

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN VENTRY CARE HOME

Assessment 1

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1. Introduction

Ventry care homes is a family run business started in 1986, offering services like specialist dementia care, private residential care, and mental health care for the elderly people in north London. The company specialises in the development of a highly qualified and motivated team to manage its community-based homes across London.

Ventry Care homes' turnover rates have increased over the last 2 years partly due to overwhelming workloads to be completed by short-staffed teams, during two twelve-hour shifts in a day. Besides the limitation in flexibility, the understaffed workforce is predominately under-skilled with only one registered nurse per home executing all managerial duties assisted by a team of team senior carers. Communication between staff and homes residents continues to be a prevalent problem as most of the staff from the European Economic Areas (EEA) and a few from the rest of the world where English is a second language.

With only online training programs offered staff members, there has been no way of verifying whether the learning was carried out by the staff. The new carers are barely completing their induction period due to the recurring staffing problems, as new staff are put on the floor to work after the first day of the three days of induction. Management has neither provided upscaling opportunities nor responded to workforce problems by carrying out regular recruitment and selection to match the turnover rates.

1.1 Background

Human resource management benchmarks on policies application, when it comes to organisation development and design, resourcing of employees, rewards and performance management, learning and development as well as service provision aimed at enhancing employee well-being (Armstrong and Taylor, 2014, P 217). However, HRM practices in organisation, remain subject to the changes such as demographic and sociocultural changes for example cases where demographic changes in the workforce have affected how roles work and family are played out over the last five decades (Halbesleben and Wheeler, 2007).

This evidenced in Ventry care homes' policy of redistribution of expecting mothers' roles, once they go away on maternity leave, only to come back and get placed in other roles with new challenges requiring new skills. Without proper diversity management policy implementation, female employees are scarcely encouraged to commit to long term employment within Ventry Care homes (VCH).

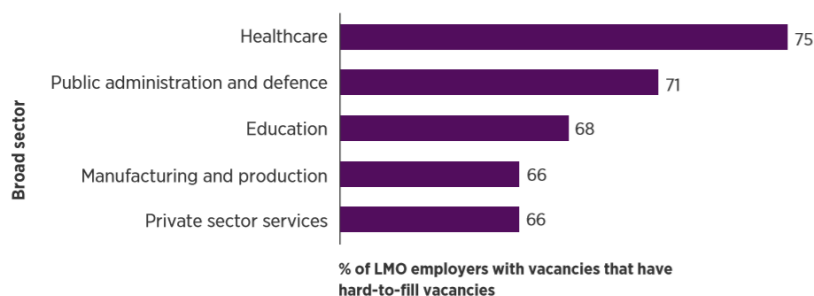
Therefore, as suggested by Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010) organisations like VCH need adopt to the environmental changes, such as diversity, labour markets and legal changes caused by Brexit; thus having the VCH human resource team focusing on the intake, retention and release of employees in organisations. In other words, revising their people resourcing strategies.

People resourcing, according to Armstrong and Taylor (2014, p.216) could be used to make sure that organisations like VCH have the required number of employees, and hence combat their staffing problem. People resourcing activities include workforce planning, and recruitment as selection among many more, enabling VCH to recruit and maintain the right number of skilled and talented employees in order to meet its business objective.

1.2 Labour markets

By the end of 2019, the UK labour market had experienced an increase in the net score on employment from 18 to 22 with healthcare have a +30 score according to the labour-market-outlook-report (CIPD, 2019). However, hiring difficulties still exist because of the tight labour market in UK, leaving the healthcare sector having the highest rate of 75% vacancies that require filling in the last one year as shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Organisation with hard to fill vacancies by percentage.



Base: autumn 2019, all employers with vacancies (education n=66; private sector services n=288; manufacturing and production n=100; public administration and defence n=48; healthcare n=53).

Source: (CIPD, 2019)

As shown in figure 1 above organisations in the health care sector have the highest number of vacancies that are hard to fill standing at 75% of the vacancies unfilled. This may be one of the reasons for low staffing levels at in health care sector, but also because the immigration of EEA nationals to UK for work purposes is not directly proportional to employment growth.

Furthermore, despite the undeterred demand for labour amidst reducing supply as stated CIPD in the 2017 LMO survey (CIPD, 2017), a reduction in the number of employed EEA nationals in UK may be one of the reasons for the low staff levels and hence health care organisation, would be better positioned in dealing with this by investing in skills enhancement and talent development to maintain competitive advantage.

2.0 Environment changes and impact on people resourcing strategies.

With globalisation comes political, economic, sociological and cultural changes affecting human resource practices within organisations both today and in the future. Therefore, dealing with people in organisations requires HR professionals to be well acquainted with the impact of globalisation and these changes, not only on the industries and markets, but also on peoples' mindsets, behaviours and attitudes (Sparrow et al., 2004, P.39).

It has become more apparent as indicated in the Resourcing and Talent Planning report (CIPD, 2017), that organisations need to be aware of the potential social culture and diversity changes to deal with the gender and racial diversity, as well as staffing shortages through attraction and retention of staff with necessary skills to give the organisation competitive edge.

As is the prevailing practice across employers in the private sector, according to the LMO Autumn Survey (CIPD, 2019), organisations should consider joining the 59% employers in the sector who are dealing with people resourcing problems by raising salaries of the staff as a means to both motivate existing staff to stay and attract new talent and skills in the business.

2.1 Social cultural changes: *Diversity – Ethnic minority and gender employment*

When organisations are implementing initiatives to derive organisational success, effective management of diversity is of paramount importance. Suggestions from previous research point towards actively managing and valuing diversity as a social change that comes with globalisation of industries, organisations and HR services such as people resourcing (Agocs and Burr, 1996).

On a global scale, in organizations, both multicultural and cross-cultural workforces have become the norm. Despite the mixed views on subject of a diverse work force in organisations today diversity continues to take a somewhat centre stage in the educational, political, corporate and legal arenas,

with organisational attitudes shifting between intolerance and tolerance and in some cases recognition of the diversity (Joplin and Daus, 1997).

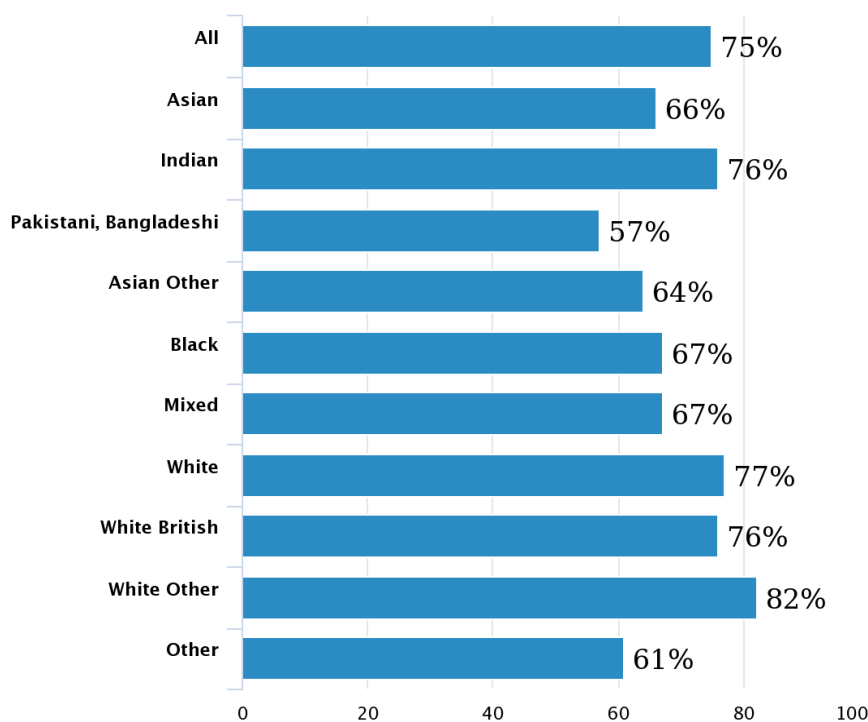
There is still reluctance to a certain level, in some organisation's recruitment and selection process when it comes to recruitment and subsequent Agocs and Burr (1996), in some organisation, where top level management is strictly limited to family members regardless of gender and age. Thus, promotion of middle managers of ethnic minority although some are female staff, is less likely to happen because of their type of organisation structure.

Diversity management issue in organisations may also be due to other reason such as the general diversity employment levels as shown in figure 2 below adopted from the annual population survey conducted in 2018 indicating that only 65% of the employed populace belonged to the ethnic minority group in comparison with the 77% which belonged to the white ethnic group, and the Bangladeshi and Pakistani ethnic group under employed at 57% (www.gov.uk, 2018).

Although Agocs and Burr (1996) argue that minority and female employees tend to be more disadvantaged during performance appraisals, trainings and remunerations as indicated in the figure 2 below where regardless of ethnic group, and that women have a lower employment rate (www.gov.uk, 2018).

Human resource management diversity practices have not been directly associated with the apparent escalating diversity levels as per some studies (Sparrow et al., 2004). In most privately owned companies, apart from the directors, who are predominantly English male, the biggest portion of workforce is dominated by female, mature woman of various racial backgrounds including the home managers and team leaders. Diversity management is best described by Rynes and Rosen(1995) who argue that over all diversity as well as top level management diversity is not necessarily increased by diversity training, moreover organisation with high diversity are known to have high turnover rates of employees and lower wages (Blum et al., 1994).

Figure 2. Employed ethnic minority figures in England, wales and Scotland in 2018 between the age of 16-64



Source: Office of national statistics (2018)

This may be due to the fact that during the formulation and implementation of appraisals, pay and training policies, organisations tend to ignore individual differences and hence gender pay and income

inequalities remain fundamental issues in the management of diversity, not to mention the limitations faced by ethnic minorities when dealing with their freedom of expression in organisations (Kirton and Greene, 2010, P.280). However, consensus within human resource managers regarding the application of ethical principles surrounding diversity practices in organisation remains a contentious issue (Martin and Woldring, 2001). Moreover, many organisations operating at a global level still struggle with implementation of diversity management framework, regardless of how much they promote it (Snape and Redman, 2003).

2.2 Political changes: *Brexit 's impact on people resourcing strategies*

There has been a sense of uncertainty surrounding Brexit as one out of five employers started becoming more aware of the potential candidates while being cautious during recruitment according to the resourcing and talent planning survey (CIPD, 2017). Anticipation of recruitment difficulty by twenty 2020 was eminent as organisations exhibited the recruitment of a more diverse workforce including other ethnic minorities as opposed to the traditional practice of recruiting mostly people from other EU countries. Although as stated in the resourcing and talent planning survey (CIPD, 2017) the difference in number of organisations intending to recruit EU nationals regardless of Brexit was substantial due to uncertainty brought about by Brexit.

However, despite the times, organisations are constantly under pressure to attain and maintain their competitive advantage positions, add value as well as deal with the relentless new opportunities and challenges, as posited by Terry (2008). Organisations must deal with the existing staffing deficit in the health care sector as indicated in the LMO (CIPD, 2019), by analysing both their intellectual and human capital in order to attain and maintain competitive advantage. In other words, engage people resourcing strategies alongside other business development strategies (Armstrong *et al.*, (2007)

Some organizations have been reported to perceive Brexit as advantageous when it comes to hiring less, focusing on upskilling their staff members, organisations are using Brexit to widen their channels of recruitment. Hiring less and upscaling is believed to cut costs in cases where turnover rates are high whilst developing a shared organisation culture according to the CIPD Guide Preparing for Brexit through workforce planning (CIPD, 2018).

Figure 3. Organisations' view of Brexit



Source: CIPD (2018)

As indicated in figure 3 above, some organisations have various perceptions about Brexit, of which as indicated earlier, some companies don't hire more staff as this helps then with cost cutting and focus on upskilling, something that give VCH and opportunity to change their employment terms. Up skilling may mean that, the same person may take on two roles and get paid for one with a slight increment in wages to motivate them. And hence the perception of low impact on workforce, and opportunities surrounding the workforce.

3.0 Impact of environmental changes in people resourcing strategies in VCH

Although workforce planning, recruitment and selection involves more than on set or HRM practices (Chu *et al.*, 2019). Political and social cultural changes such as Brexit and diversity have had adverse effects on VCH people resourcing strategies and hence emphasis on staff retention and minimising turnover rates so as to manage the increasing needs of their residents considering the diminishing labour supply in the health care sector as posited by Beard *et al* (2016).

3.1 Steps in dealing with the impact of environmental changes

After evaluation of the changes affecting people resourcing strategies, it has become imperative of the VCH human resources team to formulate a clear people resourcing strategy by creating steps such as these shown in figure 4; and thus mitigate the impact of these changes such as, shortages of staff, knowledge and skills, employee turnover rates, as indicated in the workforce planning guide (CIPD, 2018). It is inevitable for VCH to evaluate employee sentiments towards job satisfaction, security and assess the risks of increased turnover rate, and hence make informed decisions deal with the workforce or recruitment and selection problems associated with the care homes.

Figure 4: steps for people resourcing strategies



Source: CIPD (2018)

3.1.1 Building or upskilling instead of buying

As per the workforce planning guide (CIPD, 2018) shown in figure 4 above it would be advisable that, VCH should consider building instead of buying by introducing apprenticeship or graduate scheme programs to entice local recruits in whilst providing work experience. Provision of upskilling programs as career pathways such as associate nursing programs for their senior carers to advance into nursing careers and in turn have them sign 3 year contracts to work for VCH upon completion of their nursing courses. This should enable VCH to reduce the employee turnover rate and offer job security, satisfaction and stability and at the same time, as staff upskill, their wages increase.

3.1.2 Workforce development, resources redeployment and revising labour sources

Development of the work force should be one of VCH's main objective to ensure sustainability of the business alongside redeployment of resources to deal with the staff shortages because of the limitations in supply of labour from EU countries as a result of Brexit's presupposed restrictions on free movement of goods and people. VCH should now focus on other sources like the Philippines, Africa and India where the supply of staff may be in surplus. Furthermore, in the effort to reduce staff shortage, VCH may consider work restructuring on a regular basis as per the number of staff present on duty and much better if they are multi skilled staff.

3.1.3 Employer brand enhancement, contingency workers planning

Although VCH operates in a tight labour market, VCH could consider employer brand enhancement to improve their recruitment process there by attracting the best percentage of people with the essential skills to deal with the knowledge and skill brought about by diversity imbalances in the work force associated with age, gender pay, and ethnicity. With the current levels of uncertainty, the option of contingent workers such as agency staff may give the company a bit of mileage to deal with the changing employment demands as well as boost the ethnic, age and gender diversity among staff.

3. Conclusion

Staff stability is key in enable VCH meet their residents' needs as this would allow the company to maintain the required knowledge, skills and practices at their facilities at any one given time and hence having stable working environment as posited by Berridge *et al* (2018). Although the VCH work force is largely dominated by female, staff who are above 45 years of age, there remains pay gaps with a high turnover rate and no upskilling opportunities. However elimination of practices such as ensuring staff levels are up to the required standards in VCH may not necessarily mean that VCH staff will stay on the job as often there is more forces at work than sometimes anticipated as posited by McGilton *et al* (2014).

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