



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

Masters Degree in Human Resources Management (MHRM)
(2nd Semester Examination – April 2012)

MHRM 07 – Contemporary Issues in Human Resource Management

Instructions to the Candidates

- (1) *Answer four (04) questions.*
- (2) *Time allocated for the examination is three (03) hours.*
- (3) *Total number of questions is seven (07).*
- (4) *Total number of pages is four (04).*
- (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.*

- 01 i List constituent elements of competency and then competencies required by HR professionals for delivering results to their customers. You are required to draw your answer upon HR competencies model developed by Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sancholtz and Younger.

(08 Marks)

- ii HR is an integral part of business and HR department of an organization should be structured in such a way that it could really contribute to the business of the organization. And also, arguably, HR department should not manage people in other departments of the organization. Instead, it should facilitate grooming line managers to play the role of people managers so the HR department could get rid of 'Suspense Account Syndrome.'

Discuss this statement with special reference to possible ways of structuring HR departments to support business, the role of HR department in facilitating training and development of line managers to assume the role of people manager alongside their technical role, and how to measure performance of those line managers as people managers.

(17 Marks)

(Total 25 Marks)

- 02 i Define any two of the following concepts/phenomena in a lean manufacturing environment:

- a Seven wastes (*nanantsu no muda*)
- b Skill formation plan sheet
- c Multifunction training table

(05 Marks)

- ii 'Though lean manufacturing can result in improved organizational performance, challenges do exist. Convincing employees and managers to think and act in ways that are foreign may be difficult. Employee may resist the tools of lean manufacturing or may experience difficulty thinking in new terms such as customer value and waste.'

(Source: The role of communication and management support in a lean manufacturing implementation, J. M. Worley and T. L. Doolen, Management Decision, Vol. 44, No. 2, 2006, p. 230)

Analyse this statement highlighting people-related challenges do exist in a lean manufacturing environment. Then, organize a program both for management and shop floor level (*Genba*) employees of an organization which plans on positioning itself on a lean journey in a few months. The objective of the program is to get everybody in the organization engaged in a lean journey with total commitment and dedication of the leadership across all levels of the organizational hierarchy. Your answer should include, *inter alia*, what specific actions organization should take in pre-implementation and implementation stages of lean journey. In building this answer, you may benefit from reading the journal article authored jointly by Worley and Doolen.

(20 Marks)

(Total 25 Marks)

03 i Identify personality traits according to 'The Big Five Model'

(10 Marks)

- ii An organization in manufacturing located in suburbs of Colombo has been suffering from serious issues such as high absenteeism and turnover of *Genba* employees. Almost all sections of *Genba* handle labor intensive operations with a large female production employee workforce. Most sections have consumed unusually overtime hours exceeding the budget owing to absenteeism of production employees. For the past few years, this company has been experiencing severely turnover of production employees who had just completed five years' of service.

Interestingly, circumstances had also compelled this organization to advertise the post of factory manager every six-month time during the past four-year period as no factory managers could stay with the company for more than six to seven months. Compensation and Benefits survey

undertaken for this organization by an external consultant has found that the compensation and benefits package this organization offers to factory manager is well above the market average.

This company is a joint venture i.e., Sri Lankan and a foreign entrepreneur have invested in. Total output is exported to the country where foreign entrepreneur was born. Both these entrepreneurs have appointed a team of professional managers from Sri Lanka to run the company. Two entrepreneurs attend only quarterly management meetings for setting strategic direction of the company. The demand for the product of the company is on rise in the foreign country in point. The critical issue is high turnover and absenteeism of not only production employees but also the turnover of factory manager.

HR manager, a member of the management team, has been questioned for several times by others at monthly management meetings. Managers in finance, quality, research and development, and supply chain functions have blamed HR manager for not selecting the right person for the role of factory manager for the past four-year period. They strongly believe that recruitment and selection process needs revisiting.

Assume that the management team has appointed you as a consultant as you are versed in organizational applications of personality-related theoretical knowledge. Your assignment is to design a system to select the right person for the right role on managerial cadre.

Instruct clearly and cleanly the management team on designing the system while capitalizing on your theoretical knowledge of personality, personality traits, and personality types based on Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI).

(15 Marks)

(Total 25 Marks)

- 04 i What is a Psychological Contract?
(05 Marks)
- ii "Psychological contract between employer and employee cannot be maintained today, because what employees and employers want and expect from each other will change dramatically in the new work environment." Elaborate this statement by discussing what will the new contract look like between employer and employee?
(20 Marks)
(Total 25 Marks)
- 05 "People Management Characteristics in 2020 needs to be changed according to Blue World, Green World and Orange World of the business." Explain this statement.
(25 Marks)
- 06 i Synthesis of Roles for HR Professionals by using Dave Ulrich model.
(10 Marks)
- ii Explain about the Five (05) key human capital measurements out of ten key human capital measurements that has identified by Society of Human Resource Management.
(15 Marks)
(Total 25 Marks)
- 07 i Distinguish work-life conflict and work-family conflict.
(09 Marks)
- ii What are the advantages of documenting family friendly policies of the organization?
(16 Marks)
(Total 25 Marks)