

Qualification: CIPD Diploma in Applied Human Resources Module

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Student Name: Sarah Chislett

Student Number: 1810599

CIPD Membership Number: 42778293

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Signed: Sarah Chislett Date: 20/04/2020

Q1. An employee is emigrating and asks you if the labour market trends of their destination country are the same as in the UK. Describe the key contemporary trends in both the UK labour market and in the labour market of any other country (of your choice).

Reviewing the labour market is important to consider whether the current market is a tight labour market or a loose labour market, a tight market is when there are more job opportunities than people seeking employment compared to a loose labour market when there are lots of people looking for employment and not many opportunities available (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.53). Looking into the current UK labour Market some key trends would include, Labour trend which has decreased slightly but remains strong, an increase in Healthcare, construction and in the voluntary sector. There seems to be a struggle to fill certain roles, showing that 64% of recruiters stating that some roles were proving hard to fill. Some of these roles include 53% with professional occupation, 16% with associate professional and technical occupations and 11% with managers and senior officials (CIPD, 2020).

It is worth while noting what employers have done to improve recruitment and retention, the biggest change is the investment in training, more apprenticeships, improved or implemented planning strategies and improved employee conditions (CIPD, 2020). By implementing these key changes, it links well with employee engagement CIPD states that employees who have good quality jobs and are managed well will be happier, healthier and more productive (CIPD, 2019).

When taking into account pay there have been certain factors behind employers decisions to give pay awards, more than four in ten employers think that a pay increase in the region of 2% will be implemented by December 2020 28% expect there to be a form of increase and 15% expect a pay freeze. The Factors which influence the decision 's for pay awards include inflation, recruitment and retention pressures, affordability and national living wage. It is believed that the basic pay growth for Private sector workers will be higher than Public sector workers (CIPD, 2020).

When comparing the UK labour Market with Spain there are 20 million more people who live in the UK compared to Spain, however Spain has over 80 Million Tourists per year. The Spanish economy is the fourth largest in the euro area and Fifth in the EU (European Commission, 2019).

There is an expectation that employment for full time workers will continue to rise with the creation of an additional 800,000 jobs to help unemployment rates. Currently Spain has the second highest unemployment rate within the EU. The Spanish business structure mainly consists of small business units and 8 out of 10 companies has 2 or fewer employees. The largest of the small enterprises are within the services sector and the bulk of large companies is in the industrial sector (European Commission, 2019).

There has been an increase in the number of active companies in Spain by 1.7% which has been the fourth increase after six consecutive years of decline. There is a high number of foreign workers who pay social security contributions, and over 2 million of them are EU workers from Romania, Italy and the UK (European Commission, 2019).

Spain has high unemployment rates in young people and workers over the age of 50. It also has many temporary workers (European Commission, 2019).

Q2. A new HR assistant asks you to explain the following aspects of workforce planning: 1 key principles of workforce planning 2 tools used in workforce planning 3 how to develop a basic people plan, including succession planning.

The CIPD describes workforce planning as a core business process to align changing organisational needs with people strategy (CIPD, 2019). Taylor and Woodhams describe workforce planning with 4 stages.

Forecast demand is the first stage of talent planning, understanding what tasks will need completing, how these can be separated into individual jobs remembering to think about full time, part time, flexible working and what would be the required skillset. Finding the answers and solutions for some of these questions may not be straight forward however there are certain things we can review to help. Systematic techniques such as looking at past trends to predict future trends, managerial Judgement based on experience and knowledge of doing a job well for a long period of time whether this is in a certain organisation or industry. Finally work back from the costs which allows an organisation to review future budgets and see how many staff they can afford. By using these techniques, we should be able to identify what jobs and how many employees and what skill set an organisation would need (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.58).

Forecasting supply is when we need to look at what we have currently with regards to people, wage costs, demographics across different areas of the organisation and absence levels. We then need to review their skillset either through reviewing training records, appraisals or consulting person specifications for their current roles. Once we have completed this task we then need to try and understand who is likely to still be working for the organisation in the future, to do this you can look at trends in resignations, who is approaching retirement are not forgetting lateral changes within organisations through natural progression (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.58)

When the information for supply and demand have been gathered, we can then start to look at a skills audit to understand the discrepancy between the both. Woodhams states that this can be done in three simple steps. The first step would be to create a competency framework for each of the common roles listing all the competencies needed for that role and indications of the level of skill needed. The second step would be to assess each current employee by using an audit form. CIPD stresses the importance of the relationship between line managers and their employees (CIPD, 2019) which is why they should be the ones to complete this audit. The Third step would be to summarise the results to identify which current skills they have available and what would match for the need of the future (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.59).

The final stage is addressing the gaps, this stage is split into two sections the first is to verify how the organisation can use its current resources to their advantage, this could include training people, moving people are the business, actively encourage the use of knowledge sharing using models such as OSCAR and GROW (Mindtools,2019). The second is to identify which external skills can be used, to be able to do this you will need to review the current labour market by looking at recruiting from further afield, working with other organisations for work experience schemes or to review the value outsourcing could bring to your organisation (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.59).

When you have considered the four stages to workforce planning there is often an activity that is completed alongside this known as succession planning. Woodhams states that succession planning is often interchangeable with talent planning (2016, pp.59), whilst CIPD describe succession planning as identifying and growing talent to fill leadership and business critical roles in the future (CIPD, 2020).

There are different approaches to succession planning, traditionally larger organisations ran a top down approach aiming to find internal for integral roles and mapping out their career this approach can be quite subjective, however due to the increasing speed things change, uncertain times and a flatter structure this type of approach has seen a decline (CIPD, 2020).

The Modern approach to succession planning is very different, there is less secrecy and more open communication, they would be a sophisticated selectin technique and it would be a more diverse approach and would have closer links to wider talent management practises (CIPD, 2020).

It is important to remember when considering talent planning that organisations should give all employees the same opportunities, to ensue this happens you should have good communication, opportunities for employees to express interest, Fairness in the selection process, regular appraisals for all employees, training audits and working with managers on the importance of equal opportunities to name a few (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.60). However, reviewing all these plans is what is going to make them successful.

Q3. Your Director asks for your thoughts on how the organisation can attract the talented people it requires and ensure that these people stay with the organisation. Explain different approaches an organisation can take to both attracting and retaining talent, and the strengths and weaknesses of each approach.

Woodhams states that when organisations develop resource strategies the key is to understand that it isn't operating in isolation, to be successful at this the organisation should be looking to attract the right people and differentiating the company from its competitor's (2016, pp.60). When considering talent within the organisation, it is important to consider the retention of talent already within your organisation as well as how to attract the talent the organisation needs.

Employee Branding is all about ensuring that your organisation is seen in the best possible way to encourage employees to come and work for you, CIPD describe this as ' A set of attributes and qualities often tangible, that makes an organisation distinctive, promises a particular kind of experience and appeals to people who will thrive and perform best in its culture' (CIPD, 2019). Employee brand should connect to organisations values, HR policies and people strategy allowing it to showcase the organisations values which in time will be a boost for employee engagement and retention of the great colleagues they could gain through the attraction process and should be evident from the recruitment process highlighting how they treat their people through inductions, performance management and reward this gives employees a real insight into the organisation (CIPD,2019). For employers it is imperative that they honestly reflect what they organisation is and does not promote itself with fake claims as this will only result in future attritions problems and a bad reputation for the organisation (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.62).

When an employee is looking for a job, they want to ensure that they are picking the best organisation to work for, competitor analysis is important to ensure that you are giving the best candidate experience there is. Some key things to consider would be salary, benefits, job security, job role, working environment and opportunities for training and development (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.61). There will not be a set approach for this as everyone's priorities are different which could be down to the five generations of workforce (Grensing-Pophal, 2018). For some people they will want to earn more money in the interim and not be concerned about the options of future development as they are confident they could move roles through other organisations whereas for others they will happily start off at a lower income as the thought of developing throughout that organisation is what their main goal is.

Organisational position within the labour market are based on two factors the first is reward, how much an organisation is willing to pay for an employee and the second is culture, the extent in which employees are treated ethically and respected within their organisation (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.61). These two approaches are sometimes known as an employer of cash and an employer of values. An employer of cash would pay people well but may not treat people very well, expecting them to work long hours and treat them harshly compared to an employer of value who would treat people well offering job security, rewards and the offer of progression but would not pay them very well this is sometimes used in the public or voluntary sectors but again it would be dependent on your own preference as to which employer you would wish to work for dependant on your personal situation. There is also the employer of churn who tends to treat people badly and pay them poorly often resulting in high turnover, so this is only normally sustained during a loose labour market. Finally, is the employer of choice this is when companies pay people well and treat people fairly, employers of choice are normally found in the tight labour market and often end up in the Sunday times '100 best companies to work for' (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.61) such as Churchill, Beaverbrook's, Toyota and Bravissimo (Sunday Times 100 Best Companies to Work For 2020).

When you have great talent within your organisation it is critical to know how to retain it, there are many reasons as to why people leave jobs, sometimes it is the attraction of a new role or the dissatisfaction they have from their current role such as lack of career opportunities. It is important to understand why people leave any organisation, however getting factual evidence is often tricky. Exit interviews are often the key way we capture employees thoughts on their organisation, role and manager however for this to be factual you should prevent the employees direct line manager completing this task as often employees won't be honest about their feeling and experiences through fear of ruining the relationship they have already built (CIPD, 2019). CIPD stated that using an external provider would allow this to be complete impartially however, there is then concerns around employees completing it if they do not have the same emotional respect for someone outside of the business. Any information that is accurate would be helpful in ensure you can change your approach if necessary, with remaining employees to ensure they don't become an attrition issue.

By analysing who is leaving your business you may be able to get a better control of how you manage retention. Reviewing who is leaving can help you understand if it is from a certain area of the organisation, a certain demographic or someone of seniority level all of which can be built into your retention plan (CIPD, 2019).

To retain people within an organisation you should consider some of the following during their selection process give them a realistic job preview, that way they know what they are signing up for. Ensure there is career development and progression options for people so they have room to grow and build a career, consult with employees allow them to feel engaged within the business and part of the bigger organisation, employee voice is very important across all work levels, be flexible allow people to build their own working hours, days this is one aspect that whilst if feasible is great but won't work for all areas in every business due to client and customer demands and finally treat people well, look after their wellbeing treat them as individuals and people not just numbers and the organisation will reap the rewards (CIPD, 2019).

Q4. In preparation for input at a managers meeting, summarise the following: 2 key aspects of good practice in relation to developing job descriptions, person specifications and*

competency frameworks • *different methods of recruitment and selection, and the strengths and weaknesses of each* • *good practice in relation to dismissal, redundancy and retirement.*

Woodhams states that Recruitment and selection tend to be used together when bringing new employees into a company (2016, pp.63). Recruitment normally comes from one of two options, either to fill a new role within the organisation or when an existing employee leaves the business. Within recruitment there are different routes to finding the best candidate for a role, it is important to think about what an organisation needs from the candidate but also what the candidate needs from the role. Employers have a legal responsibility with recruitment and selection under the Equality Act 2010 to ensure no unlawful discrimination takes place (CIPD, 2020)

Understanding about the role is important to ensure when hiring the most suitable person gets the job. There are many ways in which you can recruit for a job, internally there is the option of succession planning through promotions allowing build to build careers within their organisation, or there is transfers within the organisation where people can complete sideways moves to different areas of the organisation instead of upwards promotion. To advertise for a role internally adverts can be placed on notice boards or company intranets, and word of mouth, When considering external options for recruitment there is the option of specialist recruitments such as being headhunted through an organisation or supported through an agency, newspapers or magazines, radio adverts, job centres, educational links such as careers fairs and the use of social media is also very prominent in recruitment now due to the use of LinkedIn heavily supporting employees finding new roles (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.63).

Job descriptions are one of the more common approaches to recruitment and selection, IRS state that 75% of employers include copies of job descriptions in application packs and 82% of employers focus their job advertisements on this (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.63). Information found in job descriptions usually is Job Title, Rate of Pay, Location of role, Supervisors name, Summary of job role and principles of job duties with a description. This is helpful for candidates as they get an insight into the role and what is expected of them.

Developing a person specification focuses on the human attributes that are considered essential for someone to perform in a role. IRS state that 72% of employers use person specifications and they often include skills required, experience in a similar role, qualifications, education and personal attributes (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.63). Often with each specification it will state essential or desirable giving the candidate an indicator if they are suitable for the role.

Once the recruitment process has been completed there is often a group of individuals that now need to go through a selection process, and like the recruitment process there is more than one way for this to be done. When recruiting there is often a tool used called a competency framework, this is often linked to the organisations core values and they want to ensure they pick the right candidate for their business. To be able to hire the right candidate they may use some of the following selection methods, Applications, interviews, ability and personality tests, work samples and assessment centres and references (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.63).

Applications are often done via CV'S this is helpful as a snap shoot of someone's career but doesn't often give you much detail about them as a person and what they can bring to the role and it is not endorsed by anyone.

Interviews are varied, a telephone interview which is often the first stage of the process but is often not a structured process to face to face interviews often supported by a member of HR to panel interviews and sometimes group interviews which are more formal and structured as they are face

to face, depending on the individual and how they manage these situations interviews can be a great way to sell your talents and what you can bring to an organisation. With ability and personality tests these are only used around 50% of the time but if they are, they can be measuring someone's IQ, measuring literacy or numeracy skills and sometimes measuring the skills for job specific activities. These tests are never used in isolation, they can be used when there is a high number of candidates and they need to short list. Alongside these tests there is also the use of personality tests for candidates to demonstrate their skills such as communication, diplomacy and emotional intelligence this can be a stressful task for some people to complete though and may not be a true reflection on their actual abilities. Assessment centres are becoming very popular especially when hiring for multiple roles, Woodhams states that assessment centres are perhaps the most sophisticated selection style allowing you to complete interviews, candidate presentations, work samples, ability and personality tests and group activities. With this form of selection criteria, it incorporates a lot of the selection styles all in one go which is a great cost saving activity it is also great for the candidate as it allows them to show off their skillset as long as they can perform well under pressure. Once the ideal candidate has been found then most employers will complete a reference check on their candidates, Most employers tend to ask for two references either from a previous employer or as a character references, common practise these days is to give a factual reference which would include their job title dates of employment and reasons for leaving (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.65-67).

As we know voluntary turnover is one of the biggest reasons as to why we have a recruitment and selection process, there are however three other types of employee departure this is retirement, dismissal and redundancy (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.73).

Retirement normally comes when an employee has reached the age of departure from the workforce, however due to employment law employees now have a lot more say in when they are going to retire, employers are no longer allowed to compulsory retire employees without a business reason, employers these days are often more supportive with flexible options for the individual. There should be continuous discussions with the employee about their future, offering them options and flexibility such as less hours, less responsibility are even extended periods of leave (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.74).

When an employee is dismissed from the organisation it is because they have failed to meet the requirements of their role, there should always be a valid reason to dismiss an employee under the 5 legal reasons to dismiss (CIPD,2020) through either conduct or capability. All employees who are dismissed through conduct or capability should go through a structured process which will adhere to the ACAS code of practice.

Redundancy refers to dismissal due to the job role of the employee no longer being required due to a closure of a business, workplace or a diminution in the need for employees completing a certain kind of work (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016, pp.75). When considering redundancies employers should always look for a suitable alternative this could include a recruitment freeze and redeploying employees who are at risk of redundancy, overtime freeze, pay cuts, voluntary redundancies or voluntary early retirement. If none of the alternatives are feasible then redundancy becomes the only option and should follow a structured process including communication, understanding if it individual or collective consultations, the selection of employee representatives and multiple consultation meetings (CIPD,2019).

As with any form of employee departure they should all be treated in a fair and appropriate way, ensuring that employee welfare is at the forefront of the process and that regardless of the way they have left the organisation their experience has been the best that the employer could offer by

looking at an employee lifecycle from the beginning and including all the best practise options described.

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