

CULTURE AND HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

Human resource management (HRM) in organizations is concerned with the staffing function by assisting managers to hire, train, evaluate and compensate employees at all levels. Culture appears to influence various aspects of managing human resources. *Ceteris paribus*, culture affects preferences of managers regarding a variety of HRM activities. Specifically, we examine the possible influence of cultural assumptions and values on recruitment/selection, training & development, performance appraisal, and "other" HRM tasks.

Cultural Assumptions and HRM

The cultural assumptions examined here seem to primarily affect recruitment, selection, and appraisal HRM activities.

Cultures with perceived control over their environment feel that people can and do have an impact on their environment and, therefore, consider merit (e.g., accomplishments, experience) and skill as the critical criteria for recruiting and evaluating (appraising) personnel. Submit cultures seek assistance from those in their environment so that personal contacts are an important source for being recruited and evaluated. Control cultures value training to enhance their control over their surroundings. Submit cultures do not see training as improving their ability to control their environment. Submit cultures also value long term employment because people selected become part of the network of acquaintances and colleagues which provides security for the organization and its members. Control cultures value limited employment; as long as your skills are needed to meet organizational goals.

In cultures where people are seen as lacking responsibility (evil), the manager decides when employees need training. In such cultures personnel performance is evaluated using the manager's goals. In cultures that view people as "good" managers will trust employees to tell them of their training needs. In such cultures employees are comfortable in using goals jointly developed with their managers (e.g., Management by objectives) to evaluate their own performance. In such cultures people can be trusted to develop meaningful goals for their work.

Cultures that stress monochronic time like to break up work and training into sequential tasks/steps so employees are recruited/trained for specific tasks. Once the tasks are completed, the employee may no longer be needed. Polychronic cultures base their work on relationships. The longer an employee works for an organization, the more they can develop their network of relations at work. These relations make them more effective; therefore, such cultures value long term conditions of employment. Training in such cultures may be designed to develop several skills at once.

Private space cultures emphasize tasks so people are hired into tasks with specific job descriptions. Public space cultures emphasize relationships so people are hired because of their ability to build relationships and develop new ones in order to accomplish their jobs. People's assignments may vary and be less systematic.

Low context cultures derive meaning from verbal communication so criteria for recruitment, selection and appraisal are explicit and appraisals are done regularly to add to its explicitness. They prefer training sessions and materials that are specific in nature. High context cultures tend to prefer implicit criteria that can be derived from the situation. Training sessions and materials may be more general in nature. Performance appraisals include subjective standards and more subtle/implicit criteria to avoid embarrassing an individual in the case of negative feedback so as not to break the bond of trust between members.

ASSUMPTIONS AND HUMAN RESOURCES

Assumptions	Recruitment & Selection	Training	Appraisal	Other
<u>Environment</u> Submit	Personal contacts	Training,	Who you know, Emphasize behaviors over results	Life time employment
Control	Merit	Training critical	Merit	Limited term employment

<u>Human Nature</u> Evil	-	Manager initiates training	Superior's Goals	-
Good	-	Employee initiates training	MBO	-
<u>Time</u> Mono	Employ based on task	Training sequenced	-	-
Poly	Long term employment based on relations	Training several skills at a time	-	-
<u>Space</u> Private	Task based, systematic	-	-	-
Public	Relations, less structured	-	-	-
<u>Context</u> Low	Explicit criteria	Training materials specific	Regular using objective criteria	-
High	Implicit criteria	Training materials general	Subjective using subtle criteria	-

Values and HRM

The four cultural values examined here appear to influence all of the HRM activities under consideration.

High power distance cultures emphasize status wherein clerical jobs are seen as better than blue collar jobs and managerial jobs are higher in status than non-managerial jobs. In such cultures, one's boss determines one's training needs. Training is conducted to convey specific skills, and the trainer has higher status in the training situation so s/he lectures primarily. High PD cultures have wider salary gaps between organizational levels to reflect the higher status of those in higher jobs.

Low PD cultures minimize status differences so they view clerical and blue collar jobs as equal and the salary gaps between organizational levels are not as large. Since people in lower status positions in the organization can share decision power, they can initiate some of their training needs. Training is provided to give individuals more autonomy in performing their jobs. During training sessions, power sharing occurs between trainer and trainees as the trainer uses more participative techniques such as discussions and role play.

High UA cultures fear the unknown and tend to be more suspicious of foreigners who are unknown to them and are more reticent in recruiting and selecting persons having a different cultural background. As risk takers, high UA cultures are more comfortable in hiring people having a different cultural background. Training is geared toward developing specialists in high UA cultures because having experts helps reduce uncertainty. High UA cultures place greater importance on training generalists as they are better able to adapt to unforeseen changes. High UA cultures value security so they emphasize seniority and loyalty in performance appraisals and in promoting people. Low UA cultures rely on merit and task performance for appraisals and promotions because they value risk taking over security.

Collective cultures select employees that fit the work group; whereas, individual cultures select people who can perform a single task or job. Collective cultures use team based criteria such as group conformity and loyalty to appraise and promote employees. Promotion from within the organization is stressed to reward loyalty and maintain group harmony within the organization. Individual cultures use individual criteria such as market value to appraise and promote people. Promotion comes from both within and outside the organization to find the best individual performers.

Masculine cultures tend to emphasize gender differences so they have more gender segregated occupations (i.e., men's vs. women's work). There are fewer occupational differences based on gender in feminine cultures. The purpose of training and performance appraisal in masculine cultures is to stress performance on specific tasks as well as the help people achieve. Feminine cultures tend to emphasize the ability to work with others and service to the organization in training and appraisal of employees because they value processes as much as results. Masculine cultures reward results; whereas feminine cultures reward processes or how the results are achieved as well.

Cultural assumptions and values influence primarily the goals and criteria used in managing human resources in organizations. [References: 1a., 10, 11, 13, 21, 23, 24, 25a, 25b, 26]

VALUES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

<u>Values</u>	<u>Recruitment & Selection</u>	<u>Training</u>	<u>Appraisal</u>	<u>Other</u>
Power Distance Low	Clerical & blue collar work equal	Employee initiates. Train for autonomy . Participative methods.	-	Narrow salary gaps
High	Clerical better than blue collar	Bosses decide on training . Train for skills.Lecture meth.	Supervisors provide feedback	Wider salary gaps
Uncertainty Avoidance Low	Accept expatriates	Generalist/Leadership	Merit, task perf.	-
High	Suspicious of expats	Specialist,Standardized & structured training	Seniority, loyalty	Be clear about what type of behaviors lead to specific rewards

<p><u>Self-orientation</u> Collective</p> <p>Individual</p>	<p>Select to fit group</p> <p>Select to fit task</p>	<p>-</p> <p>-</p>	<p>-Conform to group . -Promote within. - Feedback indirect style in informal setting</p> <p>Individ. Perf. Promote best performer.</p>	<p>Rewards should be similar for similar levels</p> <p>-</p>
<p><u>Assertiveness</u> Feminine</p> <p>Masculine</p>	<p>Occupations gender free</p> <p>Occupations gender based</p>	<p>Ability to work with others. Service, Training with interaction among participants</p> <p>Task Perf. Achievement.</p>	<p>Reward process</p> <p>Reward Perf.</p>	<p>-</p> <p>-</p>

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