KUSHAGRA

MBAFT– November 2019

Examination : MBA (FT) Ist year, Ist Semester, November 2019
Paper No.   : MBAFT-6106
Paper Title: Human Resource Management

Total Marks : 50

Time: 3 Hours

Instructions: Attempt all questions. All questions carry equal marks.

Q1. An email sent to employees of an IT major on 5th February, 2015 said, *"Everyone except for approved employees (tele-workers etc.) will be in office five days a week- no exceptions. If you are not travelling for work, then you should be in office".* The company with a workforce of more than 317,500 people globally also informed the employees that it will be "tracking badge swipes to the office". Although the mail was not sent by the CEO, there were many references to how seriously the global IT firm had taken up this initiative. The firm decided to keep a closer watch on work timings of its employees across the globe, a move that was contrary to the increasing trend of flexible timings at workplace. Industry experts widely believed such blanket rules never work and that this move will agitate the good workers for whom companies accommodate flexible timings.

a) Assume you are the HR director of this firm and believe that flexi hours should be offered to the employees of IT-sector. What arguments and justification will you give to the CEO in support of flexi- hours? Discuss with reference to the soft (Harvard) and hard (Michigan) models of Human Resource Management.

b) Examine the role of voluntary benefit offerings by firms in talent retention. Cite examples of 'voluntary benefit programmes' of some firms you are familiar with.

(5+5)

[OR]

As they grapple with rising attrition rates, IT companies are making all efforts to prevent young employees skilled in digital technologies- and other high performers- from jumping ship. Employees with 3-7 years of experience are most in demand, given the premium skills that employees in this bracket have. Also at high risk are the experienced and senior level employees. While a certain attrition rate is a given and even healthy as it helps organizations infuse new talent and manage margins, regrettable attrition (high performers, critical talent, experienced in new technology areas) becomes a concern as the replacement cost can be high and the lost time may affect business.

a) Explain high levels of attrition of high performers in IT companies with respect to the various trends (environmental/ business/ technological etc.) that influence human resource demand and supply.

b) Suggest various HR initiatives that the IT companies may adopt for retaining high performing talent.   — 1 mar.   (5+5)

Q2. The world is a completely different place now than it was 10 years ago. People have become more reliant on technology and, businesses are able to glean actionable insights from data collected, no matter the industry. In this ever-changing business environment, corporations can't keep up with their competition without embracing these types of technologies to improve their models.

With so many new-to-market technologies bringing businesses impressive customer and employee data, many corporations are still using static training techniques of the past. Most businesses don't place a huge emphasis on employee training – that's a fact. It's time for that to change, especially as one in three employees say that *uninspiring training content* is a barrier to their learning and can influence them to leave their company for new opportunities. What's more, sticking with *antiquated training methods* is costly. One study even found that ineffective training techniques could cost a company up to Rs. 1000 crores a year per 1,000 employees.

Corporate training departments also need to look at how much guidance employees need and *how to address their individual learning styles*. A recent research project found that 74 percent of employees don't feel as though they are achieving their full potential due to lack of development opportunities. And from a management perspective, 62 percent of human resources managers do not believe they are meeting each individual's learning needs.

How can corporate training departments address these issues and offer more effective training and development opportunities in the workplace? **(10)**

[OR]

It's been proven time and again that traditional once-a-year performance appraisal is ineffective for growing businesses. Annual performance reviews are falling out of favour. In a Mckinsey survey, 54% of employees reported that the traditional performance management had no positive impact on their performance.

Employees don't want to wait a year to learn how the managers perceive their performance, their capabilities and the areas to improve. A year wasted without knowing these insights is detrimental to their career growth. They want to resolve the issues then and there and grow at a faster pace. Companies too need to have some fair and transparent metrics to identify their best performers and not-so-best performers. Evaluating the employees and categorizing them in buckets are unproductive and very demoralizing for the workforce. Moreover, the primary objective of performance management has changed from evaluation to continuous development.

Describe the main characteristics of comprehensive developmental performance management tool that fulfils the current needs and the capacity to evolve to meet their future needs. **(10)**

Q3. For the past few years, Westend Clothing, a company headquartered in Surat has been evolving its business. Instead of only making cloth for designer apparel, Westend Clothing has begun to produce and offer for sale many types of fabric products, including canvas awnings and fabric for upholstery. The company has recently used nanotechnology to develop stain-resistant fabrics that are increasingly popular in skilled nursing facilities and hospitals because of their durability and ease of care. The company has grown from 150 employees working at one plant in Surat to 700 employees working in three plants in Mumbai and one near Hyderabad. Some of the corporate jobs at Westend Clothing are marketing analyst, executive assistant, designer, sales representative, customer service specialist, purchase manager, research scientist, and accountant. The company values integrity, relationships, innovation, and change. Its mission statement emphasizes the importance of putting customer first:

"At Westend Clothing, we strive to be the number-one provider of high-quality, high-performance designer fabrics. We believe in always putting the customer first, valuing our employees, and maintaining the highest ethical standards."

As Westend Clothing has grown, it has also begun to experience a problem of turnover. Last year the turnover rate was 45%. The turnover rate for comparable organizations in its location and industry is less than 20%.

The selection process at Westend Clothing has not changed from the time the company was started until now. Basically, the HR department prepares and posts an advertisement for whatever job is available, collects the applications and resumes, calls applicants of interest, and has them come in for a one-hour interview, followed by an interview with the supervisor of the position, regardless of the job.

a) Assume you are the HR manager at Westend Clothing and you are presently hiring for the position of a customer service specialist to be located at Mumbai. Would you hire for 'person-job fit' OR 'person-organization fit'? Explain.

b) In view of the mission statement of the firm, how would you assess 'customer orientation' of a potential candidate through an interview?

(5+5)

Q4. On January 8 and 9, 2019, 200 million workers went on a two-day nationwide strike in India. The strike was against a proposal to limit the formation and powers of trade unions, as well as for a minimum wage of Rs. 18,000 and the protection of the public sector. The strike was called for by 10 of the largest central trade union organizations in the country. These are national union federations, which represent most of the organized labour in the country. Many of them are associated with different political parties.

The immediate trigger of the strike was the Trade Unions Amendment Bill, 2018, proposed by the central government in August 2018. While the Bill proposes to give statutory recognition to labour unions from both the State and central government, it also seeks to give the respective governments wide-ranging discretionary powers in making that decision. The Bill also gives no standard criteria for this recognition. This goes against the established practices as agreed upon in tripartite (employer, employee and government) consultations in the past. This also threatens the scope for workers' organization in India. The proposal of the Bill prompted the 10 unions to jointly declare the national strike on September 28, 2018.

But on a larger scale, the trade unions have put forward a charter of demands before the government as part of their strike. The demands range from raising the monthly minimum wage to Rs. 18,000, and securing and protecting the public sector to matters of price rise and food security. The charter specifically includes preventing foreign or private involvement in some of the key public sector enterprises in the country, including defence, manufacturing, railways and other public transport, and banking and finance. They have also targeted proposals by the government to amend or alter the existing laws on labour rights and trade unions. Many of these proposals aim to make conditions "easier" for businesses.

In a press conference held on January 7, leaders of the 10 trade unions highlighted the government's attitude towards unions in general. The strike was announced in September, but the government did not reach out to the unions for negotiations. In fact, the government sidelining the unions is a long-standing problem. The relationship between the government and trade unions has become increasingly competitive and acrimonious.

Discuss the role of Trade Union, management and the State in the maintenance of Industrial Relations harmony? In what ways has the relationship between the three changed over the years and why? (10)

<p style="text-align:center">[OR]</p>

One of your employees has come to you with a written statement indicating that his work hours are not fair. The employee is a member of a recognized union in your company.

Is it an instance of Complaint or Grievance? Explain. How you would handle the situation. How can HR managers contribute towards the reduction of total number of grievances filed by workers each year? (10)

Q5. **Citing suitable examples, discuss any TWO of the following;**
   a) Balanced Scorecard as a tool to implement organizational strategy.
   b) Significance of orientation and socialisation for an employee starting out on a career.
   c) HR challenges of 'Downsizing' to manage employee costs and strategies to manage these challenges.
   d) Role of equity in compensation structuring.
   e) Common selection errors

<p style="text-align:right">(5+5)</p>