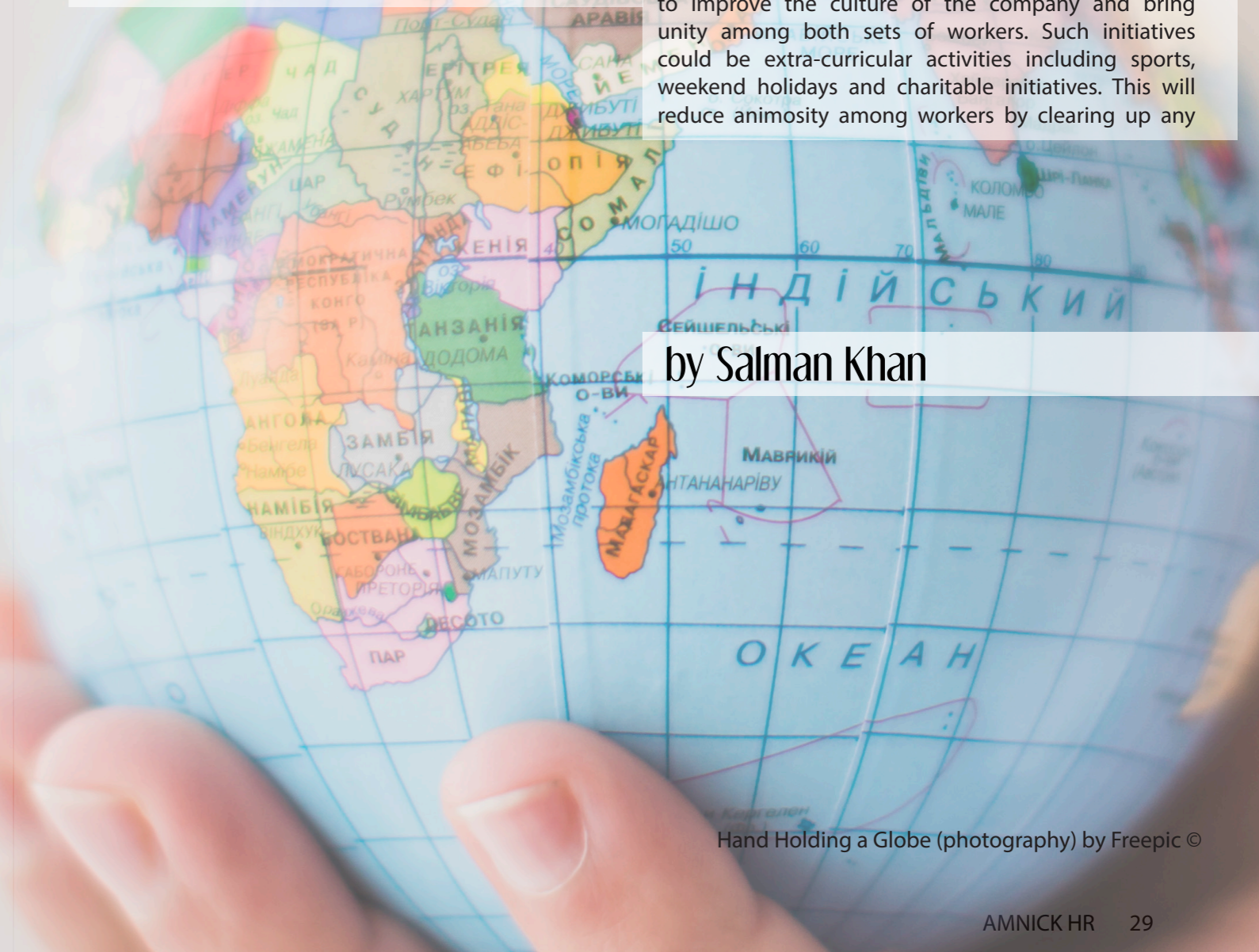
Improvements

Members of a Human Resources team should ensure there is no bias towards domestic workers when recruiting candidates. In practical terms, this means that for all recruitment activities such as CV screenings, interviews and tests, the HR team member should only focus on the competencies and qualifications of the candidate.

Furthermore, promotions within a team should be given on the basis of merit. Besides, an efficient HR team should work with all managers' teams to understand each element of the performance levels to be able to truly understand which workers are meeting targets and performing up to, or exceeding, company standards. This way, an HR team will have direct knowledge of each individual's appraisal and they will be able to ascertain which employee is fairly or unfairly promoted so they will be able to fully understand the process and the final decision, which can help migrant workers to challenge any unfair decisions.

Finally, a good HR team has to implement initiatives to improve the culture of the company and bring unity among both sets of workers. Such initiatives could be extra-curricular activities including sports, weekend holidays and charitable initiatives. This will reduce animosity among workers by clearing up any

by Salman Khan



Hand Holding a Globe (photography) by Freepic ©

What strategies can HR put in place to bring out the best in people?



by Valeria Carvalho

Having the right people working for you can really make your company excel when compared to others. Employees are the one shaping the destiny of any business, and this idea is becoming more and more accepted by leaders worldwide.

Therefore, bringing the best out in people is not only a concern of the Human Resources team, but of the whole lead-team. The process of staffing an organization in future-oriented and goal-directed ways supports the organization's business strategy and enhances organisational effectiveness. Staffing influences the success of future training, performance management and compensation programs, and the execution of a business's overall strategy.

However, you should not hire people only because they have a good CV, you must choose the candidate that will fit your organisation's culture and pursue your company's objectives. Being good is not enough; the candidates must adapt to the environment, to their teams and to the company values. Once you have established the profile you want, you need to identify the methods of recruitment which will reach your audience. For example, if you are looking for recent graduates you'll probably have to search in a different place than if you were looking for experienced professionals.

A good starting point can be internal recruitment and employee referrals. In these two types of recruitment, you are more likely to find targeted psychological profiles, once they are either a current employee or an

acquaintance of one of them. Another gain you have with that action is related to the company climate. The message the company sends to the whole staff when the HR department look inside first to fill a new post is that they are valued by the company, and worth what is being invested in them. The confidence of the group tends to rise, as well as the feeling of belonging within a workplace community.

Meanwhile, if what you are looking for cannot be found internally, you can choose between many available tools to get to your aim, such as internet recruiting (the company's website, the company's LinkedIn profile and other jobs websites), recruitment agencies (for more specific and senior roles), existing CV database (unsolicited CVs), career fairs and networking. All of them can be very effective depending on the purpose of the recruiter. It is important to mention that LinkedIn is a very powerful recruitment tool on its own, allowing employers to connect with a diverse range of professionals worldwide and can be used for internal as well as external recruitment.

The key to find the appropriate candidate is to have a clear idea of what you are looking for and where you are most likely to find it. This leads us to another crucial point: developing the job posting.

After deciding the best channels to find your employee, the best way to match the right person to the right position is describing the role on the job post in an effective and representative manner. Describing the

work environment, the steps to the application process, the nature of the job, among others, can ease your path towards finding the best candidate.

To make sure you select good candidates, make sure you have:

- ■ Described the role in details
- ■ Created a profile for the "ideal" candidate
- ■ Published your ad in different mediums so you can have a wider reach
- ■ Develop phone-screening questions to quickly eliminate candidates that do not fit
- ■ Review the received CVs
- ■ Select candidates by phone
- ■ Assess candidates using a proven assessment tool
- ■ Select and conduct candidate interviews
- ■ Select your best candidate and conduct a background check to avoid potential problems

Following all these steps will certainly help you to have a successful recruitment process.

Once you have found the best candidates to work for you, you should redirect your efforts to create a pleasant working atmosphere and make your employees feel happy to work for you. Otherwise your resources will have been used in vain. Retaining the right people is as important as recruiting them, if not more so. Your employee is gaining more experience and becoming better than when you hired them; they are a growing investment, so keep them close.

As mentioned above, if employees' values and efforts are appreciated, invest in them. Investing in education and training will increase the effectiveness of your company, as well as keeping your employees engaged and satisfied in their work. To retain staff, a business needs to put in place incentives for its employees to stay, such as benefits like pension schemes and holiday time, possibilities for career progression, and, of course, rewards when they are performing above expectations, such as pay rises and bonuses. An additional tip: use the induction process as a 'welcome card'. That is the first impression the new employee is going to have, so make it a good one.

Finding and retaining the best people working for you is not a simple task, nor something you can achieve overnight. HR departments, and the whole company leadership team, must have in mind that to attract competent people, the company needs to ensure it has something to offer them in return for their skills and hard work. If a company does not care about its employees, why should the employees care about the company?

The HR role: Corporate Social Responsibility

by Veronica Di Carlo

The concept of *Corporate Social Responsibility* is linked to the awareness of the companies about the impact of their business on the society and the environment. Environmental and social issues are included into the business operations through the development of specific economic, social and environmental benefits.

The Triple-Bottom-Line-Approach leads to the balance of social, environmental and economic imperatives. What is behind this paradigm is that the success of a company cannot be measured only by the business, but also by ethical, social and environmental performance.

It is essential to distinguish between CSR, that can be represented by strategies in the business management, and charity. As a matter of fact, it embeds human rights, health and safety, corporate governance, economic and environmental issues and working conditions. Definition aside, the goal of CSR is to make changes through sustainability.

What is the link between Social Corporate Responsibility and the role of Human Resources? As already pointed out, CSR is a change to attitudes and actions, which is strongly dependent on people, process, coordination and management. That is why it is involved in the business development. On the other hand, HR is about policies, people, stakeholder, ethical, social and

environmental responsibility, being responsible for most of the results of the organizational strategies and goals. By this point of view, human resources professionals have skills and knowledge related to people engagement, communication, learning, company cultures and community relationships and diversity management, which are the basic ingredients to make Social Corporate Responsibility successful. The HR functions are here seen as complementary to what CSR aims to reach.

The Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM) conducted a pilot study in 2007 in many countries, such as India, China, Mexico, Brazil, Australia, USA, Canada about the role of HR and concluded that CSR strategies should not be created but implemented by HR (SHRM, 2007). As a matter of fact, HR has to be considered more as a bridge to connect and align business practices, CSR strategies and employees' contributions to initiatives and programs of the company. Another vital role of HR is to consider how CSR beliefs are going to affect the community, the employees, the management.

Corporate Social Responsibility involves different areas, and human resources can practically help the company by spreading and sharing their values among employees, encouraging green practices, celebrating success and fostering a culture of SR.

Three key areas are strictly related to HR functions:

- Community Relations
- Training and Development
- CSR Platform

All these elements allow not only employees and the community, but any stakeholder to be more involved in all the aspect of the company, with a direct participation and knowledge of its values, interests, and programs.

Green practices are about assisting waste reduction, as well as promoting growth, better ethics or reducing carbon footprint. Human resources have a crucial role and can intervene directly to the employees. For examples, rules about recycling paper, bottles or cans can be introduced into the company; donations and collection of food campaigns can be started; energy consumption can be reduced by encouraging shutting off computers, printers and lights after work hours, as well as switching to laptop over desktop computers, which consumes more.

Another good strategy is to create new initiatives for younger employees who are already conscious about the environment. Enthusiast employees are the best way to spread good practices and new initiatives among employees that are more skeptical.





Focusing on new employees can be a good strategy to rehabilitate the employer branding and trustiness as well. As a matter of fact, many organizations in the past have forced their employees to accept misconduct or waste, due to corporation failure in management. CSR can introduce and develop volunteer days or community programmes, corporate sponsorship for events or participate in walkathons and fund-raising to rebuild trust and credibility of the company among the workforce and the community.

“Enthusiast employees are the best way to spread good practices and new initiatives among employees that are more skeptical”

It is also extremely important to celebrate the company success of all these programmes, which will give them real meaning, drive more implementation and last but not least give the company publicity that allow the community and the employees to know the active interest and participation the company has for local issues.

As highlighted so far, there are many advantages in embracing new strategies and policies in CSR. As a matter of fact, the image of the company improves, as

well as the values and prestige. This directly leads to the increasing in attracting and retaining the employees, because people want to work for companies that care about both the workforce and the community. Along with that, the authorities become less hostile, because companies with CSR programs always work within regulations.

On the other hand, there are also some disadvantages. In fact, if the employees or the community do not see instant results, they start to believe in the company and to think that those programs are only some marketing strategies to make more money. In addition to that, CSR programs increase prices of the products and expenditure; many big corporation can afford not to increase prices, but small companies cannot. Moreover, one of the biggest critic pointed out by economists is that companies that work on developing new programs for CSR shift their objectives from making profits to use up funds for community welfare.

Two examples of good Corporate Social Responsibility are Starbucks and Disney:

The first one was ranked as one of the five most socially responsible company in 2012. It focuses on better ways to produce sustainable products and established some guidelines in order to ensure product quality,

environmental leadership and economic accountability. Moreover, the company provides clean water to many people by supporting the organization “Ethos Water”. The second company, Disney, takes much interest in issues like environment, volunteerism and the community. In fact, in 2009 the company was declared leader in CSR, helping during natural disasters – for examples the earthquakes in Haiti in 2010 – offering free tickets in exchange of volunteer service for an organization of people’s choice, establishing the Earth Day through which it makes a positive impact on the environment and the community. Since 1995 the company has raised over 20\$ million with its projects.

To conclude, it seems very clear that Corporate Social Responsibility has a great impact not only for the company, but also for the employees and the community that is directly or indirectly linked to it. It is not about money, but it is about welfare, health and reputation.

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The pursuit of HR opportunity

by Aimen Basin

One day, when I was an HR Admin, my company had a vacancy.

One of the candidates I interviewed was an ambitious lady. She already had a job, but she's looking for another opportunity. She passed the interview successfully although she had limited experience. She said: "I would prefer to work in HR management, so if you had any vacancies in your HR department, I could be even more effective and efficient there".

I told her that once I have a vacancy in my department, I will invite her for interview.

After a month or so, she messaged me and told me she had resigned from her previous position and she was looking for a new job. Luckily, at that time I had a vacancy in one of the company's departments.

She was perfect to work in this position, so I asked her to come for interview for this vacancy.

Also when she came and passed the interview successfully, she said: "I'm very interested in HR field and wish to work as an HR staff"

Actually my vision is "Recruit the person who is interested in his specialization even with a limited experience; he is more effective and efficient than those having experience but without any passion for their work."

I told her that when I have a vacancy in my department you will be my first choice.

After a few months, I saw her profile in LinkedIn and her position was HR specialist at Halliburton (a renowned American oil company)

She got this job because she deserves it, because she is ambitious and likes her specialization so she improved and developed her skills and knowledge in the field she likes and eventually got what she deserves.



Zero Hours, What's the Story?

by Funsho Emiola

What exactly is a zero-hours contract?

People do use the term "zero-hours contract" but the truth is, this is not a legal definition. Zero hours is a contract where no hours are guaranteed. The employer can choose to offer no hours at all and the employee can decide to not work the hours they have been offered.

It is not easy to calculate zero hours contracts as the office of National Statistics uses two measures. One is for the number of contracts that do not guarantee a minimum number of hours and another for the number of people employed on zero contract hours. What this means is that one person could have more than one zero hour contract with different companies.

The figures suggest that, as at December 2016, 905,000 were on zero contracts. As these figures were only taken from a sample of people the figures are more likely to be between 836,000 and 975,000.

What kind of people are likely to be on zero hours contracts?

- 52% Women
- 33% Aged 16-24
- 18% Full-time Education
- 22% Accommodation and Food Industry
- 20% Health and Social Care
- 2.5% Construction

What are the pros?

Employers can pay for work when they need it
It suits quite a few people such as part-time workers and those in various industries such as tourism, retail and hospitality
Helps to reduce unemployment
Reduce wage bills

What are the cons?

- Large part of workforce underemployed on less than 30 hours a week
- Pay less to more people
- Lack of transparency
- Open to exploitation
- Workers less likely to be in good health, risk of poor mental health as gathered from Studies at UCI, Institute of Education (IOE).
- Difficulty in securing a loan, mortgage or mobile phone contract because there is no guarantee of securing work each week

One of the main issues is defining who is an employee, a worker or a self-employed person as this greatly affects your employment rights. You have to look at what happens in practice, i.e. if a person will be punished if they keep on turning down hours that are offered. You also need to ask the question are they working set hours each week. This may suggest to a tribunal that the person is actually an employee. As an employee they have full rights including a right to redundancy pay, protection from unfair dismissal, a minimum notice period and time off for emergencies. A worker is entitled to the minimum or living wage, rest breaks, holiday pay, protection from being overworked, discrimination and wage reductions. Employers have now been barred from issuing exclusivity contracts which sought to exclude workers from working elsewhere whilst on a zero-hour contract. The real question to be asked here is why would anybody continue to work with a doubtful status as a worker when they could be afforded full rights as an employee?

Zero hours contracts are still very much a topic of hot debate. The Taylor Review, a major report written by Matthew Taylor, was published this week (11th July 2017) and looks into the UK's working practices. Seven key changes were recommended on how those employed by Uber, Deliveroo and other gig economy firms should be treated. The report also suggested that workers should be taught transferrable skills and the Low Pay Commission should introduce a new minimum wage for people with zero-hours contracts and people should have the right to request a fixed number of hours from their employers. However, it has ruled out a total ban on zero-hours contracts.

It looks like zero hours contracts are here to stay. If the government are not willing to place a ban on these types of contracts, it will be down to each individual company not to offer zero-hours contracts.

In recent months, Sports Direct have moved away from zero hours contracts for those workers who are directly employed by them. McDonald's is to offer its entire staff the opportunity to move away from zero-contract hours and to guarantee either four, eight, 16 or 30 hours a week with new contracts. McDonald's have already gone as far as trialling the new contracts in 23 UK cities. Surprisingly, they found 80% of McDonald's workers preferred to remain on flexible contracts. I think this speaks volumes. McDonald's has just recently won the Top Employer Award for Innovation in Flexible working. Admiration was given to McDonald's for the sheer fact of trying to make zero hours work both for the employer and employee.

It is quite clear zero-hours contracts are not for everybody. For those who do choose to work in this way certainly more legislation is needed, to address the pitfalls and offer better protection.

The Effectiveness of CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

By Christina Gil

Designed by Stuart Kinnear

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a trend that has generated much interest in recent decades. It is an increasingly widespread opinion that companies have, or must assume, a fundamental role in the betterment and preservation of society. With this article I attempt to analyse the effectiveness of CSR and the challenges it poses from a legal point of view, as well as studying the regulations, international standards and their respective legal status.

The European Commission defines CSR as “the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society”, what involves undertaking “a process to integrate social, environmental, ethical, human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and core strategy”.¹ This business approach took on great importance in the 90s, defined as the “golden age” of corporate globalisation by Ruggie². This phenomenon extended economic activities beyond national boundaries, meaning that transnational companies gained increased power and influence and acquired a fundamental role in the international political and economic sphere.

However, the economic growth of companies was often related to abusive and inappropriate activities and their negative effects soon appeared. Numerous human rights scandals made companies adopt new strategies in order to respond to stakeholder demands, thus overcoming the traditional aim of companies to maximise profits. They started

accepting the consequences of their actions, and adopted a commitment to act ethically and in accordance with the law. Therefore, we can understand CSR as a voluntary process by which companies assume certain social commitments and seek to actively contribute to pursuing this goal by acting in a sustainable way from an economic, social and environmental standpoint.

But is there a real commitment from companies? Is CSR really effective? To answer this, we will first address its legal nature.

Classical international law places host states not only as responsible for human rights violations committed within its territory, but also for the protection and promotion of human rights as a whole. It was not until the Nuremberg and Tokyo trials that the principle of individual criminal responsibility was seen in the prosecution of war crimes.

However, no international treaty attributes criminal liability to legal persons. The different international normative texts frame the CSR under soft law, opting to let companies decide for themselves if they want to be involved and to implement mechanisms for self-regulation.

At an international level, we can highlight many instruments such as the “Maastricht Guidelines on Violations of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights”³ or the “Tripartite declaration of principles concerning multinational enterprises and social policy”.⁴

But in 2000 the largest corporate sustainability initiative emerged, the UN Global Compact⁵; based in four areas: human rights, labour standards, environment and anti-trust, it was embraced by more than 12000 companies in 170 countries.⁶

Also relevant are the “UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights”⁷ elaborated by Ruggie⁸ in 2011, built on the three-pillar structure “Protect, respect and remedy”⁹ which urge companies to respect international norms and stresses again that the primary responsibility rests with the host state.

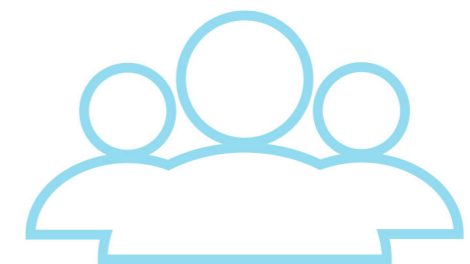
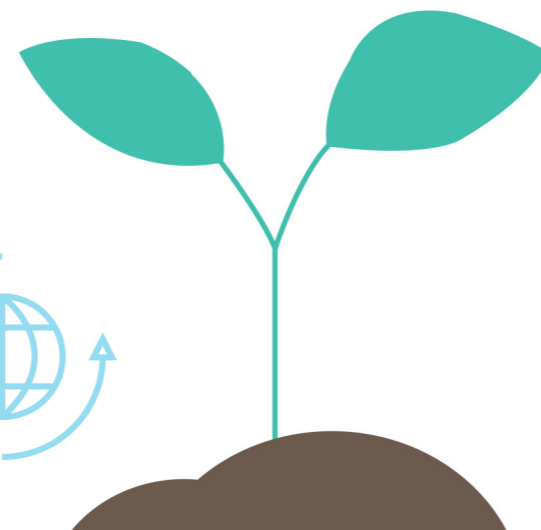
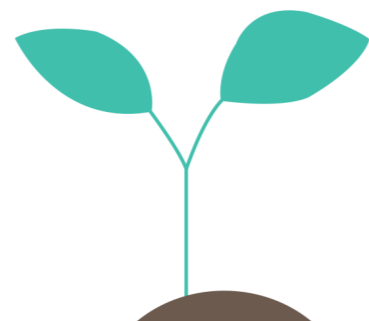
Regarding the European legal framework, we can say it is one of the most comprehensive in this area. Several initiatives that seek to promote responsible behaviour on the part of companies have been developed, for instance “The White Paper on environmental liability”;¹⁰ “The Green Paper: Promoting a European framework for corporate social responsibility”;¹¹ and a large number of communications from the Commission.

But what all these actions have in common is their voluntary and legally non-binding nature, leaving its regulation in the hands of private enterprises, often in the form of codes of conduct or periodic

reports. These measures that are not always sufficient however, which makes it necessary to consider the extent to which self-regulation is useful. Diverse studies show there is no direct positive relationship between performance and this type of measures (among others, Steven Mintz 2013¹²; Cho et al. 2007¹³).

A recent study from the University of Granada reveals that the top international firms have a much better record of environmental disclosure, but also worse environmental performance than their peers, which may be due to a search for legitimacy through the transparency of their actions.¹⁴

What is the point of creating social programs if the company is violating the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, or of producing follow-up reports if this does not result in an improvement in environmental performance for example? In this respect, there are many voices that wonder what the real reasons for companies to participate are.



Potential reasons maybe ones of cost, marketing and business ethics, but the reality is that companies with greater power and influence than many countries have fewer obligations than these. There is a new paradigm in which the emergence of non-state actors has challenged the state-centric system, undermining their dominance, hence the need to reallocate human rights obligations.

This issue has already been dealt with by the UN Sub-Commission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights.

This body adopted in 2003 " The Norms on the Responsibilities of Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Regard to Human Rights", a text that intended to create an international framework for mandatory standards on Corporate Social Responsibility.

Nevertheless, and in spite of its widespread acceptance among civil society, the Norms were strongly criticised by business associations and the UN Commission on Human Rights did not approve the draft. Therefore, it has no legal standing, a decision that reaffirms the inherently voluntary nature of such measures.

While international law does not establish direct obligations for corporations, they do recommend states regulate them through domestic legislation. Most states accept that companies have legal liabilities and impose criminal sanctions on those who infringe them.

A noteworthy example in the UK is where, in laws such as the Bribery Act, extraterritorial obligations are imposed on its companies. However, the inability or the unwillingness of some states, due to the lack of means or because they are not interested in controlling since they could jeopardise foreign investment, make CSR ineffective.

Despite its many advantages, we can see many deficiencies that make it necessary to consider the implementation of mandatory international standards in order to endorse soft law instruments. Hard and soft law approaches may be compatible, but they do not have to be exclusive.

In conclusion, it can be considered a success that the traditional myopic role of companies has been changed and that, either in response to the pressures of stakeholders or as a business strategy, companies have assumed social obligations towards society. However, different studies demonstrate this commitment does not always result in an improvement in human rights performance. The legal analysis shows that CSR is based on voluntarism, and only states can demand legal responsibility and due to the lack of resources of some states, or even a lack of will, this is not always sufficient. It is crucial to hold companies accountable and adapt legislation to the new reality and to new trends like CSR.



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Interview with a Human Resource Professional

with Karen Murray - HR Business Partner

Karen Murray, 30, is a young woman with a distinguished career in the Human Resources industry. She started 11 years ago, from her beginnings as a HR assistant and with discipline, hard-work and study, she has worked her way up to where she is now, determined and focused to push her career to the highest possible level.

Karen is currently working for a HR company in Kent as a HR business partner and she kindly took time to answer some questions about her life and career in Human Resources.

Tell us a bit about yourself and your career.

My first "HR job" was only a small part of my role at a manufacturing company. I worked in the office doing some administrative work but was asked to arrange some training, write some job adverts and process some new starters as part of that role. I started to really enjoy this aspect of the job a lot more, and did some research and reading into potential career pathways. In time, this led to me studying for my CIPD Level 3 Award and taking on more responsibility within the company with things like interviews, supporting disciplinaries and issuing contracts.

From there, I went into HR Admin, HR Assistant, HR Officer, HR Manager, then an HR Consultant position, all across different industries and sectors, leading to my current role as an HR Business Partner in a large organisation.

Day to day I get involved with both strategic and operational work to support the company's leadership team in developing an HR function that supports the overall aims of the organisation.

Why did you decide to work in HR?

By chance I fell into a HR position and found that I really enjoyed the variety of work I was able to get involved in. From here my interest and enthusiasm grew, encouraging me to study towards my CIPD qualifications and develop within the career path.

What is the best part of working in HR?

Working with all aspects of the business, HR touches every employee and I get to work with everyone, ranging from fresh new apprentices to the CEO.

What is the most challenging aspect of your job?

Changing perceptions that HR doesn't just deal with disciplinaries and grievances but can add real value within a business and affect the bottom line.

How difficult it is to deal with different people all the time and try to manage them?

A challenge! Especially within a large organisation where there is such a diverse range of skills and experience, it

is important to adapt your style in order to work with each individually to achieve the best outcome for all parties. Being exposed to such diversity develops your interpersonal skills and allows you to create great working relationships.

What do you think are the key competencies needed to work in HR?

The ability to see the bigger picture, build and maintain relationships, patience, time management, negotiating skills and the ability to think proactively.

How do you remain abreast of new developments in technology?

Industry reading, publications, online forums and attending events.

Why HR is so important to an organisation?

I think that people are the most important asset to any organisation and one of HR's many roles is to make sure that people are performing to the best of their ability. HR can support training and development of employees

to improve performance and it can enhance employee engagement, all leading to the company becoming an 'employer of choice' in their industry.

How can HR departments work cohesively with other departments within a company?

An organisation's most important asset are their employees and for a company to succeed we must ensure the right people are in the right roles at the right time. That's where HR comes in, to work with leaders to develop strategies to bring that most important asset on the journey.

What advice would you give to someone who wants to work in HR?

Gain as much experience and knowledge as possible, HR has a number of different avenues. To be a successful generalist it is important you take the time to understand everything from basic employment law, to the issuing of a contract, to supporting a disciplinary, to being actively involved in developing company strategy.

Ask questions, research so that you are current and on top of the latest trend and finally, take yourself out of your comfort zone.



by Flávia Barbosa

The Development of Recruitment

by Marco Zappia



Changes in the economic conditions of the 21st century have brought about the need for Human Resource Departments to take on additional responsibilities, often actively participating in business decision-making. By sharing a seat at the management table, they help determine when to downsize, outsource, retrain and recruit suitable talent. HR staff also participate in managing the cost of employee benefits, such as insurance and pensions, and in handling other issues and activities such as creating and documenting policy, assisting with employee-related litigation and ensuring compliance with employment laws such as the Employee Retirement Income Security Act. Helping to determine the company's overall direction, HR departments focus on building organizational capabilities using employee management and development strategies that align with organizational goals.

Within this adaptation of recruitment policies, many companies have come to prefer using agencies to recruit for them, because agencies have better knowledge of the market. The best recruiters will have their finger on the pulse of their specialist markets, and can give the hiring team insight into what is happening. They should know the available talent, where they are and how to reach out to them, salary rates, career expectations, available skill-sets and current hiring complexities. Moreover, agencies have networks to help connect you to people with a range of skills and experiences, many of whom would be off the radar of an in-house team or hiring manager. Sometimes large companies invest a lot of time and money in developing and marketing their employer brand. If you chose your agency wisely then they can give potential candidates a valuable insight into your business.

Changes in the Future

Many HR professionals believe that HR will look radically different by 2030. Driving this change is a series of modernising trends that will have a significant impact on people, influencing their motivations and perceptions

of work and the organisations that employ them. HR as an industry needs to be aware of these trends and adapt appropriately, as their role has a vital function to play in helping organisations and leaders adapt to ensure they are fit for the future.

An example of these trends can be seen in some financial services companies, which have pioneered innovative recruitment techniques, such as using IP recognition to direct visitors to local recruitment information on its website. Candidates can also interact directly with the internal recruitment team through social media. Such interventions have doubled the number of roles filled.

A number of organisations are also exploring more agile ways of delivering major programmes of work by implementing flexible resourcing models. By using hybrid physical and virtual teams, such organisations are able to respond more quickly to fluctuating demand for resources arising from peaks and troughs in business activity.

The Future Today?

From 2013, we have been witnessing a new evolution of recruitment, with technology playing a newly important role in the way companies approach the talent search and the hiring process. Services such as LinkedIn are proving vital in finding new talent, as with this kind of website the individual experience and skills of candidates can be checked by hiring managers far more easily.

With the gradual phasing out of paper CVs thanks to these new methods, every candidate can be found online and continuously updating the CV, and recruitment and HR professionals need to stay aware and make best use of this trend.

HOW DO MOST HR MANAGERS LOOK AT THE HUMAN RESOURCES?

by: Aimen Basim
Designed by Megan Chiossi



"image: Freepik.com"



"image: Freepik.com"

Human resources managers need to look at human resources from several angles, each angle is based on the nature of the job performed by the manager, whether recruitment, training, performance appraisal, etc. The angle I would like to discuss here is the most comprehensive: It's the Skill & Will perspective and according to this, the staff or candidates for jobs would be as follows

First: Low Skill & High Will

Those have limited or no experience/skills but have a high desire to work and perform.

Usually these people are new graduates who are new to work and don't have enough experience but have a high desire to learn and gain experience.

Second: High skill & low Will

This category of employees have high skills and experience, but low or no desire to work. Most of these employees are in the comfort zone. They reach a point where they are no longer stimulated by their work environment, and no additional challenges or experience they can gain, so their work becomes a boring routine.

There are also other reasons pushing an employee to be of this category, such as low salary, salary reduction, boring or negative work environment, inefficient management, etc.; these reasons and others make the employee with high experience have no real desire to work or develop.

Of course there are many solutions to get these employees out of the comfort zone and raise their level of desire to work.

Third: High Will & High Skill

This category of human resources is the most productive and of the highest performance and in return they are the highest paid because they are really enriching the place where they work and develop continuously because they have the experience and the high efficiency in their work field and on the other hand they have the will and the real desire to perform and develop and produce the best. They are usually considered by recruiters as over qualified for entry level to middle management.

Fourth: Low Skill & Low Will

This category of human resources is always the last to be recruited, and the first to have their contract terminated.

These people, lacking the professional experience, don't have the desire to develop themselves or to accept the advice, encouragement and motivation by the human resources management and even would not benefit from training because they don't have a desire to change.

Employees who are of this category are often a concern for owners of companies as well as HR managers because they are only numbers added to the number of employees without productivity in exchange for the salaries they get.

THIS MAGAZINE HAS BEEN DESIGNED WITH PASSION BY GRAPHIC DESIGN TEAM, AS A PART OF THE WORK EXPERIENCE PROGRAMME

MEGAN CHIOSSI

I really enjoyed designing the article for this magazine with an amazing team that are always there to help. It was challenging but also rewarding and has helped me gain more confidence with the design process. It has also helped me develop many skills and traits that are going to be vital for the future. It's also great to receive feedback from the various team members, it puts you on the right track to a successful design.

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RHIANNON GRIFFITHS

I have enjoyed learning new skills with putting the magazine together, as well as finding out the challenges with combining pages from different designers, and working on the final touches for the project that Sandra started. It's helped me to improve my skills in InDesign and it's been great being able to work as a team to get it complete and get feedback and help from others to improve my skills and the magazine itself.

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SANTA EVERTOVSKA – KIRSTEINE

Designing this one, the last page of HR magazine, I found exciting as every project either it is smaller or bigger, usually gives an opportunity to learn something new. I just enjoy a lot working with Adobe programs, especially here, where we are a great team helping each other with ideas and feedback.

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”

“

STUART KINNEAR

I have had a lot of fun designing two articles and the cover for this magazine as it has given me room to experiment with different concepts and given me new challenges for me to overcome. It has allowed me to design using both photographs and illustrations together to create something unique and original from my previous projects.

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Many thanks to SANDRA GONZALEZ who had a meaningful contribution to this magazine!

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