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Activity 1-4

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Student Name: Melanie Goldsworthy

Student Number: 1905548

CIPD Membership Number: 55478711

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Signed: MGoldsworthy

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Resourcing and Talent Planning – Understanding

1.1 Describe key contemporary labour market trends.

The *labor market* is a term used to describe the supply and demand of labor; employees provide the supply and employers provide the demand. The labor market is also known as the *job market* and is a major component in any economy. Depending on the state of the labor market there may be too many available jobs and not enough people to fill them, or there may be too many people who need jobs and not enough work (Kenton, 2020).

Recently, and mainly due to the corona-virus pandemic, the labor markets have changed in many countries including the UK. Business that are surviving are those who can work remotely or are considered 'essential' such as supermarkets where business like hospitality and tourism are suffering hugely at the loss of business. People who are less valuable to their company are losing their jobs as business can't afford to keep them and on the other side, there are jobs being created due to this 'new normal'. There has been less need for physical labor and more for intellectual labor due to restrictions. Also, the transition to automation for a lot of organizations has needed to happen sooner than expected (Trends in the Labour Market 2020-2021, 2020).

Labor market trends for the UK have changed significantly since the start of COVID-19 with 693,000 less payroll employees since the start of the pandemic; 60% of these people are in the under 25s age group, although there has been a small rise since February 2021. Other key trends in the UK are:

- The UK employment rate, in the three months to January 2021, was estimated at 75.0%, 1.5 percentage points lower than a year earlier and unemployment rates, in the same time period was estimated at 5.0%, 1.1 percentage points higher than a year earlier.
- The economic inactivity rate was estimated at 21.0%, 0.6 percentage points higher than a year earlier and the redundancy rate was estimated at 11.0 people per thousand employees.
- There were an estimated 601,000 vacancies in the UK in December 2020 to February 2021; this is 220,000 less than a year ago and the rate of increase in vacancies has slowed strongly in recent months.
- Growth in average total pay (including bonuses) among employees for the three months November 2020 to January 2021 increased to 4.8%, and growth in regular pay (excluding bonuses) increased to 4.2%.

In summary, although the UK labor market is not particularly good at this time due to the pandemic, it is improving and will hopefully continue to improve (Labour market overview, UK - Office for National Statistics, 2021).

In New Zealand, annual wage inflation declined to 1.6 percent in the fourth quarter of 2020 from 1.9 percent in the prior period but above market expectations of 1.5 percent. Public sector wages advanced 2.0 percent, down from a 2.6 percent gain in the previous quarter; and private sector wages rose 1.5 percent, slowing down from 1.6 percent last quarter. Wages increased by 0.4 percent on a quarterly basis, from a 0.6 percent rise in the prior period. (New Zealand Labour Costs | 1992-2020 Data | 2021-2023 Forecast | Calendar | Historical, 2021).

The 34-day series indicated that for the latest week, the week ended 28 February 2021, the number of paid jobs (compared with the previous week) was:

- 2,251,150 total paid jobs - up 10,810 or 0.48 percent
- 107,570 paid jobs in primary industries - down 470 or 0.44 percent
- 427,570 paid jobs in goods-producing industries - up 480 or 0.11 percent
- 1,657,990 in services industries - up 10,080 or 0.61 percent
- 58,030 in unclassified industries - up 730 or 1.27 percent

The median income compared with the previous week was:

- \$1,076.92 - up \$0.85 or 0.08 percent (Employment indicators: Weekly as at 5 April 2021 | Stats NZ, 2021).

This data also generally shows an increase in paid jobs with higher wages as the labour market improves.

1.2 Describe the principles of effective workforce planning and tools used to carry it out.

Workforce planning can be one of the most effective activities organizations can engage in and modern approaches are informed by management information systems such as PESTLE. Workforce planning includes analyzing the current workforce to understand what the future workforce needs are and implementing solutions so that the organization can achieve its mission, goals and strategic plan. Workforce planning can be useful to see future obstacles or unachievable targets internally or externally and give the organization time to minimize the risks and damage of these events.

Workforce planning can:

- Reduce labor costs
- Identify and respond to changing customer needs
- Identify relevant strategies for focused people development
- Target inefficiencies
- Enhance employee retention
- Enhance productivity
- Enhance employees' work-life balance
- Make recommendations to deliver strategic value through talent

This will implicate HR practices such as:

- Organizational design and development
- Succession planning
- Flexible work and well-being initiatives
- Recruitment and selection processes
- Talent management
- Employee retention planning
- Job design
- Career planning
- Learning and development focus
- Reward and recognition

To ensure that implementation of workforce planning initiatives are successful and organization must:

- Generate consensus on the plan
- Ensure clear allocation and understanding of the responsibilities
- Provide support for managers
- Review and capture learning
- Ensure data is kept over time

(Workforce Planning | Factsheets | CIPD, 2020).

To ensure your workforce planning initiative is in line with organizational strategy, the strategy documents should include an executive summary that presents strategic objectives and key programs for the upcoming year; internal analysis on organizations competencies, capabilities, and satisfaction of employees; an external analysis of the organizations customers, products, and competition; strategic objectives list that includes the organizations GAP analysis results, KPI's, success factors, high-level business objectives; succession planning documents that explains how things will look when change occurs.

Ways to monitor workforce planning initiatives are to analyze climate or culture surveys and human resources data such as turnover data and exit interview responses. As a matter of good practice organizations should ensure that their monitoring and evaluation activities are supported by relevant data collection, analysis, and measures (Taylor, 2020).

1.3 Explain how to develop basic people plans and succession plans.

A basic people plan is what it means specifically to the people element. The organization would define the skills that are required, when they are required and how many of them are required. A succession plan is where an organization identifies potential talent to fill a leadership or critical position in future so that it is not vacant for too long. This is usually in case the person in the position currently decides to leave or retire (Osing, n.d.).

These plans will include content such as how the organizational objectives link to the workforce, any recruitment needs and targets, if there is a need for re-organization or re-development of the workforce, succession planning, performance review arrangements, learning and development, costs, and monitoring of ROI (return on investment).

The first step of succession planning is to identify critical positions where successors will be needed. These can be individuals or a pool of people with set skills. Developing future leaders has to be aligned with organizational process and culture although, some more modern organizations who adopt an inclusive workforce approach to managing and developing talent will identify critical roles at all levels. It is critical for organizations to link their organizational objectives to their workforce so that the workforce can achieve the organizations goals. During this process it might be identified that there is a need to recruit skilled employees or to change the structure of a department, for example. Formal and informal learning and development processes and a focus on relevant management experience should also take place (Succession Planning | Factsheets | CIPD, 2020).

To find out if the plans efforts are working you need to perform assessments that will comprehensively evaluate the successors or pool of people's performance and qualifications. Use assessments to measure what the person/people have learned, how others feel about them, and how they have improved the company. The use of aggregate data to identify learning needs to inform the training and development efforts will also assist in understanding the costs and ROI of the plan (DeRosa, 2015).

Some costs to succession and people planning are:

Direct costs

- Severance packages
- Recruiting/executive search firm expenses
- Unplanned board meetings, with unexpected travel costs
- Time spent reviewing resumes, holding interviews, screening candidates, and discussing alternatives
- Premiums paid for unplanned and/or external hires
- Lawyers, consultants, public relations, etc.

Indirect costs

- Time and capacity lost while onboarding unprepared candidates
- Perceived instability within the organization
- Lower morale and disrupted team dynamics
- Costs of establishing new strategy and procedures
- Further turnover as employees leave for more stable organizations
- Loss of revenue and earnings

The costs of poor planning can be high but if it is done right the return on investment will outweigh the cost of well designed people and succession plans (A Good Succession Plan Saves Money | SIGMA Assessment Systems, n.d.).

2.1 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to attracting talent to the organisation.

Different approaches to attracting talent could include an emphasis on being flexible, utilizing social media recruiting, and an employee referral program, although there are many more approaches. Organizations usually use more than one of these approaches at a time and combine them to attract talent but for the purpose of this assignment I will assess these approaches as though they are being used alone.

One approach to attracting talent to an organization is to emphasize flexible working; potential employees want to work somewhere where work pressures don't affect their personal lives. They will want work conditions that are usually balanced and shouldn't be monotonous all day and perks such as home working/flexible hours, open environment offices, and company/internal sports teams. A sense of rejuvenation and freedom is very crucial else it would become a traditional workplace of 9-5. In short, get away from the conventional working standards. Whilst this seems ideal there are some potential disadvantages to the employee and employer; flexible working can make it difficult to ensure the employees are carrying out their work and could lead to being less productive. It can also isolate people if they are working from home as they are less likely to see people unless it's via a Zoom call, for example. Also, flexible working doesn't suit all job types and there are some that could not offer the same 'advantages' as the other, for example, if one department in an organization is a function like Finance this type of working could work well but for another department such as Food & Beverage, this would not work as it is operational and there is less flexibility within operational departments for home working, open office environments and working set hours that allow the employee to take part in company sporting events (8 Recruitment Strategies to Attract the Best Talent, 2018).

Utilizing social media to 'head hunt' particular people with certain skills to apply for roles within your organization is a common way to attract talent. This type of approach can be very useful through building a strong reputation and connection through social media recruiting; it also helps by engaging with the target audience. The issues with this type of approach is that it can be very time consuming for the recruiter although the cost is initially low however, often there is a cost if the organization uses an external recruitment company to do this work (Nagy, n.d.).

An employee referral program can be a great way to attract talent whilst also keeping your employees happy and encouraging them to be brand ambassadors. The way this usually works is that the employee will refer a qualified/skilled friend and earn rewards such as money. The employee may earn a certain amount at their friend's application stage and then the rest of the reward once their friend had passed their probation period (Dwilson, 2019). The disadvantages are that if the employees 'friend' doesn't get recruited it could lead to hard feelings or it could be used dishonestly to gain money for the employee if their friend doesn't continue after their probation period or once their application was accepted. Another disadvantage is that to set up a referral program takes time and resources (Goetze, 2016).

After assessing these three approaches to attracting talent there are obvious benefits and disadvantages to each; consideration of which to use should be considered carefully and depend on your organization and the type of talent you are trying to attract. Referral programs might not work for high paid positions but be more suited to assistant positions, and using social media to 'head hunt' is more appropriate for higher paid roles than assistant roles due to the potential cost.

2.2 Assess the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches to retaining talent.

There can be multiple circumstances that affect employee retention within an organization; some are within the organizations control like benefits, recruitment process and, training and development. Other circumstances are out of the organizations control like how the line managers implement the above. One suggestion is to give line managers the task of improving retention and get them to report on it.

Another factor is 'push' and 'pull' factors. A 'push' factor is something that leads to an employee leaving the organization whilst a 'pull' factor is something that keeps the employee; examples of a push factor is being head-hunted or having a poor relationship with your manager, a pull factor could be the benefits the organization offers or development opportunities available to the employee (Thomas and Hatcher, 2018).

There are some different approaches to retaining talent that include engagement activities, reward strategies, talent management initiatives, flexible working and effective line management (Employee Turnover & Retention | Factsheets | CIPD, 2021). I have listed the pros and cons of some below:

Flexible working pros – the individual gets preferences to working days/times, helps to manage work-life balance, recruits best talent and encourages diversity.

Flexible working cons – can be difficult to manage or monitor work being carried if the employee is home working from a managers point of view; if the employee switches and changes shifts often it can become difficult to monitor the hours they are working; and, it can limit social contact with co-workers leading to lower wellbeing.

Generally flexible working is something most employees want however; the pros and cons need to be carefully considered to understand if it suits the individual and the employer and if it is something that could be in place short or long-term (Gaille, 2016).

Employee engagement activity pros – helps to increase motivation and keep the momentum of work going, can increase productivity of individuals or teams, and increases enthusiasm and commitment to work.

Employee engagement activity cons – doesn't necessarily improve productivity as there needs to be other elements present such as training and resources; and, diverse employees and different aged employees are engaged by different things so there is not a "one-size-fits-all" approach (Verma, 2015).

Employee engagement activities mean well but without proper consideration and the knowledge of your particular organization, it can be hard to get right. This however, isn't a reason not to implement them as lots of organizations do get it right and see good results (Nicholson, 2020).

Reward strategies pros – These can help to encourage employees to achieve goals and motivate them to go the extra mile, some rewards include gift vouchers and merchandise that allows the employee to chose their reward (Pros and cons of 5 different employee rewards - Employee Benefits, 2020).

Reward strategies cons – Some employees can become 'entitled' by ongoing reward schemes and expect higher rewards for doing their jobs; depending on the organization it may be easier or more difficult for employees in different departments to achieve goals around revenue to earn rewards for example, if one employee works in Sales it would be easier for them to earn rewards based on revenue than an employee in Health and Safety.

Whilst reward strategies a good idea for some organizations, if they are implemented poorly they are more likely to de-motivate employees than motivate them. However, if they are implemented well and encourage employees to achieve goals they can be very effective (Mayhew, 2017).

Many of these retention approaches can be used well or poorly and have effects based on how they are implemented. Line managers have a lot of power and effect when implementing strategies and schemes to improve retention so it makes sense to provide the line managers with the appropriate skills and information for them to achieve talent retention (Why Line Managers are Your Most Powerful Retention Tool, 2013).

3.1 Explain key aspects of good practice in relation to the development of job descriptions, person specifications and competency frameworks.

Job descriptions, person specifications and competency frameworks are all different but can be used as part of the recruitment process. A job description is used to advertise a position and provides an overview of the responsibilities and tasks required to perform a job. It also includes information about the position or organization and employers can use it to assess a current employee's job performance. A person specification outlines the qualities a successful candidate will possess and would be used as part of the criteria to evaluate applicants. The main difference between a job description and a person specification is that the job description lists specifics of a particular job and the person specification describes attributes of the ideal candidate for the position (Freeman, 2017).

A competency framework focuses on the tasks and skills that the candidate will need to have to be considered for the job. A competency framework will contain information on what the person should be able to do, what the organization considers being great at these tasks looks like and what the person should be able to do with the knowledge acquired. A competency framework gives the person the ability to know what is needed to be able to carry out their job (How to differentiate between a job description and a competency model — SkillDirector, 2018).

You will need to establish why you need to create/update a job description for a role for example, a restructure, shift in market place, continuous issues in a department or an employee requests a review. When creating or amending a job description it is good practice to ensure employees understand what is expected of them. A job description should be consistent with other similar job descriptions to ensure consistency and control risk for example; a supervisor role in one department has similar responsibilities of a supervisor in a different department to even if the day to day operation differs or the work is different. Stakeholders should also have input to review and update job descriptions when needed. Job descriptions must ensure you can easily identify and deal with any exceptions (O'Neil and Watts, 2014).

A person specification shouldn't be discriminatory and allow for diversity whilst being specific to the needs of the job. The listed skills need to be specific to allow the organization to employ the best person for the job. Considerations must be given to:

- Avoid using gender specific terms as this may insinuate that the person wanted for the role is of a specific gender
- Avoid using unnecessary or marginal requirements as this could exclude people with disabilities, for example
- Avoid using ageist language
- Ensure the knowledge required is clear and whether it needs to be demonstrated or awareness

When writing a person specification you can gather relevant sources of information from the current person in the role, the line manager, observing the person in the role, utilizing other related documents such as a job description or appraisal (What Is A Person Specification? | CrunchPoster, 2018).

A competency framework should only use measurable components and should include definitions or examples of each competency. It should include:

- Common competencies that relate to certain job levels. It should include specific competencies for the role level despite the roles being carried out differently, such as a manager of a Food and Beverage outlet versus a manager of HR.
- Leadership competencies that include skills or behaviors. These contribute to leadership performance and can help to identify and develop next the generation of leaders.
- Technical or job specific competencies that apply to certain roles. This will outline technical expertise needed and assess the depth and breadth of that skill and knowledge for example; an IT manager would need specific skills and knowledge
- 'Meta' competencies outline the competencies required in the future. These will be related to the recruitment of high-potential candidates who the organization wants to invest in to promote and develop into more senior positions within a specific timeframe (Competence & Competency Frameworks | Factsheets | CIPD, 2020).

3.2 Evaluate different methods of recruitment and selection.

There are many different types of recruitment and selection methods such as adverts, agencies, search consultants and websites. There are also different types of selection methods such as interviews, tests and assessment centers. There are different factors that contribute to their effectiveness and rules to follow to ensure you are not discriminating against protected characteristics (Check you're following discrimination law: Hiring someone - Acas, 2021).

-Advert pros – Helps to reach a wider range of people if used effectively

-Advert cons – If you only use social media to advertise a job you could miss out on applicants who don't use it.

If job adverts are used in a way that reaches a wide range of people they are more likely to be effective. If advert costs are high they may limit how many places you advertise the job, resulting in limiting the pool of potential candidates.

-Agencies pros – Less time consuming for the organization and they can advise on salaries based on the job market.

-Agencies cons – Can be very expensive and you wouldn't normally use them for lower level job vacancies. Agency's can be very useful when recruiting managers/directors or someone with a specific set of skills (if you haven't identified anyone internally). If you have the budget to use them this can save you a lot of time and effort but for lesser roles such as assistant they are not normally worth the cost (Phillpott, 2019).

-Websites pros – Websites such as LinkedIn can be a good way to advertise jobs as users are aware that the purpose is to show their work experience and professionalism

-Websites cons – This could be a discriminatory way of advertising and eliminate those who don't use the website.

Using websites is a good way to advertise your job vacancy but they may work better if they are used as well as another method to ensure it reaches a wider variety of candidates.

Different types of selection methods pros and cons are:

-Interview pros – Help to find out if someone is really right for the job.

-Interview cons – Can be time consuming and results based on personal preferences rather than factual ones. Interviews can work well if they are used objectively when interviewing. Two or more people should interview candidates to ensure the process is fair and that the candidates is not being discriminated against.

-Test pros – Can be useful for jobs that require complex thinking and are a way to assess candidates without being biased

-Test cons – Shouldn't be used solely to decide on a successful candidate and doesn't mean that by using these tests that you will employ the best candidate

Psychometric testing works well and can assist if you have a large pool of candidates for a position. Whilst these tests give results on the candidates that can be used to measure and narrow down the applicants, it shouldn't be used alone and doesn't mean that the person with the best score is necessarily the best person for the job.

-Assessment centre pros – Reflects the reality of the role for the candidate and the set tasks utilizes the person's behavioral and personality skills as well as cognitive assessments.

-Assessment centre cons – Can be time consuming to set up when defining scope and purpose of the roles involved including the delivery of the session, decision making and feedback.

Assessment centers are great for those who have the time and effort to ensure this process follows best practice as it reflects the reality of the role. However, this process can be time consuming to set up and involves considerations for multiple factors (Selection Methods | Factsheets | CIPD, 2020).

Generally each of these recruitment and selection methods has its pros but consideration needs to be given to other factors such as job market, the position you are trying to fill, costs, time constraints, and the type of person you want for the role (without discriminating) before you chose which method(s) to use (Thompson, 2018).

3.3 Explain key aspects of good practice in relation to dismissal, redundancy and retirement.

It is essential for organizations to carry out dismissals, redundancy and retirement processes in line with best practice to avoid tribunal hearings and unnecessary damage and costs to the organization.

When going through the disciplinary process that may lead to dismissal you need to:

- Formally notify the person of investigation and the reason why
- Investigate the issue using an independent person who is not involved with the issue
- If evidence shows that there is a case to answer the person will have the opportunity to respond to investigation findings and give their version of events
- Consider their version before concluding the investigation
- On concluding the investigation consider alternative solutions that don't result in dismissal such as re-deployment or a personal improvement plan (depending on what the reason for investigation is)
- If no other solutions are appropriate the person should be invited to a formal disciplinary hearing with at least 48hrs notice, allowed to be accompanied to the meeting by someone who is a trade union rep or another employee, and provided with all the relevant documents and investigation pack for them to prepare
- No decision is made until the disciplinary hearing has been held
- Hold the meeting somewhere there will be no disturbance and other employees can't hear/see
- Upon deciding to dismiss, the person should be given the opportunity to appeal and an outcome letter sent to them

If the process is followed correctly there will be no case for unfair dismissal however, if the process is unfair or not followed properly, even if the person is 'guilty' of gross misconduct for example, they can argue that the dismissal is unfair (Acas Code of Practice on disciplinary and grievance procedures | Acas, 2015).

Organizations should have a redundancy policy that includes the following process in this order to demonstrate best practice if it is used:

- Planning** – Organizations should avoid redundancies and consider alternative solutions such as recruitment freezes and pay freezes if necessary.
- Identify the pool for selection** – these needs to be those who carry out the similar work, who work has reduced or are in the same department.
- Seeking volunteers** – those who willingly volunteer for redundancy to avoid losing someone who would rather stay and avoid making compulsory redundancies.
- Consult employees** – employees have the right to be consulted and made aware of potential redundancies. If 20 or more employees are established to be made redundant collective consultations with recognized trade unions or elected representatives must start within a time scale of at least 30 days before the notification of redundancies for dismissals of 20-99 employees and, at least 45 days before the notification of redundancies for dismissal of 100 or more employees and collective consultations must be completed before notices of dismissal is given.
- Selection for redundancy** – if there are not enough people who take voluntary redundancy the employer will need to select those from the pool of candidates. A scoring criteria should be based on length of service; attendance records; disciplinary records; skills, competencies and qualifications; work experience and, performance records.
- Suitable alternative employment** – Employees should be given suitable alternative employment options where possible with a 4 week trial period. If the employee unreasonably refuses they may lose their redundancy entitlement pay however, if they accept but the employer or employee decide after 4 weeks that it is not suitable they will not lose their redundancy pay and revert to being redundant.
- Appeals and dismissals** – If the employee is made redundant the employee will receive written notice redundancy and have the opportunity to appeal the decision.
- Redundancy payment** – The redundancy payment will be based on things like their length of service and current salary and the amount will be either the statutory minimum notice or the contractual notice, whichever is the greater.
- Counseling and support** – Employees going through this process should be supported and offered appropriate support and counseling. Some organizations have an internal employee assistance program that can be

offered to those affected during the process and for some time after the process is completed (Redundancy | Factsheets | CIPD, 2020).

Often when employees chose to retire they don't necessarily know all of their options. Some options they can consider are to reduce their working hours, change of role and have less responsibility (Top 10 considerations for employees who are retiring in 2018 - Press Release Service, 2018).

The employer should notify the employee who is considering retirement of the other options and assist them to make the choice that best suit them and the business needs. If someone is planning to retire they may want to speak with someone like their manager or HR before they plan to retire to understand the process and things like how to access their pension funds. The employer should not take a conversation as formal notice and should receive written notice of retirement before formally completing the process. They may decide to retire and give notice to reduce their working hours leading up to their retirement in order to prepare. The retirement process can take place at any time during an employees' employment and is treated the same as resignation.

Information can be found in the relevant policy or through reliable resources such as ACAS and GOV.uk for employees considering retirement. Considerations should be given to whether the employee can financially support themselves if they retire as people are living longer than expected. Employers should be careful to ensure that during this process they do not discriminate against the person's age as this could lead to unfair dismissal through age discrimination (What is the correct procedure for handling employee retirement? | Peninsula UK, 2016).

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