

UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND

FACULTY OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

MAIN EXAMINATION 2008

TITLE OF PAPER: HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

**DEGREE AND YEAR: BCOM IV (FULL TIME)
BCOM V (IDE)**

COURSE NUMBER: BA 413/ IDE- BA413

TIME ALLOWED: THREE (3) HOURS

INSTRUCTIONS:1. THIS PAPER CONSISTS OF SECTIONS (A) AND (B)

2. THE CASE STUDY SECTION (A) IS COMPULSORY

3. ANSWER ANY TWO QUESTIONS FROM SECTION B.

**Note MARKS WILL BE AWARDED FOR GOOD
COMMUNICATION IN ENGLISH AND FOR ORDERLY
PRESENTATION OF WORK**

**THIS EXAMINATION PAPER SHOULD NOT BE OPENED
UNTIL PERMISSION HAS BEEN GRANTED BY THE
INVIGILATOR.**

SECTION A: CASE STUDY

This section is compulsory

The penalty for not having an HRD

Nowadays there is consensus among academics, policy makers and consultants as well as human resource practitioners, that in this knowledge information transforming globalising world, effective management and development of human resources will provide the cutting edge and the necessary resource-based competitive advantage to business organisations. However in the organisations where the majority of top management, metaphorically speaking, suffer from 'learning disabilities' and are often obsessed with maintaining power structures and role cultures, the contributions of HR departments and professionals to the overall output (profit) of the business often goes unnoticed until enterprises attempt to do without them.

In an article published in a financial journal a case of one of the top 350 Financial Times Stock Exchange (FTSE) organisations has been described, where the top management resisted having an HR department. The reason given was that the management did not want to stifle entrepreneurial initiative. Interestingly, but sadly, the organisation welcomed policies and practices that became an abomination to an HR professional in the true sense of the word. For an example the organisation, in its attempt to demonstrate its competitive capability recruited people who were simply the best and brightest for the business and then figured out where to fit them in. However the company had no training and development, management development or career development plan, in a strategic sense, but appeared to offer wonderful and fantastic opportunities for those strong enough to embrace them.

Sadly, the company's 'people' department reportedly arranged only fun events rather than developing concrete policies and plans to retain the staff. Ultimately over a period of three years the organisation began to experience difficulties due the lack of strategic policies concerning human resources and their management. Apparently in the process attrition set in and despite top management's efforts to turn the tide, the so-called entrepreneurial culture could not ensure competitive edge and dissatisfaction became the undercurrent. It was at that time that the value of an HR department became evident and the company appointed an HR professional manager to restore people's confidence and to avoid future preventable people management mistakes.

Adapted from: Analoui, F. (2007) *Strategic Human Resource Management* Thomson

Questions

- a. What importance would a well structured human resource development unit serve in an organisation like the one referred to above? (15)
- b. Discuss the approaches that they could use to develop their staff and prevent the problems cited in the case. (15)
- c. The organisation in question may be criticised for only having 'fun events rather than developing concrete policies and plans to retain staff'. What would be your opinion of this statement from either side? (10)

SECTION B

Answer any two questions from this section

Question 1

Critically analyse the concept of 360⁰ appraisal in relation to other appraisal methods?
(20)

Question 2

Comment on the principle of pay fairness in relation to the compensation philosophies.
(20)

Question 3

The management of a diverse workforce requires a highly integrative approach in HR. Discuss the dangers associated with the lack of this approach and the strategies that organisations can adopt for managing diversity and ensuring equal employment opportunity in the workplace.
(20)

Question 4

Discuss the major global trends in HRM and state clearly how they affect HRM in the context of Swaziland.
(20)

Question 5

Discuss the major global trends in HRM and state clearly how they affect HRM in the context of Swaziland.
(20)