

Sample Answers

Chapter 1: Today's Human Resource Management Process

Answers to Applying the Concept Exercises

Applying the Concept 1.1: HRM Disciplines

Identify each HRM discipline and write the letter corresponding to it before the activity involving it.

- A. Legal Environment: EEO and Diversity Management
- B. Staffing
- C. Training and Development
- D. Employee Relations
- E. Labor and Industrial Relations
- F. Compensation and Benefits
- G. Safety and Security
- H. Ethics and Sustainability

1. The HR manager is writing an ad to recruit a job candidate.

B. Staffing. Recruiting and then hiring is an important part of staffing.

2. The HR manager is investigating an employee complaint of racial discrimination.

A. Legal. Racial discrimination is an illegal activity that HR must resolve.

3. The HR manager is taking a class in preparation for the exam to become certified as a Professional in Human Resources (PHR).

C. Training and Development. The course develops knowledge and skills for PHR certification, leading to career advancement.

4. The HR manager is working with an insurance company to try to keep the high cost of health insurance down.

F. Benefits. A health plan is a very important benefit.

5. The HR manager is replacing the office copier with a more energy-efficient model.

H. Sustainability. The new copier is more environmentally friendly.

6. The HR manager is having a new software program installed to protect employee records from theft.

G. Security. Software provides security of the employee records.

7. The HR manager is working on the new collective bargaining contract with the Teamsters Union.

E. Labor and Industrial Relations. Dealing with union contracts is labor relations.

8. The HR manager is looking for potential new employees at the LinkedIn website.

B. Staffing. Recruiting new employees is a staffing function.

9. The HR manager is filling out an accident report with a production worker who got hurt on the job.

G. Safety. Companies have to comply with OSHA safety standards and report accidents.

10. The HR manager is reviewing a report that compares its wages and salaries to other businesses in the area.

F. Compensation. Wages and salaries are compensation.

11. The HR manager is giving priority to promoting a member of a minority group to a management position.

A. Diversity Management. This may be part of an Affirmative Action plan.

12. The HR manager is teaching the new employee how to use the HR software program.

C. Training. Teaching someone to do their job is training.

13. The HR manager is referring an employee to a marriage counselor.

D. Employee Relations. Getting employee counseling is an employee relations task.

Applying the Concept 1.2: HRM Skills

Identify each activity as being one of the following types of HRM skills and write the letter corresponding to each skill before the activity or activities describing it.

- A. technical
- B. interpersonal
- C. conceptual and design
- D. business

14. The HR manager is working on the strategic planning process.

D. Business. Strategy planning is a business skill.

15. The HR manager is working on determining why more employees are coming to work late recently.

C. Conceptual and Design. Figuring out the problem takes conceptual and problem-solving skills.

16. The HR manager is filling out a complex government form.

A. Technical. Filling out the form is a technique to complete a task.

17. The HR manager is talking socially with a few of her staff members.

B. Interpersonal. Talking with staff members socially is a people skill.

18. The HR manager is praising a staff member for finishing a job analysis ahead of schedule.

B. Interpersonal. Thanking someone is a form of motivating the employee to continue doing a good job.

19. The HR manager is assigning projects to various staff members.

C. Conceptual and Design. Assigning projects requires the manager to make decisions.

20. The HR manager is communicating with employees throughout the company via e-mail.

B. Interpersonal. Using e-mail is a form of communications.

Answers to the Skill Builder Exercises

Skill Builder 1.1 Ideas

Getting to Know You

Note: Before doing this exercise, decide if you will use permanent class groups for all exercises. If you elect to use permanent groups, but have students add or drop the course, you may want to wait a few classes before setting up the groups. You can do this exercise after finishing Chapter 1 or before starting.

I recommend doing this exercise so students can get to know you a little better as a person. Since students don't usually buy the book before the first class, I just read the exercise to them and write the three question categories on the board during Procedure 3.

Total Time (up to 50 min)

Times will vary with class size. Select a time limit and allot times for each procedure. Below is a sample time schedule for a 30-min period.

Preparation

No preparation before class

In-Class

Recommended approximate time for a 30-min period:

(Remember: Your class may need more or less time for each procedure.)

8:00 Procedure 1 6 min

8:06 Procedure 2 6 min

8:12 Procedure 3 6 min

(I tell students they do not have to have all three types of questions, but to focus on what they want to know.)

8:18 Procedure 4 12 min

8:30

(I take only one question from a group and go to all groups for Question 1. Then I do the same for Questions 2 and 3. I also tell the class that if they think of other questions to ask as they listen to other groups' questions, to add the question when I get to their group.)

If your class is slower, you can finish the exercise during the next class. If your class is faster, you can spend more time on the discussion, and/or do the Apply It section.

Procedure 2 Discussion Question Answer

Most students realize the importance of calling people by name. One technique they can use to help remember people's names when they first meet them is to address the other party with a greeting that states his or her name, such as "How do you do, Bill?" Then call the person by name 2 or 3 times during the conversation. It takes a conscious effort to develop the ability to remember names. If you forget a person's name after meeting him or her, ask someone who knows the person what the person's name is. Then address the person by name.

Skill Builder 1.2 Ideas

Comparing HR Management Skills and HR Responsibilities

Total Time (5–20 min)

Select a length of time and option to use.

Preparation

Students should have completed the preparation comparing good and poor managers, or it could be done in class.

In-Class

Have students discuss the characteristics of good and poor managers. The students should realize that a major difference in good and poor managers lies in their skills and effective implementation on HR responsibilities.

Procedure (5–20 min)

Option 1. As a class, discuss preparation answers to the best and worst manager.

Option 2. Break into groups of four to six and have students discuss their preparation answers to the best and worst manager.

Option 3. Same as Option 2, but select a spokesperson to briefly share the groups' answers. All groups report their answers. You, or a student, may write answers on the board.

Case Notes

Chapter 1: Today's Human Resource Management Process

Case 1.1: Fracturing the Labor Market: Employment in the Oil Services Industry

Questions

1. The one of the two main goals of strategic HRM is to ensure the correct number of employees with the types of skills the organization requires. Given the boom/buster nature of the oil services industry, what external factors in this case should an HRM manager monitor to ensure that employment needs are met?

Employment in the oil services industry is driven not by general trends in the labor supply but by several specific environmental factors including oil prices, technological advances, construction labor supply, and OPEC production. HRM managers need to be able to anticipate the strategic direction of the firm, and therefore its labor needs in the light of the shifts in these factors.

2. What types of jobs and related skill sets seem to be in short supply currently in the oil supply industry, given the increase in construction employment in the past year? Which of the three new HRM challenges and four critical dependent variables does this issue mostly closely address?

Although the trend in 21st-century HRM is to deal with knowledge workers and knowledge-based firms (where workers use their heads more than their hands), the oil supply industry

appears to be in short supply of construction-related workers (i.e., drivers) who possess technical skills related to the exploring, mining, production, and distribution of shale oil. The HRM challenge in this boom/bust industry would seem to be acquiring and retaining the best employees. Turnover and absenteeism would appear to be the most critical dependent variables since the difficulties of the industry would have a direct impact on employment.

3. HR managers have several disciplines of responsibilities--which disciplines does this case directly and indirectly address?

HR managers' disciplines include the legal environment, staffing, training and development, employee relations, labor and industrial relations, compensation and benefits, safety and security, and ethics. Although this case directly addresses the issue of staffing, it also addresses issues of compensation (the inability to hire drivers at \$80k) and labor management relations.

4. Given the feast/famine cycle in the oil supplier industry, what trends and issues in HR address the necessity of retaining these firms' best employees?

Creating an engaging workforce, that is hiring and training the right employees, is the first step in trying to smooth the employment roller coaster that the industry experiences.

Although higher rates of pay will attract more employees, nonmonetary actions such as workplace flexibility, more job autonomy, and a cohesive workforce will produce more productive and satisfied employees. Adhering to corporate values and goals, goals that the employees' value produces a winning work environment. Last, the hardest task is replacing actively disengaged employees who can have a negative impact on the performance of their fellow workers.

5. The people quoted in the case are all CEO's of their firms and not HRM managers. Why would CEO's concern themselves with HR issues if these issues are the responsibility of HR managers?

Although CEO's are not HR specialists they are the highest-level line managers in the firm and therefore have HR responsibilities including legal considerations, labor costs control, leadership/motivation, training and development, appraisal/promotion, and safety/security. More specifically, the CEO's responsibility is the overall performance of the firm relative to its strategic objectives (in this case, fast growth to keep up with customer demands), and therefore the ability to hire qualified staff is paramount in meeting increasing customer demands.