

To be a successful Human Resources Manager

Some important ingredients

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The transendency of Personnel Management to the exalted position of Human Resources Management and the steady transformation of the human factor from a purely supportive role to an all-encompassing strategic role, are clear indications that the managements have, by now, correctly realised how critical the human resource is for the success of the enterprises. An organisation now being defined as a grouping of employees (i.e. staff being the organisation) succinctly amplifies the centre stage the employees occupy and the strategic importance they assume in the realisation of organisational objectives.

A keen observer of the developments in our management scenario would perceive that:

(a) some organisations have replaced the position of Personnel Manager and the Department of Personnel Management to Human Resources Manager and Department of Human Resources Management

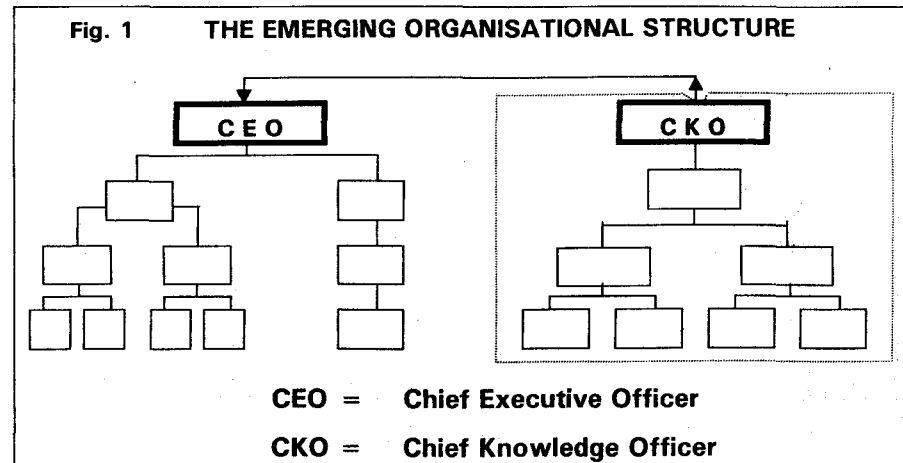
respectively for any or more of these reasons, i.e. to impress upon the others that their managements have been modernised in keeping with the current trends and/or 'motivate' their Personnel Managers (wonder whether 'motivation' is the correct word to be used in this context) and/or to attract personnel from without to fill vacancies.

(b) some managers are still in a struggle with their managements to get their designations changed from 'Personnel Manager' to 'Human Resources Manager'.

The comment that needs to be made on these developments is that neither such managements nor such managers are genuine and sincere in their attempts to discard 'personnel' and garb it with 'human resources'.

Human Resources Management (HRM) and Human Resources Development (HRD) can come into practice only when personnel in an organisation both at the top and lower levels have understood the differences and implications of the two designations and desire the introduction of HRD/HRM for better performance. Such understanding would result in commitment.

No organisation can develop until and unless the personnel working in the organ-



isation are committed to achieve its ideals.

HR Manager - Role as an effective communicator

Convincing and persuading the employees being an important function of an HR Manager, effective communication is a boon, to fulfil his duties and obligations. In an organisation, conflicts mainly arise due to ineffective - faulty - inappropriate communication (both oral and written). It is said that a man is gauged by the language he uses. The HR Manager should, therefore, be an effective and conscientious communicator, mindful at all times about his communication. To quote Granville Kleiser, "the best evidence of

your culture is the tone and temper of your conversation".

HRD being an effort to develop capabilities and competence among employees as well as to create an organisational environment conducive to employees' development, it is recognised everywhere that human resources in an organisation are an essential prerequisite for growth/development. It has been rightly said in 'A study of the Capacity of United Nations Development System' that 'Human rather than capital is the key to development'. Development is not a mechanical process. It is a human enterprise and its success will depend ultimately on the skill, quality and motivation of the per-

sons associated with it. In view of the aforesaid trends in organisational development, and growth being a determinant of the growth and development of the human resources, a trend of thought is emerging on the practicality of providing two parallel positions at the top instead of the currently accepted position of 'Chief Executive Officer' (CEO).

Knowledge is now considered as the key to providing the competitive edge to any enterprise. As such, the introduction of a position designated as 'Chief Knowledge Officer' (CKO) is being considered (Fig. 1). This trend needs our serious attention as developing the human resource through the creation of a learning organisation has

now received strong acceptance. It has been effectively proved that while imparting of knowledge adds value to the organisations, sharing of knowledge would cut across all barriers/layers to make the organisations flatter.

The result, would be the transformation of organisations as well-knit and cohesive units. This trend is also interpreted as transformation of "Experience based Management" to "Knowledge based Management". Such developments augur well for those responsible for human resources development. The HR Manager, in this context, occupies the pivotal position as the person responsible for all the important facets relating to the human resources of an organisation, viz: HRM (Human Resources Management), HRD (Human Resources Development), HRE (Human Resources Environment) and HRU (Human Resources Utilisation).

This shift of emphasis should impress upon all HR Managers that they cannot be satisfied with the traditional role they have hitherto been playing. Their sphere of activity has become wider and their responsibilities have become deeper to engulf all organisational activities. Nothing can now be segregated from the functions of HR Managers.

Becoming an erudite - a learned person - accepted by the staff, is the answer - the only answer for him to become equipped for the playing of the new role. Reading and more reading, listening and more listening, discussing and being innovative in doing things, and introducing/inculcating productive management techniques that add value to organizational performance would provide the much-needed bases to acquire this challenging role.

Topical vs holistic approach

As most of the text books and reading material on HR Management follow a topical approach mainly for the convenience of teaching the related concepts and principles, we normally tend to think and act taking each element as a separate entity. This approach has made us oblivious to the fact that all these elements are interwoven and interdependent.

We have thus been shut out from viewing the subject in its totality. If we intend making the organisation a cohesive unit, it is most advisable and prudent to look at its issues holistically. The central truth is that striking a balance between both formal and informal groupings of an organisation is one of the most difficult chal-

lenges an HR Manager has to face in the discharging of his duties. One could acquire the desired intuition to overcome any crisis situation if he has sufficiently mastered human and organisational behaviour and has experienced how employees behave under different situations and circumstances.

The HR Manager is, and should be the person who is closest to the employees. The CEO will have an overall supervision of the organisation.

The influence and impact of the Heads of Departments and line managers are mainly/mostly confined to their respective work-units. The HR Manager, is and should be a different person.

He should be omnipresent. Recognition for his position is derived from the acceptance by the staff that he is the force that pulls all work-units into an effective whole.

Differently stated, the HR Manager should be the person who culturally binds the organisation. If he is fully conscious of his responsibilities, he should bring about/add more elements and strengthen the culture, to ensure that the staff cohesively move in the desired direction for the realisation of the organisational objectives.

Continued on page 43