WJEC BUSINESS STUDIES A LEVEL RESOURCES.

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Recruitment, selection, training and appraisal.

Recruitment and training.

Vacancies can arise for a number of reasons. These include; expansion, retirement of existing workers, need for new skills, workers leaving for a new job elsewhere or because of promotion or temporary reasons such as maternity leave. Whatever the reason large businesses have a number of options in regard to recruitment of replacements. These can be divided into internal and external methods.

For small businesses recruitment is often a simple process. Managers and business owners often understand in detail what tasks are involved in a job and will know the type of person required to perform the job well. Finding someone to fill a vacancy can also often be relatively simple, with word of mouth or the job centre sufficient to find suitable applicants.

The Formal Recruitment Process

For large businesses there is a more formal recruitment process that needs to be followed. Every job should have some form of job description, this explains the tasks involved in the job, the job title, responsibilities attached to the job, place of work, and employment conditions (holidays, salary etc.). Job descriptions need to be updated regularly, as jobs often evolve, as those doing the job become more experienced and skilled.

The second stage in the recruitment process, after updating or preparation of a job description, is the preparation of a Job Specification, this describes the skills, knowledge and experience needed to complete the job.

So it will detail educational requirements, experience and skills needed, perhaps physical attributes (e.g. for fireman) and important aspects of personality required.

Once Job Description and Job Specification have been prepared the company can start to look for the right candidate.

Large businesses and internal methods of recruitment.

This method involves finding someone already employed by an organisation to fill a vacancy. This has several advantages. These include the fact that the applicants will already known the company and its methods of working and are therefore likely to settle into the job a great deal easier than external candidates. Also the cost of recruitment is reduced, they will be no need for external advertisements and all the administrative costs and time involved in dealing with applications. A third benefit is that internal recruitment will increase motivation of the workforce. There are though problems with using internal recruitment. Firstly there will be limited range of applicants and there will be reduced the potential of finding new talent and less input of new ideas and methods of working. Also as one person is promoted then another vacancy is created.

External recruitment methods.

There are a wide variety of methods firms can use to find suitable candidates. The actual method or methods used will depend upon the type of vacancy and the number of vacancies available. For skilled and professional workers

then it may be appropriate to use recruitment agencies that are specialised in finding specific workers for specific tasks. Headhunters can be used when senior management positions arise. Headhunters will use their knowledge of the employment market to find suitable candidates. For semi-skilled workers advertisements in local and national newspapers may be appropriate. The job centre can be used for administrative and unskilled workers. Where people are needed to enter management training programmes often the must suitable method for finding a good pool of candidates is to use recruitment programmes at universities.

Many of these recruitment methods are expensive but can help ensure that the right candidates are found.

Application is a normally made through the use of application form often backed by a letter of application and a C.V. If will be the role of the personnel department to initially sort through the applications and to produce a shortlist for interview.

Interviews often best carried out by a panel consisting of a specialist personnel manager, a manager from the department the person is applying to and an independent member. This would allow an all-round picture of the candidate be arrived at. The actual choice of candidates may not just depend on interview but the application process can also contain tests for personality and aptitude.

Psychometric Testing .

A psychometric test is a way of assessing a person's ability or personality in a measured and structured way. There are 3 main types of tests: ability, personality and interest (although both personality and interest are more like psychometric questionnaires). This type of test is used by employers to help them in their recruitment process while other tests are used by universities to help select candidates for courses such as medicine and law.

It is common for graduate employers to use psychometric tests as part of their selection process. Organisations believe tests help them recruit the right people with the right mix of abilities and personal qualities. They are also useful for "sifting out" large number of applicants at an early stage and so saving the employers both time and money.

Once candidates have been selected and before they formally start their job of work they should go through an induction process. Induction involves introducing a new employee to the workplace, to the administrative systems of the employer such as holiday arrangements, introduce the new employee to work mates and direct line management. The objective of induction is to familiarise new employees with their place of employment and to make them feel more comfortable in their new employment.   A successful induction programme will motivate staff and reduce the risk of staff leaving an early stage.

Staff Appraisal

Built into the principle of effective Human Resource Management is the idea that staff should be regularly appraised by their direct line manager. This means there will be regular meetings, once every 6 months or on an annual basis, in which the staff members' performance is analysed, normally against performance targets. So an employee may be

judged on tasks completed, number of complaints, performance of subordinates, management of budget and so on. As well as these measures of performance, training needs are discussed and career prospects examined. Within the staff appraisal interview, bonus earnings may also be set.

The Staff Appraisal system does have both supporters and critics.

The supporters argue that staff appraisal motivates, allows the setting of achievable targets, allows those who understand the job, (that is the line managers), to give a value to the work done and allows achievable bonuses to be earned.

Critics argue that the staff appraisal system establishes tensions in the workplace (is his bonus bigger than mine?), workers are often put under tremendous pressure to keep improving performance, and it places too much power in the hands of line managers who may be ill-equipped to use the system effectively or alternatively abuse the power the system gives them. Also managers can have conflicting roles. At one time supporter and developer of staff, at another times responsible for reprimanding and punishing staff.

The success of staff appraisal in the workplace also depends on staff problems that are highlighted, being acted upon - if problems are not followed up, and feedback provided, demotivation can quickly occur.

To be successful appraisal systems must be based on clear criteria for appraisal (set, agreed and understood targets), managers must be trained to solve problems that can arise as a result of poor performance being indicated in appraisals, and employees must be encouraged to fully participate in the system (talk about their problems, their own failings and discuss methods of resolving problems and improving performance).

Whatever the difficulties and the pro's and con's of appraisal, the system has gained wide spread acceptance, especially in service industries.

Notes.