

# Chapter 6

## Motivating A Diversified Workforce

### ***Guidance Note For Students***

The activities that follow are designed to be used with HRM: An Integrated Approach. Read chapter six, which provides both the answers in easy to follow sections and guidance on other areas of the book that can help you with your studies.

#### **Learning Outcomes**

After reading and completing the activities in this chapter you should be able to:

1. Identify the trends, which have led to changes in the nature and needs of the workforce.
2. Appreciate the value of encouraging organisational diversity.
3. Critically evaluate strategies for motivating different groups such as contract workers, part-timers and mature employees.
4. Recognising the different motivational requirements of voluntary and public sector workers.
5. Examine the implications of demographic age profile trends.
6. Recognise the connections between the value of employee motivations and organisational performance.
7. Critically evaluate the role of HR trained professionals in encouraging the development of more effective employee motivation initiatives.
8. Present a case ( individual or group presentation) on possible approaches to motivating a diversified workforce.

***Note to Students:***

***Can You Tell Me All The Answers Please?***

In common with the vast majority of students, you want to do really well in your study programme. There are grades to attain and employers to impress...

You may like to believe that there are perfect answers that can give you perfect grades. Indeed, if this were an elementary mathematics handbook you would be correct. However, with people simple sums do not always produce neat solutions.

So, can I reassure you that I do not have all the answers to everything, and neither does anyone else! What I would encourage you to do is engage in discussions with your fellow students, read different writers ideas and listen to your lecturers. Your lecturers have invested many hours, years in doing what you are setting out to do so they are excellent guides to help you succeed. Learn to think for yourself and integrate ideas across disciplines and subject areas. Think outside the boxes.

***Practicing HRM: Working Girls***

It is interesting to research and study theoretical models, but seeing changing working patterns in real life can sometimes be a thought provoking surprise. In the situation upon which this practicing HRM is based, I was lecturing on a CIPD course in London. The student cohort for the seminar consisted of fifty women, with ages ranging from early twenties to mid forties and one male student. This was, admittedly, somewhat unusual and I was also conscious that presenting a session on changes in the workforce profile and women was likely to stimulate a lively discussion. The second part of the session was to be a facilitated discussion and I had planned to ask groups of students to reflect upon their own workplace experiences and any issues that might arise from balancing a demanding career with childcare. So to ensure that each group had a diverse group of people including those responsible for childcare I asked the students:

‘Could you please let me know if you are a working parent?’ Of the fifty-one people in the seminar room, just two raised their hands. For a moment I thought what to do next with just two parents in the room?

The following question areas produced a vibrant discussion.

- To what extent, if at all, has your career, influenced your planning regarding when to consider starting a family?
- What facilities, in any, does your employer provide for staff wishing to work from home?
- What policies does your organisation have to support employees with caring responsibilities? (Children and other family members such as spouse or parents).
- In your experience, what changes in attitudes, if any, have occurred in your work environment to encourage employees balancing work with family/ care responsibilities?
- If you are a workingwomen, to what extent, if at all, do you think having a family would hinder your career progression?
- If you do not intend to have a family, what work place benefits would you like to see established for career men/women?

## ***Guidance Note For Students***

Apart from pay, what benefits would you like to receive from working? Different people live in different circumstances, so one size, one set of policies will not suit everyone. Beware of so called ‘best practice’. What ‘fits’ one situation may not be appropriate everywhere else.

***Practicing HRM: What’s An Employee Benefit?***

Make a list of the benefits employers can offer. Then consider how each of the elements could be balanced each of the others.

For example:

- Flexible working hours or home working.
- Shorter holidays for more pay.

Enhanced pension benefits for mature workers or earlier retirement

### **Practicing HRM: The Charity Worker**

Think about a charity or unpaid work, where you might consider serving as a volunteer.

- Make a list one list of the knowledge and skills you could bring to the role.

Then make a second list of what you think you could learn/ gain from the experience of volunteering.

### **Exercise The Voluntary Sector**

- What do you consider to be the main differences in voluntary worker motivations and employed worker motivations?
- If volunteers are unpaid does it also follow that they need not be managed?
- If successful HR ought to be more about building cooperation than control through rewards and sanctions, to what extent should managing volunteers be no different from the best of HR management practices?
- What are the advantages to a volunteer of having a document clearing stating his/her rights and responsibilities?
- Why do you think some voluntary workers are resistant to any notion of being managed?

***HRM In Action The HR Initiative That Went Wrong***

Names and certain details have been altered to respect the anonymity of individuals and the multinational organisation from which the research for this study of *HRM in Action* was derived.

A young and enthusiastic graduate joined a large and successful organisation where there appeared to be a range of opportunities for training and career development. The organisation's Personnel Director was keen to develop a more proactive human resources function and encouraged the new graduate (I shall refer to as Patrick) to undertake an audit of HR activities and obtain feed back from staff as to which areas HR could improve its service to the organisation. The results of the audit were a surprise to the management team. A significant number of the staff, team leaders and middle managers interviewed were, to put it mildly, scathing of the organisation's recruitment, retention, training and remuneration policies. The Personnel Director was deeply concerned by the results of the research and recommended a root and branch reorganisation and management development programme, recruitment, appraisals, rewards and life work balance packages. Patrick was, of course, delighted that he could make such a significant contribution to the organisation in his first human resources job and he was fulsome in praising his employer. Problems were, however, not far over the human resources horizon. The value of the human resources input was not shared by all of the key opinion formers, indeed, a significant number of senior managers thought that the place of HR was to focus on operational matters and not to 'meddle' in management planning issues. There were some senior managers who saw little, if any, value in having an influential HR function. Indeed, some managers were openly hostile at the interference in their working practices. Some of the top management team argued that external providers could handle all the HR department's tasks. Following a period of increasing discord between the HR director and the other top managers and disheartened by the lack of commitment to longer-term development plan, she moved to another organisation. A new HR director was appointed to focus on compliance to

industry/ legal standards and to enforce employee performance evaluations through competency standards and compliance documentation for each department. Patrick, who had put so much effort into improving the standards of service to the departments now found his role firmly fixed in overseeing operational administrative tasks included the overseeing of a variety of external providers, who in the absence of a strategic lead, focused on the compliance regime. In less than eighteen months most of the original HR team had moved to other organisations. The problems uncovered by Patrick's study became worse and employees resented the additional paper work imposed by the new HR director, which they felt was rapidly becoming a key part of the problem, rather than any part of a solution. The difficulties employees experienced in communicating with the management team were aggravated by the use of the management by competency standards, which they believed, with good reason, had been imposed without consultation. Many of these problems were blamed on the HR team who were regarded as distant and disengaged from the realities of the organisation's core business activities. There was also an increase in employment disputes, some of which led to industrial action and or legal actions.

### **Discussion Questions**

- Why is it important to consult and involve senior managers in the preparations for any potential new HR initiative?
- The HR audit results were a surprise to the operational management team. What can we infer this means with regards to staff/management communication and relationships?
- What is likely to happen to staff morale if the management team do not make changes following the results of the audit?
- Why do you think the managers were hostile to the results of the audit?
- How might the communications and teamwork of managers/ staff have been improved? (Team working is discussed in chapter 3)
- Why should HR professionals make a real effort to understand the aims, objectives of their colleagues in the organisation?

## **Guidance Note For Students**

The following exercise provides an interesting opportunity to think about what it is like managing people in different situations. Do the exercise and think about what kind of work environment would suit you best.

### **Group Activity: *Motivating a Diversified work force***

Present a case (individual or group presentation) on possible approaches to motivating a diversified workforce in one of the following:

- A for-profit organisation
- A voluntary sector organisation
- A public service organisation

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter you have reflected upon the challenges and needs of the modern diversified workplace. And critically evaluate the role of HR trained professionals in encouraging the development of more effective employee motivation initiatives to meet the needs of a diverse workforce. This included an evaluation of the trends, which have led to changes in the nature, and needs of the working people. The chapter has also encouraged case study evaluation of the kinds of strategies that HR professionals can employ for motivating different groups such as contract workers, part-timers and mature employees and volunteers.

## **Guidance Note For Students**

The references are a useful guide to seek out other sources for background reading and ideas for your course work. Universities and colleges expect you to read more than just the set text. Although HRM An Integrated Approach provides a complete course for you, it is important to recognise that there are many other opinions, ideas on HR and management in general. In your assignments and activities you will be expected to refer to a range of literature. Go to you Learning Resources Centre and read/ view academic literature and expand your knowledge of HR and Management.

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**Personal Notes On Chapter 6**

Notes for seminars

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