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Introduction

The current rapidly changing global labour market is being transformed by technological innovation, demographic changes as well as geopolitical uncertainties as organisations aim to attract, administer, and develop talent. To multinational organisations like AstraZeneca, these changes have tremendous implications to HRM and international HRM strategies. This report is a critical analysis of the role of global trends in labour market analysing demographic and geopolitical pressures, organisational reaction to skills shortage and self-assessment of my personal preparedness to work in an international and technology-driven world.

Question-01: How are technological advancements (e.g., AI, automation, digital platforms) reshaping labour markets, and what implications does this have for HRM and IHRM strategies?

1. The Technological Changes Which are Reforming Labour Markets.

- I. **Automations and AI changing the form of jobs:** The manual and routine work is being substituted by AI-based systems and robotics, leaving a paradigm shift of high-skilled analytical, digital, and STEM-oriented jobs (ILO, 2023).
- II. **Increased need of digital skills:** Labour markets are now prioritising data science, machine learning, cybersecurity and biostatistics skills and especially in sectors that are driven by science (OECD, 2024).
- III. **Surging of digital platforms and remote working:** Online labour markets allow hiring globally, working remotely, and adapting their work schedules, eliminating geographical limits to talent (De Stefano, 2023).
- IV. **Skill polarisation:** Higher-level skill jobs become bigger, whereas middle-skill repetitive jobs get smaller, compelling workers to constantly upgrade their skills to keep speeding up (World Economic Forum, 2024).
- V. **Greater dependency on virtual learning ecosystems:** Organisations are training talent fast and in large numbers with the help of e-learning, digital academies and AI-personalised training (CIPD, 2023).

2. Implications for HRM and IHRM Strategies at AstraZeneca

i. Digital capability strategic workforce planning:

- ❖ The key areas that AstraZeneca will need to predict the possibility of future skills are AI-driven drug discovery, digital therapeutics, and advanced biomanufacturing (AstraZeneca, 2024).
- ❖ HRM needs predictive analytics that will predict talent deficits and develop tailored reskilling programmes.

ii. Online revolution in recruitment and selection:

- ❖ Artificial intelligence (AI) applications can allow AstraZeneca to philtre the global applicant pool effectively, minimise bias, and focus on niche scientific talent (Upadhyay and Khandelwal, 2019).
- ❖ The international HRM (IHRM) needs to integrate recruitment in several labour markets that have different levels of talent supply.

iii. The improved sourcing of global talents using digital platforms:

- ❖ AstraZeneca is becoming more dependent on online recruiting solutions and online virtual career fairs to tap into niche talent in bioinformatics and data science across the world (AstraZeneca, 2024).
- ❖ IHRM needs to respond to the global differences in digital labour laws and international labour laws.

iv. Constant learning and reskilling IRPs:

- ❖ The rapidly developing technologies compel AstraZeneca to invest in the development of digital training courses, including its Digital Health R&D Academy, in order to reskill researchers and clinical personnel (AstraZeneca, 2024).
- ❖ HRM needs to incorporate lifelong learning using blended digital and personalised training using AI (Noe, 2020).

v. Managing a globalised and hybrid workforce:

- ❖ Through remote collaboration, digital systems enable the teams of AstraZeneca to work in the UK, Sweden, India, and the US without issues (AstraZeneca, 2023).
- ❖ IHRM should deal with cross-cultural management, international performance systems, digital wellbeing, and international labour compliance.

Question-2: What are the key demographic and geopolitical factors influencing employment markets today, and how do they create challenges for HR professionals?

The current labour markets are shifting under the influence of the potent demographic and geopolitical forces leaving the professionals of HR in the state of a great challenge, especially in the multinational organisation like AstraZeneca. The ageing of population in most developed economies is one of the greatest demographic trends.

i. Population ageing and falling labour force.

- ❖ The OECD economies are also facing a reduction in the number of working-age individuals and it is projected to decrease by 8 percent by 2060 (OECD, 2025a).
- ❖ In the case of AstraZeneca, it implies that the company has fewer domestic applicants to fill specialised scientific and R&D positions, which makes the recruitment of skilled labour even more competitive (OECD, 2025b).

ii. Increasing labour market pressure and old-age dependency.

- ❖ Old age dependency ratio will grow at a very high rate which will put pressure on the fiscal area and workforce around the world (OECD, 2025b).
- ❖ The HR teams need to change and embrace flexible working, retain the older employees and invest in lifelong learning strategies.

iii. Talent source is international migration.

- ❖ Several developed economies are relying more on migrant labour to address skills shortages, especially in science and medical care (WEF, 2025).
- ❖ AstraZeneca needs to consolidate the global mobility systems, expatriate support and immigration compliance in the IHRM.

iv. Political instability and regulatory fragmentation.

- ❖ Planning of labour is uncertain due to political tensions, differing regulations and changing industrial policy (Reuters, 2025).
- ❖ The CEO of AstraZeneca has already cautioned that Europe will lose its health sovereignty, which may cause him to shift the R&D investment to other locations (Reuters, 2025).

v. Changes in destinations of investments in the world.

- ❖ The growing economies are turning out to be appealing destinations in the production of biotech and pharmaceuticals (WEF, 2025).
- ❖ HR departments have to deal with international recruitment, adherence to various labour regulations and homogeneous teams.

vi. Unstable economic and geopolitical cycles.

- ❖ The unpredictable global shocks may alter the labour demand in scientific, logistics, or clinical workforce, and the workforce needs to be adaptable (OECD, 2025a).
- ❖ HR is required to deploy agile workforce planning and forecasting based on scenarios.

Lastly, unpredictable labour demand is also caused by economic volatility and geopolitical shocks. AstraZeneca HR workers should thus embrace the agile workforce planning, scenario modelling as well as strategic forecasting to adjust to abrupt alterations in global markets (OECD, 2025a). On balance, changes in demographics and geopolitical forces necessitate the HR department of AstraZeneca to be more global, dynamic, and strategic in their international talent management.

Question-3: How can organisations address persistent skills gaps and talent shortages in critical sectors through strategic HRM?

The skills gaps and talent shortage in sectors like technology, health, biotechnology, and pharmaceutical which are highly needed in the global organisations have remained a major problem in the provision of workforce to various organisations. At

AstraZeneca, a corporation that deals with the borders of science research, digital healthcare, and international production, such shortages are especially acute. Strategic HRM therefore is very critical to the efforts of alleviating these constraints in the labour market.

i. Reskilling and continuous learning to build future ready skills.

- ❖ To acquire digital, scientific and leadership skills, organisations should invest in formal learning channels and internal academies (WEF, 2025).
- ❖ AstraZeneca is one of the companies that implements iLearn digital platform to facilitate scalable international learning and lessen dependence on recruitment (AstraZeneca, 2024).

ii. Enhance international talent lines.

- ❖ The hard-to-fill STEM roles are taken care of through partnerships with universities, research institutes and early-career talent programmes (CIPD, 2023).
- ❖ Early Talent and Graduate Programme at AstraZeneca is aimed at hiring scientists and digital specialists around the world (AstraZeneca, 2024).

iii. Capitalise on technology and talent analytics.

- ❖ Workforce analytics is an AI-based system that can forecast skill shortages in the future and develop specific interventions (Deloitte, 2024).
- ❖ This will increase the capabilities of mapping scientific and digital expertise requirements in AstraZeneca by country.

iv. Implement inclusive recruiting and different sourcing practises.

- ❖ Inclusive recruiting increases the reach to the underrepresented population, which assists organisations to broaden the pool of talent (CIPD, 2023).
- ❖ The DEI policy at AstraZeneca facilitates hiring of personnel in the emerging markets, to occupy clinical and digital positions.

v. Improve value proposition (EVP) to employees.

- ❖ Talent attraction and retention in competitive areas are encouraged by competitive compensation, hybrid work, career development, and wellbeing programmes (SHRM, 2024).
- ❖ The emphasis of AstraZeneca on its flexible work and employee wellbeing presents it with competitiveness in the field of limited, scientific talent.

vi. Globalise movement and international talent exchange.

- ❖ Mobility programmes help solve shortages, where the talent is moved to high demand regions (Deloitte, 2024).
- ❖ AstraZeneca has programmes of international assignments that assist in putting their specialists in R and D centres in UK, Sweden, and US.

vii. Enhance talent development leadership capability.

- ❖ The line managers are required to be capability builders, so that learning and coaching can bridge the skill gaps (Ulrich et al., 2022).

Lastly, global mobility and exchange of talent is still a potent tool. The cross-border movement of talent will help organisations to quickly address deficits in location of priority (Deloitte, 2024). Through its international assignment programmes, AstraZeneca can easily transfer its R&D specialists between its centres in Cambridge (UK), Gothenburg (Sweden), and Gaithersburg (US) and deploy expertise in order to efficiently exploit it.

4. Global Readiness: A Reflection on My Capabilities for the Evolving Workplace

Reflective Report on My Abilities to work in an International Environment.

To succeed in a globalised and technology-based work environment, one needs to be technologically, cross-culturally, collaboratively, and leadership-conscious, as well as self-directed in learning. Such organisations like AstraZeneca are focusing on these competencies due to the fact that their operations are present in over 100 countries, the level of competitiveness is maintained through digitally empowered teamwork, cross-border scientific teamwork, and lifetime learning (AstraZeneca,

2024). This reflective report will assess my current strengths and weaknesses in five main areas such as technology, communication, teamwork, leadership and self-directed learning and the way I will use my strengths and work on the areas that need some improvement. I rely on the evidence which is based on my coursework activities, group projects, and past working experiences.

1. Technology Capability

Strengths:

❖ Expertise in online resources.

During my studies this term, I have acquired a good command of using digital platforms like Microsoft Teams, Zoom, GWorkspace, learning management systems, and information-handling platforms. This was vital in group works and online workshops.

❖ Flexibility to innovative technologies.

I am fast learner of new software- evidenced by the fact that I managed to use Canva and PowerPoint to generate professional visual presentations successfully during HRM modules.

Such strengths can be linked to the fact that AstraZeneca focuses on the digitally proficient workforce, especially in selecting the fields of data analysis, decision making based on artificial intelligence, and global virtual teamwork (AstraZeneca, 2024)..

Weaknesses:

❖ Weak developed data analytics capability.

Although I am not averse to simple digital tools, my technical skills in more sophisticated analytic systems like Power BI, Tableau, or data modelling software are still in progress.

❖ Requirement of further insight on AI in HRM.

Since AI is now the focus of HR and organisational decision-making (WEF, 2025), I realise that I need to enhance my knowledge of automation tools and HR analytics.

Improvement Plan

- ❖ Take short courses about data visualisation and HR analytics (Coursera, LinkedIn Learning).
- ❖ Consult the free online materials of AstraZeneca in relation to digital health and data ethics.

2. Communication Skills

Strengths:

- ❖ **Effective written communication.**

This term involved assignments where I had to write analytically and synthesise research findings, which is why I developed better academic and professional writing.

- ❖ **Cross-cultural communication.**

Group assignments also helped me to be more culturally aware and sensitive working with international people which is mandatory in global companies (Hofstede, 2011).

Weaknesses:

- ❖ **Public speaking confidence**

I am not a bad writer, but there are instances when I am nervous when doing oral presentations.

- ❖ **Dealing with cultural conflicts in multicultural teams.**

Sometimes, cultural disparities brought communication gaps during group work- e.g. disparities in deadline expectations or discussion styles.

Improvement Plan

- ❖ Become more active in discussing the seminars in order to gain confidence.
- ❖ Train the formal presentation techniques like the PREP model (Point, Reason, Example, Point).
- ❖ Study the intercultural communication models.

3. Teamwork Capability

Strengths:

❖ Collaborative mindset

Our group HRM project involved me to coordinate research sections and this enhanced the efficiency of the team.

❖ Admiration to different views.

Collaborating with students of other nations taught me to appreciate the importance of different perspectives, which is essential in an organisation such as AstraZeneca where cross-border teams are a frequent practise (CIPD, 2023).

Weaknesses:

❖ Some occasional lack of delegation.

Sometimes I like to do things by myself so that they will be of quality. This may decrease the efficiency of the team and bring about unnecessary stress.

❖ Managing conflict

During conflicts, I am likely to shun conflict, and this may postpone the actions.

Improvement Plan

❖ Implement shared solutions like Trello or Teams Planner to share duties more effectively.

❖ Model positive feedback strategies and conflict-resolution models.

4. Leadership Capability

Strengths:

❖ Situational awareness

In group work, I was an instinctive coordinator and assisted in the making of schedules and the arrangement of meetings.

❖ Proper moral and non-discriminatory attitude.

I embrace fairness and inclusiveness, which is in line with AstraZeneca leadership expectations, that focus on trust, empowerment, and respect (AstraZeneca, 2024).

Weaknesses:

- ❖ **Minimal experience on formal leadership.**

Even though I portray informal leadership, I am yet to assume many formal leadership roles.

- ❖ **Should be able to make decisions in stressful situations.**

Sometimes I am indecisive when it is necessary to make decisions fast, in particular, when the information is not complete.

Improvement Plan:

Request minor leadership positions in group work or college societies.

Use decision-making models like SWOT or the cost-benefit analysis.

Read leadership books and the publicly viewable leadership framework at AstraZeneca.

5. Self-Directed Learning

Strengths

- ❖ **High motivation towards improved performance.**

I am active in the feedback review and conduct research and clarity inquiry throughout the classes.

- ❖ **Goal-setting ability**

My academic and career goals are clear, which contributes to organising my learning activities.

Weaknesses

- ❖ **The issue of procrastination under heavy workloads.**

Prioritisation is hard when there are several deadlines that have to be met.

- ❖ **Limited reflection time**

Informal reflection is true of me, but I do not write down reflections often.

Improvement Plan

- ❖ Apply reflection models e.g., Gibbs Reflective Cycle (Gibbs, 1988).

- ❖ Develop learning plans and tracking documents weekly.

In general, my existing skills allow me to work in an international organisation like AstraZeneca. My digital literacy, communication, and teamwork skills are my strengths that match the global HR expectations. Nevertheless, I still need to attain leadership confidence, high-level digital skills, and systematic self-directed learning. Having established systematic strategies of development, I will be in a better position to succeed in an agile global work environment.

Conclusion

Overall, to close the enduring skills gaps and talent shortages, organisations such as AstraZeneca need to embrace a comprehensive and progressive strategic HRM method. Investing in lifelong learning, enhancing employer branding, and building agile workforce planning will help companies to obtain a sustainable supply of qualified talent. Digital capability building and inclusive leadership coupled with strategic partnerships also guarantee competitiveness in the long term. Finally, eliminating the skills gaps is not a solo project but a continuous process that would help organisations to be resilient, innovative, and ready to face the new challenges in the workforce.

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Appendix

Empowering People. Driving
Performance. Inspiring Growth.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Presented By
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Enhancing Workforce Capability Through Strategic Learning at AstraZeneca



- ❖ AstraZeneca fosters lifelong learning culture to make employees flexible and future-focused (AstraZeneca, 2025).
- ❖ The 3Es learning model that the organisation employs to foster various development requirements is Education, Exposure, Experience (HR Grapevine, 2024).
- ❖ Digital learning is accessible to employees all over the world, via an integrated platform like Degreed which assists them to develop at their own pace (Degreed, 2023).
- ❖ Significant emphasis on digital and AI-related upskilling to make workforce resilient to the future and increase scientific capacity (AstraZeneca, 2025).

Presentation Overview

- This presentation will review the training and development practises at AstraZeneca and how they will help them create a qualified workforce that is prepared to face the future (AstraZeneca, 2025).
- It analyses the contributions of line managers towards learning, building capabilities and growth of performance (CIPD, 2023).
- The discussion emphasises the fact that L&D initiatives correspond to the strategic objectives of AstraZeneca, such as innovation, scientific excellence, and digital transformation (AstraZeneca Annual Report, 2024).
- The most important HR issues in international training delivery are digital proficiency gap, executive capacity, and international uniformity, which are examined critically (Ulrich et al., 2022).
- Finally, the presentation will end with some practical recommendations that will help to enhance the performance of L&D and performance of the organisation (Noe, 2020).



Current Training & Development Practices?

- AstraZeneca also advocates the culture of lifelong learning so that the employees could constantly acquire scientific, digital, and leadership skills (AstraZeneca, 2025).
- The 3Es learning model - Education, Exposure, Experience - is the model used by the organisation to provide structured and diversified development pathways (HR Grapevine, 2024).
- The training is provided on a global basis to employees using an integrated digital learning ecosystem, which allows learning to be self-paced and on-demand (Degreed, 2023).
- AstraZeneca operates organised graduate, apprenticeship, and early-talent programmes, such as rotational development in functions all over the world (AstraZeneca Early Careers, 2024).
- Recently, the company has increased AI and digital-skills upskilling programmes to make it ready to new technologies in science and operations (AstraZeneca, 2025).

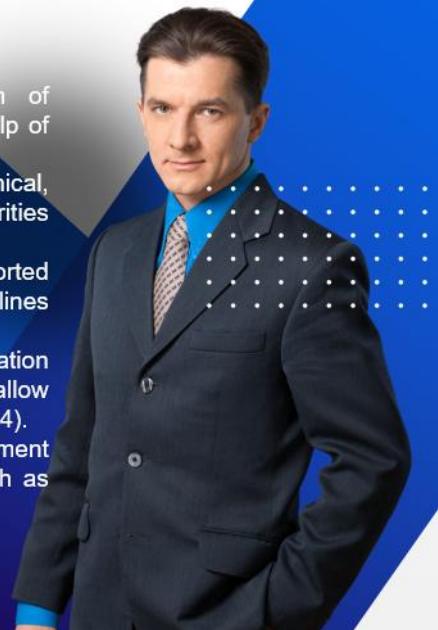
Role of Line Managers

- ❖ Line managers also serve as learning facilitators, and they are able to diagnose the skills gaps of employees and assist them in elaborated development strategies (CIPD, 2023).
- ❖ They offer coaching, feedback, and mentoring and assist the employees to put learning into practise in real work situations (Noe, 2020).
- ❖ Managers can contribute significantly to fostering an interest in the participation of AstraZeneca in digital learning platforms and 3Es development model (HR Grapevine, 2024).
- ❖ They also make sure that training is strategic and team-oriented, which supports strategic capability development (Ulrich et al., 2022).
- ❖ The line managers observe the progress of the performance following the training and support the on-the-job implementation of the new skills (AstraZeneca, 2024).



Strategic Alignment with Business Goals

- ❖ The L&D activities are planned to assist the mission of AstraZeneca in providing life-changing medicines with the help of innovation (AstraZeneca, 2024).
- ❖ The training programmes develop essential scientific, technical, and digital capabilities, which are in line with the business priorities (AstraZeneca, 2025).
- ❖ The leadership capability and succession planning are supported by learning strategies, which guarantee sustainable talent pipelines (Ulrich et al., 2022).
- ❖ Agile workforce worldwide and 3Es model The online education and models of 3Es can support the process of agility and allow uniformity of standards in different regions (HR Grapevine, 2024).
- ❖ Strategic alignment is used to make sure that development activities are translated into quantifiable business value, such as innovation deliverables and performance change (Noe, 2020).



Key HR Challenges in Training & Development

Going global with learning

Providing equitable opportunities and adoption in different regions and teams.

Evaluating the effectiveness of learning

It is difficult to associate training attendance with business performance and ROI.

Quick retraining on new technologies

Rapidly digital and AI-skilling workers without compromising regulatory measures.

Manager capability constraints

Line managers might not have the time or the ability to coach efficiently and facilitate learning through on-the-job.

Practical Recommendations

- **Adopt an L&D ROI scheme:** Measure the results of learning to determine business results (Noe, 2020).
- **Mixed international-local delivery:** Hybridise central digital learning with culturally and regulations-aneed locally-specific cohorts (AstraZeneca, 2025).
- **Manager enablement programmes:** Short coaching and development accreditation in enhancing line manager capability in facilitating learning (CIPD, 2023).
- **AI and digital upskilling routes:** Modular role-based courses and practical labs and mentoring to futureproof workforce skills (AstraZeneca, 2025).
- **Talent mobility dashboard:** Monitor rotations, skill development, and internal movement to demonstrate the development progress and retention impact (Ulrich et al., 2022).

Conclusion

The Training and Development programmes of AstraZeneca are important in capability building of the working force, innovation, and to sustain the strategic goals of the company. The organisation can promote lifelong learning and apply the 3Es model (Education, Exposure, Experience) to make sure that employees constantly acquire the skills necessary to address the changing scientific and business needs (AstraZeneca, 2025; HR Grapevine, 2024). Altogether, the development of the culture of learning will place AstraZeneca in a better position to be agile, competitive, and ready to address future healthcare and technological challenges (AstraZeneca Annual Report, 2024).



THANK YOU



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