

Qualification: CIPD Diploma in Applied Human Resources

Module Name: Using a Research Approach in HR

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Date: 17/11/19

The nature of research and the stages of the research process

The approach to research for any HR professional must be systematic and always evidence based. There needs to be some questions asked of your selection of research project before embarking on it. What is the rationale will it add value. Has alternative approaches been reviewed and looked at first. Has the subject matter been looked at before and if so what were the out-puts. Have a logical approach collate the why and how will it work. What numbers can you estimate that are relevant to reaching your decision to select your research project.

For research to be accurate the HR professional needs to ensure credible sources are used when researching, once an area of research has been identified. This may well be a business priority which requires research to be carried out to identify trends or improvements in processes or policies.

Horn (2009) highlights the methods are:

- “Burning desire” strategy - personal interest in an area
- Replication strategy - some previous research
- Practical problem strategy - area of research by key area of concern
- Convenient access strategy - selected because of access

Once a potential area of research has been identified it is important to start to review relevant data. It is important to understand the research which is already available in the same field.

There are different data types that are able to be used during research.

- Primary - new data
- Secondary - data already exists in reports or academic journals or other means via credible sources.

Horn (2012) “points out that primary data refers to information that has been collected for the study in which it is used. In contrast to, secondary data refers to information that has been included in or discovered through previous research projects or academic writing”.

- Qualitative - based around words and meanings
- Quantitative - collection and analysis of numbers

Anderson (2013) “points out that while quantitative data can show when things are or are not occurring, it is not as successful in finding out the reasons why. Qualitative data can be gathered from exit interviews as it gives specific detail as to why a person may have left the business.

Compare and contrast different approaches to research

Bryman and Bell (2015) “point out all final research must cover three basic criteria. As follows:

- Reliable - results are repeatable
- Replicable - able to replicate results in same method or in a different way
- Valid - conclusions are consistent with data collected

Anderson (2013) “points out four basic research strategies or designs that can be followed. Each one is suitable to different situations so there is no one option better than the other each design has its own part to play in different research situations.

- Cross-sectional - collection of data, standardised form from groups or individuals at a single point in time
- Case study - detailed investigation may be a single case or a small number of cases
- Action - Understand and promote change. Continual cycle of planning / action then observing
- Comparative - comparisons between groups and situations collection of data in different ways.

How research can be used in researching HR

Research can be used in many different ways in HR. It can identify trends and patterns to statistics along with driving required changes to policies and procedures within a business.

For Example: Retention of New Employees this is the topic which I have selected for my own project.

Research from an article on Personnel Today - Jo Faragher's research in (2017) demonstrated that more than half of all new employees 56% to be exact received incoherent training along with a lack of a structured induction plan and equipment when starting within their business.

This result clearly demonstrates the importance of the Induction Process during recruitment in to a new business making people feel valued.

This would result in a review of the recruitment process, induction process and probation policy to deliver a reduction in churn during the onboarding of new employees by introducing a 30, 60, 90 day plan to regularly meet with people which would make staff feel more valued.

The benefits to HR would be reduction in recruitment costs better engaged workforce and a higher level of skill base due to high length of service.

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