IHRA
UNIVERSITY OF COLOMBO

University of Colombo, Sri Lanka
Institute of Human Resource Advancement (IHRA)

Masters Degree in Human Resources Management (MHRM)
(1st Semester Examination – October 2011)

MHRM 03 – Human Resource Information Systems

Instructions to the Candidates

(1) Answer <u>only four</u> (04) questions <u>including</u> question number <u>One</u> (01).

(2) Time allocated for the examination is three (03) hours.

(3) Total number of questions is five (05).

(4) Total number of pages is three (03)

(5) If a page or a part of this question paper is not printed properly, please inform the Supervisor immediately.

(6) Use of any equipment/items such as mobile phones is prohibited, and rules & regulations of University examinations should be strictly followed.

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01   Panorama is one of the growing groups of garment factories consisting of three factories (platinum, gold and silver) located in different areas of the Western Province in Sri Lanka. Further Buying office and Washing plant are also located in different areas of the same province. Panorama manufactures readymade garments under renowned brand names operating successfully in USA and Europe. The management of Panorama has been implementing certain strategies to reduce cost of production through lean manufacturing while enhancing the strategy of Information Technology (IT) with a view of increasing the operational efficiency of factories in order to compete with emerging appeal manufactures of low cost countries like Bangladesh and Vietnam and to cope with global economic downturn experienced in 2008. Operations and administration of three factories are identical. Production function, Accounting function and Material supply section have already been computerized in three factories. Meantime the top management is planning to automate the Human Resources (HR) function to overcome some of the HR issues and improve the productivity of employees. The ultimate objective of gradual incorporation of IT into the various operation and supportive functions of the factories is to introduce Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to the entire group.

Platinum factory has been selected as a pilot project of implementing the Human Resources Information Systems (HRIS). The factory consisting of Production and work study department, IT section, Accounting section, Material supply section and HR department and altogether around 1000 employees are working in the factory. In terms of administration and operations, it can be observed that the department known as Production and works study is responsible for measuring Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) of production and identifying training needs of sewing machine operators. HR department basically undertakes activities such as recruitment and selection of low level and middle level employees, development of and implementation of training programs with the consultation of the operations manager, recording of attendance, preparation of the payroll and compensation.

i   If HRIS design and acquisition are the two options available for this factory in the process of system development, which option is proposed to the top management? Prepare a small report to convince your idea to the management by highlighting pros and cons of each option and capacity (strengths and weaknesses) of the organization to go for proposed option.

(20 Marks)

ii   Identify key internal customers of the HRIS of the platinum factory and what data are expected to obtain from them.

(07 Marks)

iii   What kind of system architecture, do you propose for the HRIS system for this factory?

Justify the answer.

(07 Marks)

iv   How do you justify the introduction of ERP system to Panorama?

(06 Marks)
(Total 40 Marks)

02/ i   "Human Resources Management (HRM) evolved as an economic and political conflict between employees and management." How would you explain this statement in the context of Human Resource Management Information Systems (HRIS) by drawing attention on the role of IT?

(12 Marks)

ii   "Head of the IT department believes that HRIS is all about simply computer hardware and associated software." Do you agree with this? As a HR manager, how do you justify your answer?

(08 Marks)
(Total 20 Marks)

03/ i   Explain with examples, how Data Base Management Systems (DBMS) assist Human Resource Department to perform its functions timely and accurately, comparing early DBMS and relational DBMS.

(14 Marks)

ii   What critical role does N-tier architecture provide to large, multinational companies in managing human resources?

(06 Marks)
(Total 20 Marks)

Q4   i   Identify internal and external customers of HRIS (at least two from each category) and describe their different needs of information.

(10 Marks)

ii   "Software implementation is a critical stage of HRIS implementation process, largely because of resistance of the employees. Therefore, HR department has to play a vital role in managing changes in organizations. However, getting active participation from the HR department also seems to be difficult in this instance." Do you agree with this statement?

Justify your answer.

(10 Marks)
(Total 20 Marks)

Q5   i   Briefly explain different stages of system Development Life Cycle (SDLC) of a HRIS with respect to resources and effort involvement.

(10 Marks)

ii   "Though the system may meet the all requirements as defined, it still may not be feasible to implement for many reasons." Briefly explain the various aspect of assessing HRIS feasibility.

(10 Marks)
(Total 20 Marks)

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