

research in brief

Increasing Organizational Effectiveness

Planning for and managing human resources has become recognized as an important factor in organizational effectiveness. It's an area typically overlooked or ignored by line/staff management outside the area of personnel. Thus, this paper isn't intended to be a review of what's known, but rather a kind of position paper for line managers to bring to their attention some important and all too often neglected issues.

More specifically, this article addresses two basic questions. First, why is human resource planning and development (HRPD) becoming increasingly important as a determinant of organizational effectiveness? Second, what are the major components of a human resource planning and career development system, and how should these components be linked for maximum organizational effectiveness?

The data used to address these questions evolved from: (1) formal research on management development, career development, and human development through the adult life cycle conducted in the Sloan School and at other places for the past decade and (2) analysis of consulting relationships, field observations, and other involvements over the past several decades with all kinds of organizations dealing with the planning for and implementation of human resource development programs and organizational development projects.

The author's synthesis and evaluation of these data suggest two major factors about *change* as answers to the "why" of human resource planning and development.

First, due to the increasing complexity of organizations and their external economic, political, and sociocultural environments, the general line manager can no longer make decisions by him/herself. He/she can't assimilate and digest within his/her head enough information to be the integrator and decision maker. Out of necessity, he/she finds him/herself having to *manage* the decision-making process, bringing the

right people together around the right questions or problems at the right time.

The second reason HRPD will become more central and important to line management is that changing social values about the role of work will make it more complicated to manage people.

For an organization to have the capacity to perform effectively over time, it must be able to plan for, recruit, manage, develop, measure, dispose of, and replace human resources as warranted by the tasks to be done. Thus, an ideal HRPD system would seek to match the organization's needs for human resources with the individual employee's needs for personal career growth and development.

Consequently, the basic components of an effective HRPD system should include: (1) overall planning components, (2) staffing processes, (3) development planning, (4) career development processes, (5) planning for and managing disengagement, and (6) planning for and managing replacement and restaffing.

These basic components are closely linked to the actual processes of supervision, job assignment, training, etc. These processes must be designed to match the needs of the organization with the needs of the employees throughout their evolving careers.

Furthermore, these various components are interlinked and must be seen as a total system continually adjusting to internal and external change. The total system must be managed as a system to ensure coordination between the planning functions and the implementation functions of complex organizations.

"Increasing Organizational Effectiveness Through Better Human Resource Planning and Development." Edgar H. Schein. *Sloan Management Review*, XIX (1977), 1-20.

Thomas A. Eaves