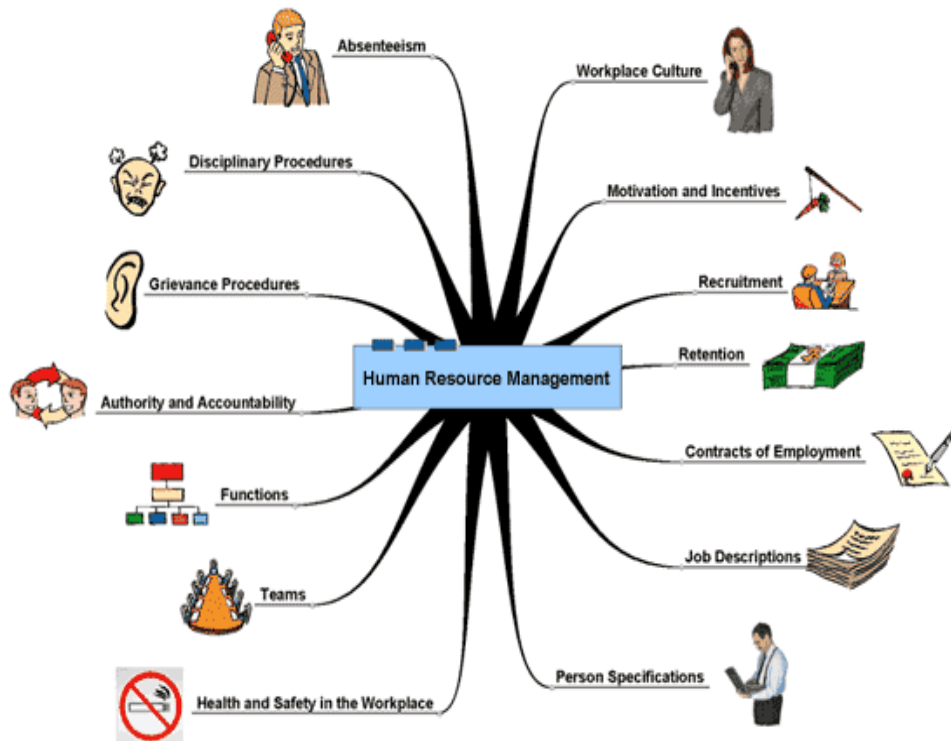


MAN 5250 – HUMAN RESOURCE  
MANAGEMENT

**Assignment 2:**  
Individual Written Business Essay.

**Q(2).** How is HRM practice likely to change in the next few years? What are the challenges managers are likely to face? Fully explain your answer. (2000 words).



([http://www.frit-india.com/Resource\\_management.asp](http://www.frit-india.com/Resource_management.asp))

<b>Lecturer Name:</b>	Troy Fuller	<b>Student Name:</b>	Lexmilian de Mello
<b>Due Date:</b>	6 <sup>th</sup> May 2009	<b>Student Number:</b>	1013 7844
<b>Word Count:</b>	2494 (4483)	<b>Day &amp; Time of Tutorial:</b>	Wednesday, 17:30

**Declaration:** "I certify that I can provide a copy of the attached assignment if required" - "I certify that the attached assignment is my own work and that all material drawn from other sources has been fully acknowledged"

**Signed:** .....  


**Dated:** ...6<sup>th</sup> May 2009...

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## ABSTRACT

In order to ascertain human resource managerial (HMR) changes that may take place in the near future it is essential that first we make a thorough analysis of the procedures in place as of today. This essay plans on briefing the reader on every pertinent factor that the HRM department may face, and the challenges faced by HRM will become self evident as the reader progresses through the article. For a foreword note, it should be noted that the main changes that affected HRM practices through the ages have been through technology improvements and hence ingenuity and innovation. It is up to you, the reader, to judge as to what final outcome practical result might be developed as from a decade from now, or henceforth.

## WORKPLACE CULTURE

In Savolainen (2000), studies showed that lack of permeation of worker mentality hindered the spreading by upper management of a 'stronger worker' mentality. A stronger worker mentality is deemed as crucial to the spread of a quality ideology in upper management – this may be incumbent/dependant of deeply rooted manager traditions in industrial relations in the field, and a discussion process is deemed as essential for a firm establishment of workplace culture.

The managerial paradigm is reflective off the participative and cooperative strategies – this dislodges workplace culture away from deep rooted mechanistic models to turning the core culture into a maturing mentality of which trust, participation, and cooperation is achieved between employees and employers.

By reshaping 'old' established values and ways gradual change of action a more methodical approach may be used that utilizes a step-by-step simultaneous model for learning and development in the workplace.

## ABSENTEEISM

MacGregor et al, (2008), indicates that the cost of absenteeism to organizations and society are believed to be substantial. MacGregor's research indicates presenteeism is quite possibly on the rise since employees are substituting work attendance for sickness absence. It is further stated that the reduction of sickness absence can only be achieved by corresponding increases in sickness presence (by of which employees still show up to work whilst marginally ill).

Stress, commitment, and job passion are all key characteristics of sickness presenteeism, and these are contrasted to the same level and extent as absenteeism and to that effect employees, in these modern days, may be replacing sickness absence by being present at work, despite being sick or ill, due to moral and ethical obligations.

**“Employers should be aware of this possibility in order to properly evaluate the effects of policies and programs relating to health and productivity.” (MacGregor et al, 2008)**

## DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

Weston (1997) indicates that we all live in a culture of which disciplinary measures are imbued into our society from a very early age in order to conform. The means by which this is achieved can be overtly or covertly through; family, school influences, religion and social norms. Disciplinary measures may even influence us through the use of stories, heroes, adventures and life experiences. Good disciplinary measures ensure that good always triumphs and the bad loses out and it is through discipline that powerful messages are enacted on by employees.

Weston (1997) makes mention of elaborate research findings that shows that adults value long-term learning and educational experiences above winning lottery or sexual gratification – if this is so then why do so many adults shy away from such proactive commitments to self-development?

The teaching focus in the Appendix suggests the use of “positive self-talk” – our mental dialogue help explain our behaviors – this to address problems with discipline in the workplace

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Hunter et al (2004), suggests that grievance may be defined as any dispute that arises members in the workplace – primarily employer/employee relations in relations to working conditions. When there is no unified body within a company (ie: a union) an employee may have a valid reason for grievance. It is only after contacting a legal representative that an employee is usually made aware of the validity of a grievance that may have taken place.

Justification for grievance disciplining can be ascertained by the following tests:

- “Was the employee adequately warned of the consequences of his conduct,
- Was the company’s rule or order reasonably related to efficient and safe operations,
- Did management investigate before administering the discipline,
- Was the investigation fair and objective,
- Did the investigation produce substantial evidence or proof of guilt,
- Were the rules, orders, and penalties applied evenhandedly and without discrimination, and
- Was the penalty reasonably related to the seriousness of the offence and the past record?” (Hunter et al, 2004)

### Types of Grievances

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Employee Complaints</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Unfair Treatment.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Broken Employment Agreement.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Employer Communications and Defamation.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Employer Complaints</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Absenteeism.</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Insubordination.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Misconduct.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <i>The nature of the offence</i></li> <li>➤ <i>The burden of proof</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <i>Substance Abuse.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Unsatisfactory Performance.</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Safety and Health.</i></li> </ul> |
|--|---|

Grievance handling is a beneficial process for both employee and employer this because it may increase moral of the later and justify legal proceedings for the former as well as create a positive workplace. It is, however, important to follow guidelines to allow for transparency and no room for damages. Generally more emphasis is placed on procedures for the grieving party as to the nature of punishment.

## AUTHORITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Goddard (2002) confronts a major problem slogan problem named “the chameleon of accountability” – this encompasses a myriad of approaches in order to address its definition. The traditional view of accountability is that it is a relationship involving the “giving and demanding of reasons for conduct” (Goddard, 2002).

**Scheduling Authority**

Ability of a team to schedule its meeting without others approving the decision.

**Selection Authority**

Ability of a team to select its leader(s) and/or new team members as required to complete assigned tasks.

**Internal Authority**

Ability of a team to control internal activities, such as allocating budget and material resources to support team activities, determining team performance goals and objectives, making timing decisions regarding the completion of specific activities, and requesting non-team members to support assignments as required.

**External Decision-Making Authority**

Ability of a team to make decisions that bind or commit an organization. This is conceptually the highest authority dimension because it allows a team to operate independently of external managers.

**Source:** Adapted from Monczka and Trent (1993, p. 68)

It should be noted that authority and accounting practices are influenced by a number of causal conditions. The term ‘habitus’ explains how accountability organization and perceptions of culture make clearer the concepts of replication of business practices as well as aides in the development of new practices – accountability ‘habitus’ is a key to understanding organization differences.

Large urban areas usually only have one authority department, whereas in rural areas there are the county and district authority departments. In a government organization perspective it is crucial that these areas be segmented like-so in order that the county can provide for social services whilst the district regiment focuses on leisure services and the such (these classifications are just for examples and may vary from country to country and specially private organizations).



## **FUNCTIONS**

Ahmed (1999) points out that human resource management (HRM) encompasses a variety of functions designed to manage, support, and develop employees working in organizations. An impediment to existing measures in managements is that they are not integrative enough in order to assess the usefulness of different managerial functions within the HRM department. There are a variety of measures for HRM implementation in literature; in this essay we take mostly a singular approach.

The prominent measure we touch on incorporates both the mission statement support and the goals of human resource management as the two main criteria's of usefulness. Performance appraisal can be used as an illustration of a tool towards effectiveness, however, other findings suggest that that appraisal measures works also for various HRM functions as well.

## TEAMS

West (1995) indicates that the quality of leadership is likely to affect both the efficiency and effectiveness of a team. A reason for not addressing aspects of leadership is due to the multiplicity of parameters within work teams.

It can be generalized that the most important job in team management is one that continually focuses on efficiency and effectiveness of the team (ie: doing the right things the right way). Leading a team is about being reflexive and providing long-term strategic approaches.

Reflexivity must exist so as to encompass:

- Coaching
- Active listening
- Reflective listening
- Recognizing and revealing feelings
- Positive feedback

Trent (2003) indicates that teams ought to enact measurable goals for pertinent reasons – ie: research evidence indicates that greater effort is exerted when teams enact on challenging goals. If we are to realize the vision of 'teams' we must develop our knowledge base and consult/manage in workgroups.

**“An experiment involving US Air Force maintenance groups found that goal setting increased productivity by 75 percent over a pre-established baseline” (Trent, 2003)**

## HEALTH AND SAFETY IN THE WORKPLACE

Cooper (1998) sees health and safety training as one of the greatest complexities in the HRM spectrum. Cooper believes it is difficult to separate the effects of training from other factors that affect and influence safe behavior – this due to the fact that there is a vast range of influences that can affect an individual's performance, this in operational health and safety (OHS). One way to address and assess such behaviors is by utilizing training tools so as to enact a 'control group'. For some safety-critical tasks it is also essential that a human error assessment take place so as to identify danger.

Error classifications:

- Skill-based errors
- Rule-based errors
- Knowledge-based errors

The most important aspects of OHS is attaining low risk situations in all facets of the organization – this may implement a methodical risk control measure, by giving a greater emphasis on human behavior hitherto.

OHS law highlights that employers have an obligation to provide a safe work for their employees as well as provide adequate training.

## PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

Cowie (2003) establishes a link that more organizations outsource their operations, and as a result more consultancy projects have become increasingly more complex – the general outcome being that all businesses are placing project management skills as criteria of greater importance for consideration.

Potential new employees need to be addressed of the following issues as they become part of a work environment, that is, what role will; leadership, motivation, delegation, monitoring and control needs have in addressing a new employee. An assessment course can ascertain as to an employee's people, listening, team and self assessment skills (Cowie, 2003).

**[The appendix under the heading “Patch Theatre Company ‘*Job and Person Specifications*’ – A comparative view” entails an example set of specifications an employer may be on the look out for (notice the layout)]**

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS

The Australian government (2009) mandates that consideration of specific work experience and educational qualifications are essential criteria for any job application – and failure to acknowledge skills accordingly may be a criminal offence as a result of bias or discrimination. People with disabilities may have less employment experience and hence difficulties in obtaining employment, and it is in fact encouraged that companies accommodate and train such individuals in order to bring them back into the workforce.

You should also include in any job description:

- “reporting relationships, such as the employee’s supervisor and any positions which might report to the employee
- possible career progression, criteria / timing of performance review
- work location and any travel required
- total remuneration package including base salary, superannuation bonuses, commissions and benefits.” (Australian legislation, 2009)

By having workplaces operate in a flexible arrangement employees may in fact improve the way the organization operates.

## CONTRACTS OF EMPLOYMENT

The University of Melbourne (Australia) has outlined in academic work various facets that should be covered in a 'contract of employment'. Below are some facets of it:

As a general guide, the following items should be covered in your contract:

- “names of the parties to the contract
- position title and duties
- annual salary
- superannuation (amount and fund)
- hours of work and overtime arrangements
- annual leave, sick leave, parental leave entitlements
- termination arrangements
- probationary period (if applicable)
- salary reviews” (The University of Melbourne, 2009)

Employees should inspect the following criteria in a contract and make sure they understand them:

- “check the salary and conditions against the relevant award (where applicable)
- compare the salary offer with market rates
- ensure that the terms of the contract are in your best interest (within the prevailing economic context)
- identify any key conditions not covered by the contract and advise the employer of those which could be improved by negotiation
- seek clarification from the employer of any aspects of the contract you don't understand” (The University of Melbourne, 2009)

Under the *Industrial Relations Act 1999*, terms and conditions of employment can be set in an award, certified agreement or Western Australian workplace agreement that must be registered and approved

For a contract of employment to be legally binding, it must contain the following elements:

- Offer and acceptance
- Consideration
- Intention to create a legal relationship
- Capacity
- Legality of work

## RETENTION

Team management may be optimized by focusing on development on areas of motivation, attendance, retention though assessment, feedback updates, ongoing support, and experience based initiatives of which all are vital in today's competitive organization locus' of influences.

**“It is possible to retain key skills within highly cash-strapped, extremely lean organizations; by focusing, as a necessity, on broader predictors of retention and motivation.” (Glen, 2006)**

In order to maximize and optimize the workforce environment, and retention, the following broad strategies may be used:

- Adoption of a holistic view of aspects likely to impact team engagement, attendance, retention, and motivation (ie: values, work balance, rewards, challenges, and etcetera...)
- Linking key drivers to individual assessment
- Key talent recognition in order to thrive experience based career opportunities.

[See 'Appendix' for a branding survey outlining retention as a primary areas of investment.]

Organizations can focus on 'predictors' in order to ascertain their degree of retention – these predictors are summarized as follows:

- “organizational process;
- role challenge;
- values;
- work-life balance;
- information;
- stake/leverage/reward/recognition;
- management;
- work environment; and
- product/service.” (Glen, 2006)

Retention strategies can be summarized as follows:

- “Phased retirement
- Mentoring
- Work/life balance
- Rewards and recognition program
- Training and development.” (Australian Government – Job Wise, 2009)



## RECRUITMENT

Whenever an employer recruits he/she is first creating and then continually shaping their organization towards an expected/unexpected outcome.

Employees need to be both ever more skilled and more adaptable if they are to provide skills and services that meet required benchmarks to establish a proactive change within the workplace. Further also is the importance of the ability to match staff to workload at all times of the day, week or year – this clearly offers the opportunity to enhance employee participation and this cannot be ignored.

Flexibility and long term security are aspects important to both employees and employers alike. The significance of long-term job security comforts employees that they have the option to do the same job over a long term, however, employment security is becoming reducing in the workforce (this to the introduction of 'WorkChoices' and the 'Fair Work Bill 2008' which somewhat disempowered the role of unions to a certain extent – as well as the nature of the global competitive environment). In return for job flexibility a comprehensive job training regime and career development should remain as an ethical obligation from the employer's part.

**“Empowerment has become a cover-up for delegating blame.” (Lee, 1994)**

Ten challenging recruitment criteria's:

- Recognition
- Conscious choices
- Development
- Long-term vs short-term
- Be clear about empowering
- Discuss culture
- Value a learning culture
- Diversify
- Recruit both submissive and challengers
- Recruit so as to shape change.

## MOTIVATION AND INCENTIVES

Incentives can be effective to employees if special grants are given under the aegis of a 'power rewards' program. Employee dissatisfaction may occur even after implementation of such programs as they remain cynical and remain wary of controlling and manipulative incentive programs – this can drastically reduce morale and motivation thus paving the way for effective analysis before any such grants.

Power rewards are rewards that:

- “Foster the desired outcomes of the organization;
- Make people feel good about their current and past accomplishments;
- Energize them to achieve even more;
- Work synergistically with intrinsic motivation; and
- Do these things cost-effectively.” (Spitzer, 1996)

Why rewards fail:

- Excessive dependence on monetary rewards;
- Lack of recognition value;
- Entitlements;
- The wrong things are rewarded;
- Delay;
- Generic rewards;
- Short-term impact; and
- The presence of de-motivators.

Raviv et al (2007) suggests that there are gender differences only to the extent that men score higher on values of competition and fitness. To that regard, it would not be unreasonable to suggest that the implementation of different award schemes to different groups within an organization (with employee consent) may actually sprout more productivity than may be seen otherwise.

## TRENDS

In the UK (a country comparable to Australia in terms of HRM policies) the HRM department is categorized by its cost-driven competitive environmental nature. The use of labor flexibility, outsourcing & downsizing has led to organizations to become leaner in order to increase such productivity. There is a general trend for benchmarking usage within workplaces as well as to make work related rewards more performance related.

Western Australian human resource trends are to expand. Over the several last few decades we have seen population dispersion throughout all sectors in HRM. The most notable trend would relate to the recent growth in population and import of skilled labor from overseas. With the property crisis on the loom, it is foreseen that population growth will occur more in the fringes of Perth, and HRM may be potentially outsourced to these other locations for various firms to operate effectively.

## CONCLUSION

It has become evident that HRM does need further work. Expansion of HRM in order to organize larger expanding businesses is leading to innovative methods in usage of strategic human resource information systems as well as creativity in implementing 'organic' work group strategies.

From personal experience, within the workforce, I believe that HRM can function on an authoritarian level, and indeed, given the competency of employees, this 'may' be termed a more effective approach.

The key facets examined in this assignment shed some light into the various areas in which HRM practice may be improved upon. Debate as to where the future will take us is highly subjective, and this is why I now pose you a question... *Where do you see HRM heading towards ten years from now?*

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APPENDIX

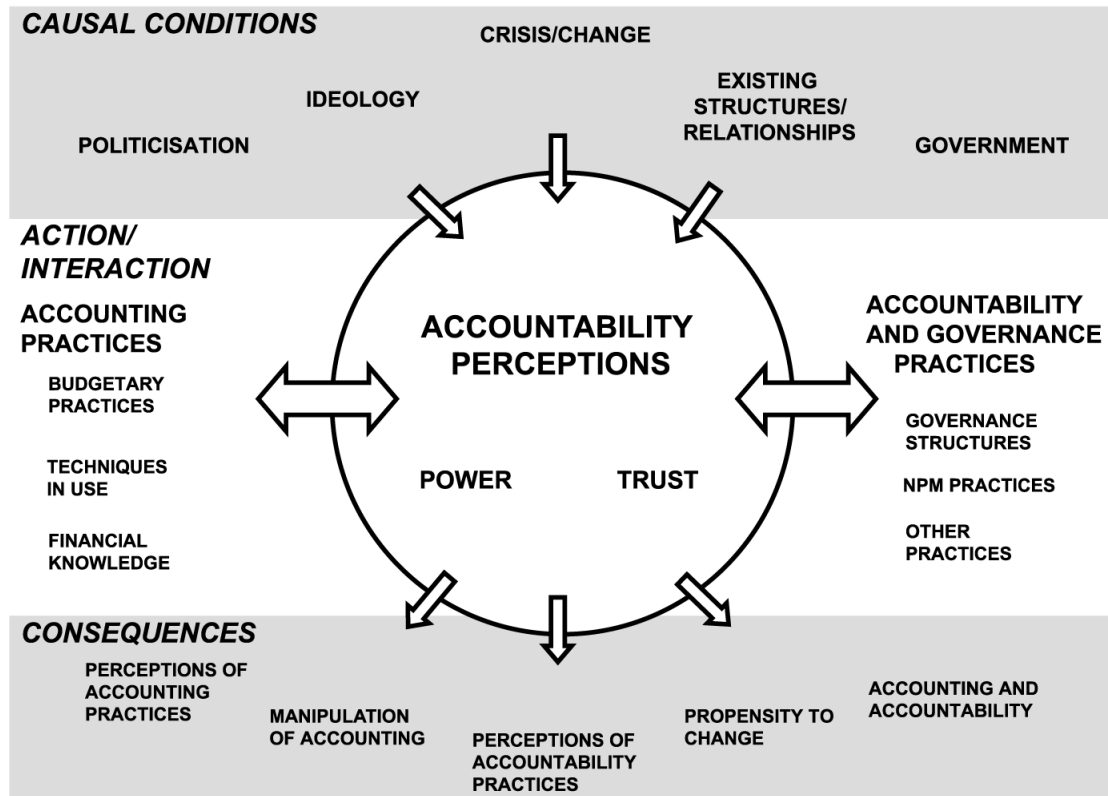


Figure 1: Source, Goddard (2002)

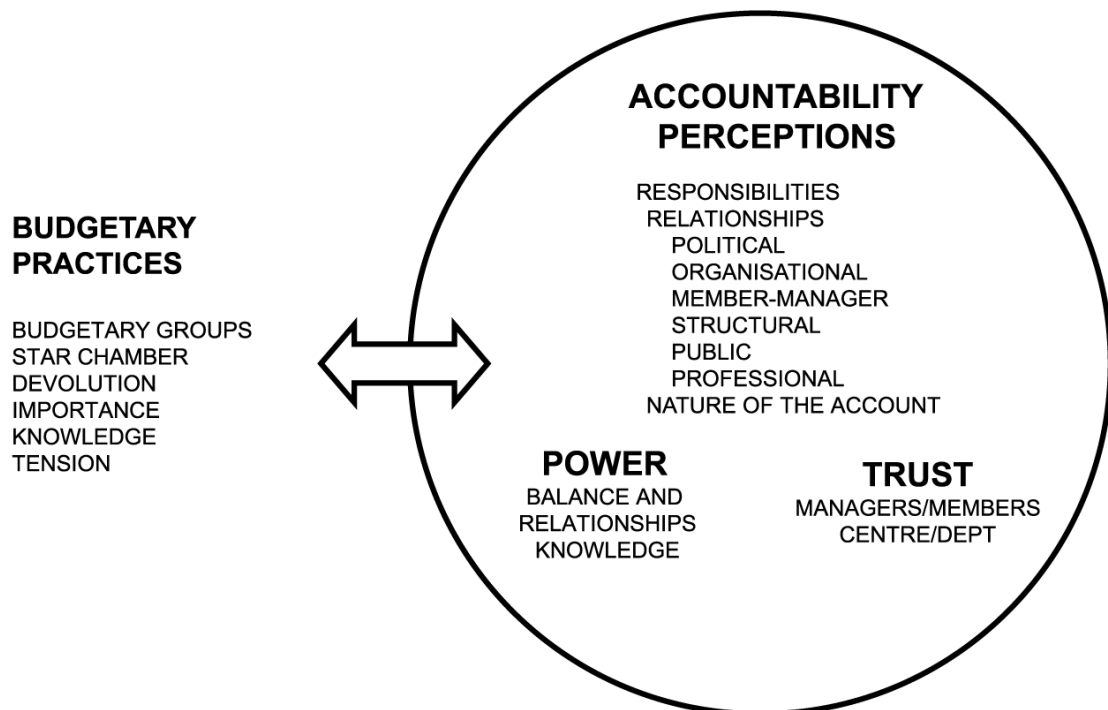


Figure 2: Source, Goddard (2002)



Table 1: Source, Trent (2003)

<b>Member Commitment</b>	<b>Part Time</b>	Support a specific project or task in addition to regular job responsibilities	Continuous support of evolving or changing team assignments as a part-time team member
	<b>Full Time</b>	Support a specific project or task with full-time commitment	Continuous support of evolving or changing team assignments as a full-time team member
		<b>Finite</b>	<b>Continuous</b>
<b>Assignment Duration</b>			

Personal performance discrepancy fault tree

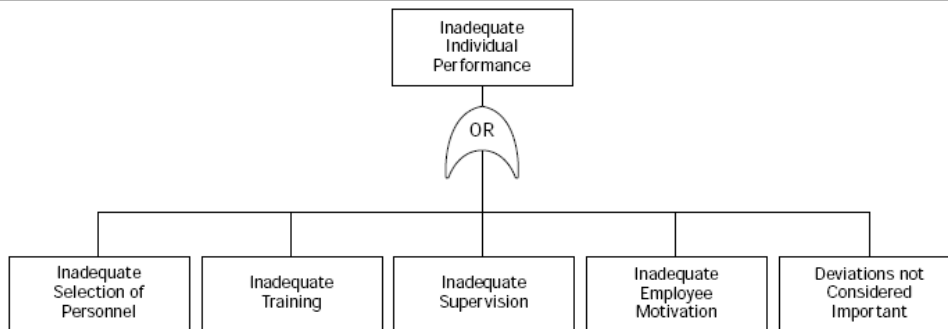


Figure 3: Source, Cooper (1998)

Patch Theatre Company '*Job and Person Specifications*' – A comparative view



## JOB AND PERSON SPECIFICATIONS

<b>Title of Position:</b>	Early Childhood Services Coordinator
<b>Appointment:</b>	The position is offered initially as a 12 month fixed term contract
<b>Salary:</b>	\$38,000 pro rata per annum, 0.8 FTE
<b>Responsible to:</b>	General Manager

### PATCH THEATRE COMPANY

Patch Theatre Company is based in Adelaide, South Australia and has presented 98 new works to more than 1.25 million 4-8 year old children and their families locally, nationally and internationally since it began in 1972.

### POSITION SUMMARY:

As a member of the team at Patch Theatre Company, the Early Childhood Services Coordinator will undertake all promotions, communication and bookings with schools, kindergartens and child care centres in the company's South Australian market. This will involve developing and maintaining relationships with early childhood educators and the bus service provider. They will also liaise with the Front of House Assistant during local in-theatre seasons and provide frequent updates and reports to the General Manager on sales. Some general administration support, proof reading and office duties will be required to ensure the smooth operation of the company.

### JOB SPECIFICATION:

#### Primarily Responsible for:

#### Publicity and Marketing

- Designing and implementing an annual promotions plan to attract SA schools, kindergartens and child care centres
- Coordinating the content and distribution of promotional flyers for SA schools seasons
- Ensuring promotional materials effectively promote the Patch Brand
- Monitoring and running marketing budgets
- Responding to school enquiries
- Providing content to keep the information on Patch's website up-to-date
- Maintaining database details for schools, kindergartens and child care centres
- Compiling evaluation information from audiences and preparing reports on seasons

#### Metro & Regional School Bookings

- Maintaining Patch's in-house ticketing system
- Setting up confirmation letters and invoices pre-season
- Confirming and inputting bookings
- Liaising between teachers and the bus service provider to coordinate transport requirements
- Co-ordinating groups of early-childhood specialists to develop teachers resources
- Assisting in the development of teachers' resources (Play Packages) to accompany each new production: co-ordinating groups of early-childhood specialists to inform the development of Play Packages and participating at these meetings.
- Editing, copying and distributing Play Packages for SA School Seasons
- Invoicing, chasing and recording payments from schools
- Reporting on ticket sales

#### Front of House Management

- Coordinating Front of House arrangements for schools seasons

- Re-ordering books and other merchandise for FOH
- Coordinating seating plans in liaison with the Front of House Assistant
- Overseeing work experience students and volunteers at the theatre
- Providing inductions including OHS&W for work experience students, volunteers and FOH staff
- Ensuring awareness of safety procedures for emergency evacuation and theatre protocols.
- Liaising with the bus service provider
- Assisting with seating patrons at the venue where required

#### General Administration

- Answering and screening phone calls, responding to general enquiries and taking messages
- Coordinating work experience
- Minute taking at critical appraisals of new productions
- Other duties as required

#### **PERSON SPECIFICATION:**

##### **Personal attributes / skills**

- Proven ability to communicate clearly, concisely and effectively, both verbally and in writing
- Exemplary proof reading skills
- Excellent phone manner
- Ability to work autonomously under limited supervision and as part of a team
- Ability to multi-task and achieve results under pressure
- Exemplary organisation and time management skills
- Interpersonal skills that foster the cooperation of others
- Drive, enthusiasm, innovation, persistence and creativity
- Strong computer skills in a range of programs including excel and word
- Ability to problem-solve
- Good sense of humour
- Excellent presentation skills

##### **Desirable Knowledge**

- Knowledge of File Maker Pro
- An understanding of Patch Theatre Company's philosophy and activities
- Knowledge of early childhood development, the school environment and communicating with teachers and carers
- A working knowledge of OHS&W requirements, particularly in-theatre
- A knowledge of First Aid

##### **Desirable Experience**

- Experience in an administrative role
- Experience within a school or kindergarten would be advantageous

#### **WORKING ARRANGEMENT:**

- 30 hours per week. Hours of work to be negotiated with the successful candidate though will ideally be spread across a five day working week.

#### **SPECIAL CONDITIONS:**

- Out of hours work including Saturdays may be required from time to time
- A flexi-time arrangement will apply hence overtime is not applicable
- Travel between several locations in metropolitan Adelaide may be required
- Driver's licence is essential

#### **Please forward applications by Thursday 21 December to:**

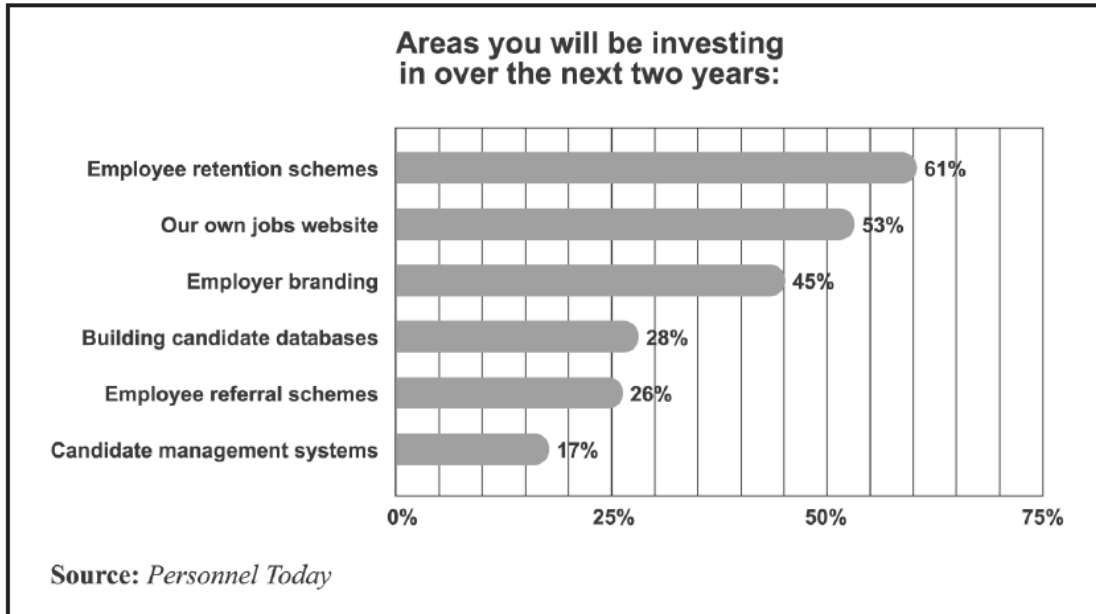
Amanda Jones  
General Manager  
Patch Theatre Company  
Lvl 1 Lion Arts Centre  
Cnr Morphett St & North Tce  
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Or email to [patch@patchtheatre.org.au](mailto:patch@patchtheatre.org.au)

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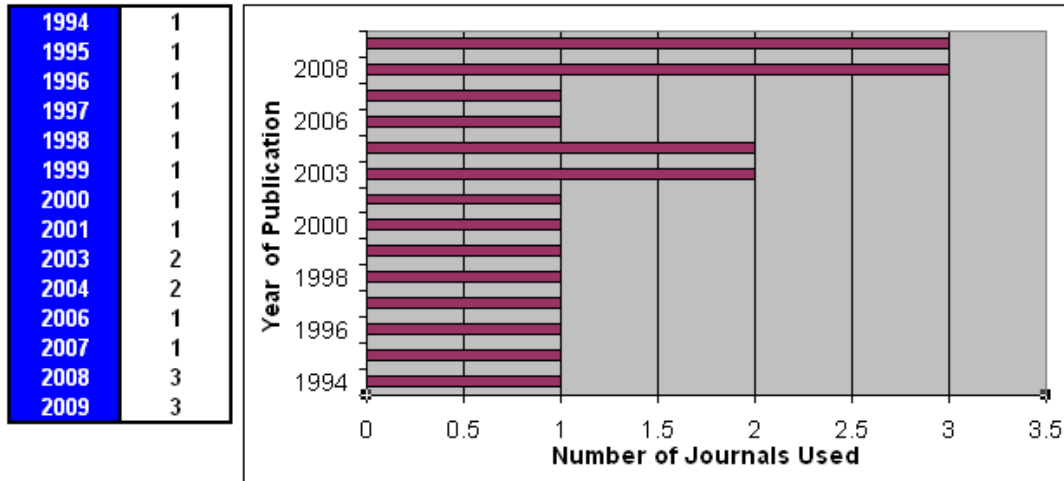
**END**

Table 2: The 'Personnel Today' employer branding survey (Glen, 2006).



**JUSTIFICATION OF RESOURCES**

On a final analysis, it should be noted that some references were relatively old, with the following variation in years per number of articles:



It should be noted that there is quite a large disparity in publication dates, and the most pertinent articles were not as recent as the year of 2009. The fact of the matter is that once a technique is established (ie: HRM strategy implementation) there requires a great deal of time, and evidence, for publications to proclaim as to what was the ‘norm’ to differ on an official level. I did cite articles as far back as a decade ago, but when cross-referencing such articles to some more present ones I found little in the way in change of opinions, and if at most just some elaborate regurgitation of words.

I believe that the journal articles I used warrant the integrity of this essay.

**“Thank you!”**