

Qualification: CIPD Diploma in Applied Human Resources

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Understanding the Contemporary Human Resources (HR) Function 5CMHR

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By signing below, I confirm that the work/evidence presented is my own, unaided work. I understand the regulations pertaining to candidate malpractice and the action that may be taken as a result.

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Date: 24th January 2019

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Human Resources

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(De Montford University, 2019) Picture Reference

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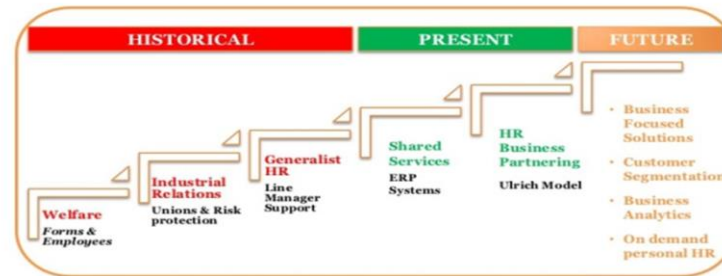
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Introduction/Aim

The presentation is to help new employees understand the HR Functions role; how its's evolving; delivering services; line managers play an essential part in HRM and how change is managed.

How HR is Evolving



(Thomas, A., 2015)

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1.1, 1.2.

Evolution during the centuries:

Personnel Management: Industrial Revolution 1900's; welfare officers, back-office function. Trade Unions becoming stronger; changes in industries.

Evolving during 1980's; Human Resource Management.

According to Wilkinson and Taylor, (2016) "people are now a valuable resource, to be developed rather than mere cogs in the company machine".

HRM evolved towards Strategic Human Resource Management (SRHM); according to Wilkinson and Taylor, (2016)

“aligns individual and team goals with organisation objectives, encouraging an engaged, high-performance culture; integrating organisational strategies”.

Workforce now strategic, activities include succession planning, skilled/talented engaged workforce, performance management, cross-cultural issues and measuring HR activities; all adding organisational value (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).



1.1, 1.2.

According to Wilkinson and Taylor (2016):

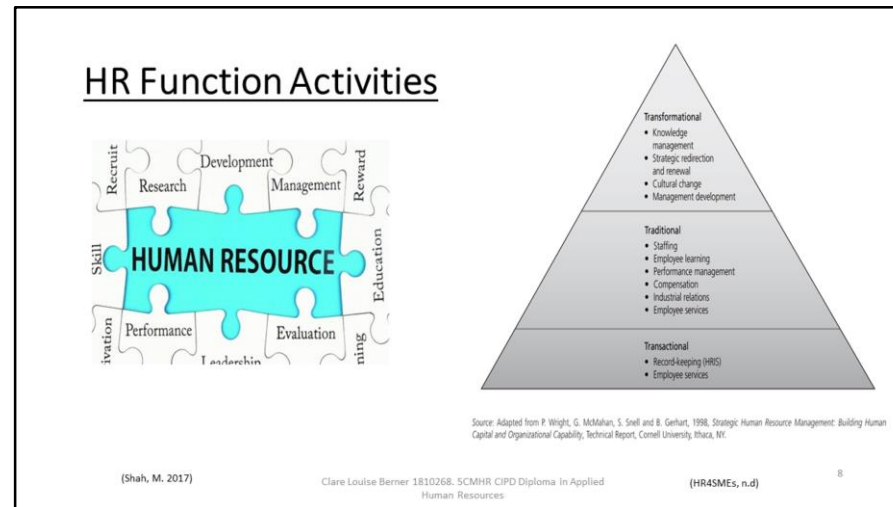
“The HR functions key purpose is supporting delivery of organisational strategy and objectives through effective management of people and performance, continuously striving to add value”.

Making HRM more strategic than traditional methods; alignment of HR strategy with business strategy by vertical integration of policies; horizontal integration, compatibility of policies, practices/procedures with each other, an operational dimension (Beardwell and Thompson, 2017). Integrated HRM achieves a highly motivated workforce, working alongside peers to achieve objectives and goals of the organisation.

HR function evolves with changing business needs, a CIPD survey concluded, HR professionals considered recruitment;

retention; employee competencies; people performance management; employee engagement and involvement being most important to their function (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

HR professionals are there to support both managers and workforce in their roles.



1.1, 1.2.

Above, HR function supports/delivers in their activities; are defined as (Armstrong and Taylor, 2014):

Transactional: the day to day service delivery; administrative activities updating policies, employee records, sick absence, HR systems; some specialities are outsourced; larger organisations like the NHS; utilise shared services for resourcing/recruitment requirements.

Transformational: (strategic) management of change/continuous improvement activities, being innovative and creative. Implementation and alignment of HR strategies and Business/Organisational strategies.

HR structures and functions are all different including set up, dependant on size the function can be a mix of generalists, specialists and administrative staff.



1.1, 1.2.

HR function covers 10 professional areas above; professionals being HR generalists or specialists.

HR Generalists: Knowledge in all areas of HR; lone working or managerial in small organisations/private companies, less formal, having less policies. Larger organisations have generalist teams, with specialist remit of responsibility, but deal with all activities within HR (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

HR Specialists: With specialist knowledge in their role, departments may specialise in professional areas depicted in CIPD Map (2013a) above.

HR role according to Armstrong and Taylor (2014):

“The function provides insights, leadership, advice, services on issues affecting management, employment, learning, development, reward, wellbeing and relationships between management and employees”.

The CIPD Profession Map **(2018b)** evolving with “purpose” which defined:

“Everyone has a fundamental purpose to champion better work and working lives. Creating roles, opportunities, organisations and working environments help get the best out of people, delivering great organisational outcomes, in turn driving our economies, making good, fair and inclusive work a societal outcome”.

HR Transformation

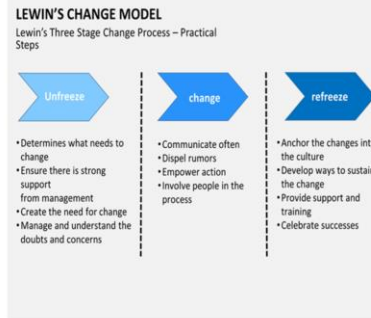
Based on the analogy, changing the shape of a block of ice.

All 3 stages need to be completed in order to avoid resistance.

Lewin put it:

“Motivation for change must be generated before change can occur.”

(Mindtools.com n.d)



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1.3

Organisations go through various transformations due to environmental/economic challenges; Brexit, legislation, organisational pressures, technological advancements, competition and strategic changes in order to survive (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

CIPD (2018c) Profession Map has ‘change’ as core knowledge; professionals contribute effectively; having skills, knowledge, behaviours to drive change in a structured/planned way; redesigning processes, negotiating/interacting with stakeholders, clear communication, employees voice, empathy, trust, working towards strategic goals, embedding change within organisations culture, employees being engaged and motivated (CIPD, 2018a).

The HR function supports line managers/employees through effective change/transformation (CIPD, 2018b).

Ulrich (1997) believes HR functions should carry out continuous transformation. HR professionals effectively managing change systematically and adding value; helping deliver controllable changes; concerning business processes and managing uncontrollable changes, affecting employees; Wilkinson and Taylor (2016) mention:

Controllable:

Project stage; HR Involvement; initial stages of change

Identifying gaps in skills; training; new positions; working practices

Organisational goals and strategic requirements

Assessing organisational change; impacts within organisation; communication, evaluation and reporting: levels of absence/turnover/grievances/employee opinion surveys/training expenditure

Interest of stakeholders; concerns/problems

Uncontrollable:

Employee feelings; everyone is different, some will be more positive/receptive

Careful planning of change; job security; careers prospects; reward/pay; appraisal; involvement and relationships; policies affecting how/when/where work is done

Positives/buy-in; promotion; encourages and embraces change; employees participate in change; communication methods; HRD interventions; training/development, coaching/mentoring; management of expectations and conflict (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

HR professionals or 'change agents' can set up focus groups; stakeholder meetings to communicate why transformation is necessary; setting out organisational vision, aims, goals, strategy; taking on-board issues/concerns and adapt a change ready culture.

Communication is key in change initiatives; this can be through (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016):

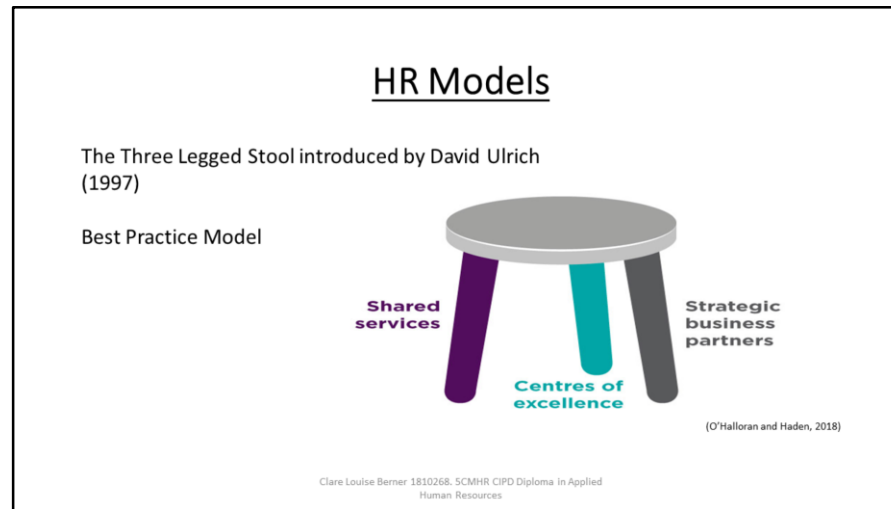
Top-down approach: Executive/Senior Management communication through meetings; letters; intranet; weekly bulletins; team meetings; generic emails; local publicised papers if affecting stakeholders externally/internally.

Bottom-up approach: Involving employees in discussions/ideas through change workshops.

Two-way discussion: with line managers and HR involvement if required. Effects on role/concerns.

Once change is implemented, success communicated, to form a culture for future change/transformation (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

Ulrich (1997) says “HR professionals should apply a model of change to a specific situation”. There are many models of change, Kurt Lewin 1951 three step Change Management Model being one of the best-known today (Armstrong and Taylor, 2014). Change should be planned, employees affected included in discussions when planning change, gradual implementation, communicating requirement for change, including goals/benefits and any issues addressed.



2.1

HR functions operate in different ways, organisations have different strategies; sizes differ, can be structured in many ways to deliver an efficient and effective service. Consisting of Private Organisations, Public Sector and Third Sector. There are three main models that can be delivered independently or combined; where decision-making power lies within the structure.

The centralised structure; decision-making authority is top level management/executives/directors/proprietors of the company/organisation; the hierarchy. All HR staff report directly to the top. There are some advantages, budgets can be centrally controlled, decision making can be quicker, but disadvantages can be lack of motivation in middle/lower management, as they do not have the power to make decisions, authority comes from the top. Larger organisations are moving away from centralisation; delegating to lower level management/department heads; making workforce feel more motivated by delegation of duties from top level down. In contrast a decentralised business structure,

decisions are spread across the structure; to include all levels of management, departments/business units at other locations. HR staff report directly to their department managers/lower level managers, although major decisions are retained at top level and policies regarding organisation as a whole; work is delegated to lower/middle management, which improves customer services and staff motivation. Larger organisations tend to be decentralised, due to expanding businesses at various locations/units (Taylor and Woodhams, 2016).

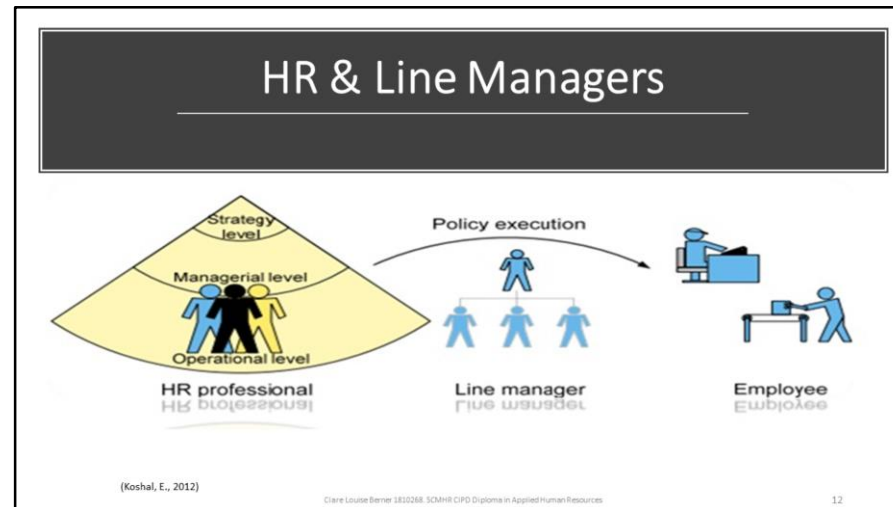
The 3-legged stool best practice model introduced by David Ulrich in the late 1990's, incorporates three types of service delivery; this model is likely to be adopted in larger organisations (O'Halloran and Haden, 2018):

Shared Services: Centralised call centres dealing with services across organisations of transactional work. Dealing with administrative work including; payroll, recruitment, leavers, employee self-service portal. Having service centres dealing with IT and advice/specialist knowledge. The NHS utilises shared services for recruitment/resourcing.

Business Partners/Strategic Partners: Senior HR professionals working with line managers; based in Business Units dealing with casework, employee issues, people/talent management, designing processes; implementing HR policies/practices; developing business strategy, adding value. The NHS utilise this model.

Centre of expertise: Specialist knowledge HR Professionals, dealing with employment law, learning, reward, recruitment, employee engagement, talent management, strategic HR. This model is a mix/combination of centralised and decentralised function. Advice can be given to business partners/line managers (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

Outsourcing: Alternative to shared services, HR activities are subcontracted out; payroll, IT, pensions, legal work and recruitment. Outsourcing is generally done to cost save or if advice on complex matters requiring expertise (CIPD, 2018e and Marchington et al., 2016).



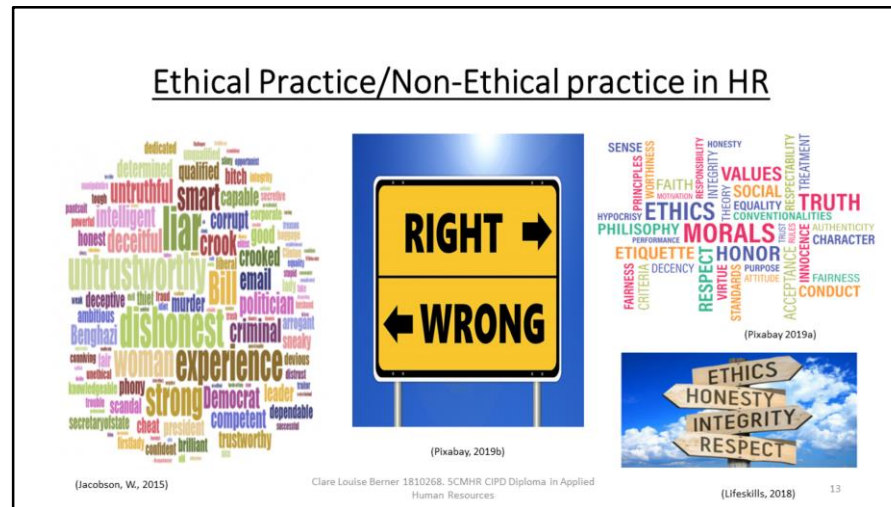
2.2

The HR function supports line managers in their operational role. Line managers have a large part to play in HR activities; ensuring their workforce is up-to-date on change initiatives; ensuring employees have a voice. HR professionals provide information regarding policies; procedures; processes; change/transformation; training and advice. It is the line managers role to delegate; monitor; brief their team; effectively manage employee performance; monitoring finances; employee health and wellbeing; Occupational Health/Wellbeing services, referrals on health issues; temporary adjustments; ill health; personal issues; consistently working within policies/procedures, treating them fairly/ethically and following process. Line managers are required to build excellent employee engagement skills; some managers influence, manage and communicate effectively, whilst others only have technical skills. HR can provide coaching/development, which forms an objective in the line manager's performance appraisal, to measure their performance, which sometimes based on reward in some organisations. HR and line managers have an interest in their workforce, to ensure organisational values, aims and strategic goals are achieved (CIPD, 2018g and Farnham,

2015).

HR work with line managers; providing leadership training, performance management, succession planning. Creating good working, trusting relationships enables proficiency in their role dealing with HR related activities like sick absence, performance, appraisals/PDP's, recruitment, conflict; knowing processes are followed according to policy. Line managers will seek advice on complex issues, liaising with Strategic Business Partners on employee relations cases; HR involvement is imperative, due to complexity and timeframe under policies. Some HR/line manager responsibilities are shared; induction process; recruitment; training; discipline. Contrasting issues involve line managers not following processes, unable to deal with HR activities/issues, not always having the competencies to manage their staff effectively, some wanting more pay to do so (Wilkinson and Taylor, 216).

Ethical Practice/Non-Ethical practice in HR



3.1

It's imperative HR acts ethically; the function controls activities of the organisation and its workforce. A role model for the organisation, ensuring the reputation isn't compromised. Promoting ethical behaviours in its workforce, ensuring everyone is treated equally and fairly. Organisations today drive ethical values consisting of: fairness, honesty, openness, integrity. Employees need to treat each other with dignity and respect, ensuring customers/stakeholders are treated fairly (Kew and Stredwick 2010, p351 and Taylor and Perkins, 2017).

There are many codes of conducts, rules and regulations that organisations need to abide by, the HR function promotes the corporate code of ethics in its values, policies, practice, culture; ensuring HR embeds corporate social responsibility as part of its strategy and business activity (CIPD, 2013b).

All HR practitioners professionally recognised by CIPD have to abide by the obligations set out in the Code of

Professional Conduct. Ethical behaviour is a core requirement (CIPD, 2019a).

Wilkinson and Taylor (2016) explains HR functions can promote ethical policies in five ways:

Equality of opportunity: fairness/opportunity to everyone; not to be treated unfairly/discriminatory.

Diversity: HR ensures organisations have diverse cultures; not to discriminate or under-represent certain groups.

Dignity at Work: embedded culture, everyone's treated with dignity and respect; clear procedures/policies in place for dignity at work, unacceptable behaviour; disciplinary/grievance.

Work-life balance: HR communicates importance of work-life balance to management/employees, monitoring, ensuring policies are in place; working time directives/flexible working regulations 2014 come into play (legislation.gov.uk, n.db).

Health and Wellbeing: HR ensures the workforce is aware of the importance of health and wellbeing through policies/procedures. An increase of absenteeism, disability issues, long term medical conditions and discrimination, could come into play if there are no policies in place.

Non-ethical dilemmas, ethical issues/conflict can damage a company's reputation. Sharing/leaking sensitive personal information; sexual harassment; malpractice; fraud; press exposure will jeopardise a company's future. Recruiting could pose problems due to damaged reputation. Gaining a reputation of an ethical employer attracts talent to an organisation (Harris, 2016).

Breaches of ethics can lead to legal implications of both civil/criminal/litigation and out of court settlements. HR professionals must abide by employment legislations regarding dismissals, redundancy, capability; ensuring management are aware they should act lawfully, avoiding tribunal costs and damaged reputation (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

The CIPD (2015) released a research report regarding ethical dilemmas; how philosophical ethics identified 8 'lenses', to help

decision-making, providing different perspectives on dilemmas, but the professional will decide.

Fairness

Merit

Markets

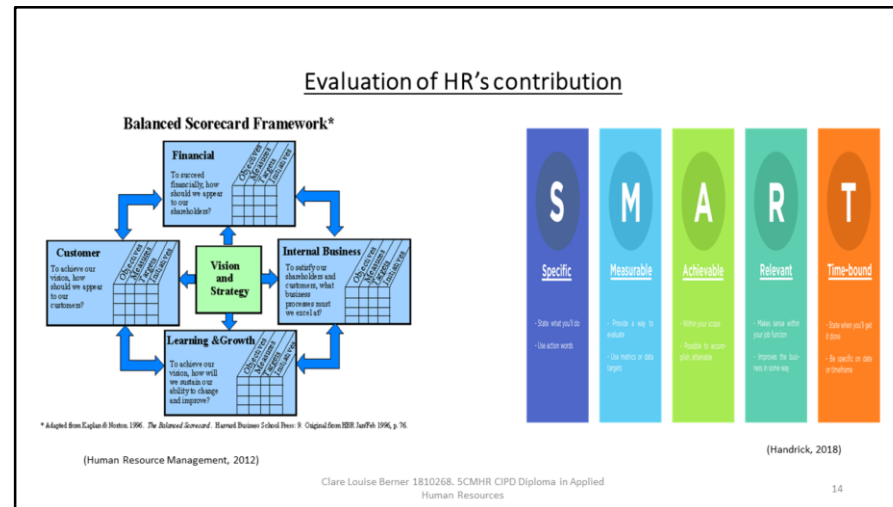
Democracy

Well-being

Rights and Duties

Character

Handing down



4.1

Aguinis (2005) defines performance management as:

“A continuous process that identifies, measures, develops performance of individuals and teams and aligns the performance with organisational strategic goals”.

By measuring performance, you can see the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of a team, individuals or how the overall organisation is performing (Armstrong and Taylor, 2014), any inefficiencies need to be addressed.

Theories/approaches of organisational success include ‘best practice’, ‘best fit’ contingency and resource-based views; improving the commitment of employees; going above and beyond in their role enables a successful organisation (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

Performance can be measured in many ways; new technology, E-HRM; management information systems; metric/analytics, this makes it easier for HR to measure (Swift, 2016):

Key Performance Indicators (KPI's): aligned to goals/objectives of organisations; the objectives are aligned to strategy. Measuring how effectively the organisation is achieving its objectives through performance management; measuring success against target. Can measure using SMART criteria (Taylor, 2016).

Balance Scorecard: Strategic/Operational performance measures linking to each other and organisational objectives, viewed in four perspectives: financial, internal business processes, learning and growth and customer (Clayton, 2017).

Audits: Carried out to inspect whether HR policies/procedures/standards are being actioned correctly. Can be planned or randomly carried out.

Qualitative: Employee satisfaction surveys, evaluation of induction/training, exit interviews, focus groups.

Quantitative: Indicators/metrics; staff turnover, sick absence rates, disciplinary, grievances, accident, tribunals, mediation, complaints, timekeeping, staff costs.

Benchmarking: comparison indicators e.g. recruitment response rates, handling grievances, customer/stakeholder feedback; benchmarking year on year or against similar organisations.

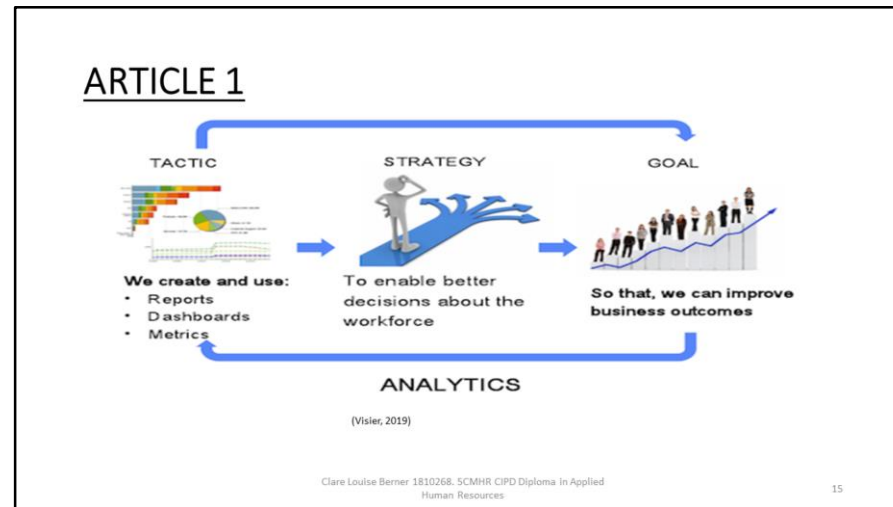
Service Level Agreement: ensuring business requirements/service expectations are reflected within; allowing the need for business to evolve within.

Stakeholder analysis: carried out to identify who the service users are, their requirements; in order to meet their needs (Wilkinson and Taylor, 2016).

Employee performance appraisals.

360 degree evaluation: Insight into how colleagues, peers and stakeholders feel.

John Purcell Bath University carried out research 'black box study'; concluded high performance policies/practices should be in place; companies mission/vision ensuring values are embedded within policies/practices and effective line management. High performance working practices leads to superior business performance; findings also found the AMO model; Ability, Motivation and Opportunity to perform well; also needs to be fully present. Increases in performance can lead to improved organisational/team performance (Taylor, 2016).



Article 1

Study: Looking at processes and linkage to practice and performance with effectiveness of HR practices and implementation thereof, attitudes and behaviours, which links HRM and performance.

One aim is to test, if agreements between managers give positive outcomes with regards to effectiveness of HR practices.

The paper measures proximal and distal outcomes to gauge a fair effectiveness.

Hypothesis were tested using random samples in Dun and Bradstreet Database UK companies with over 50 staff in the UK. Telephone interviews, using structured schedule.

Sample used 237 companies, 36% service sector, 15% multinational, median 104 UK employees, 23% had a ¼ of employees plus in the Union.

Data was collected from HR managers on 48 practices.

Results: mixed, weak, some with no hypothesis support. HR effectiveness and a range of outcomes were confirmed. There is consistent HR effectiveness with most outcomes that HR practices.

Limited HR managers and CEO agreement. Future research should include all staff groups. Effectiveness of HR practices, various outcomes were consistently associated, but low agreement on effectiveness. It's believed that effective practices/positive outcomes are associated.

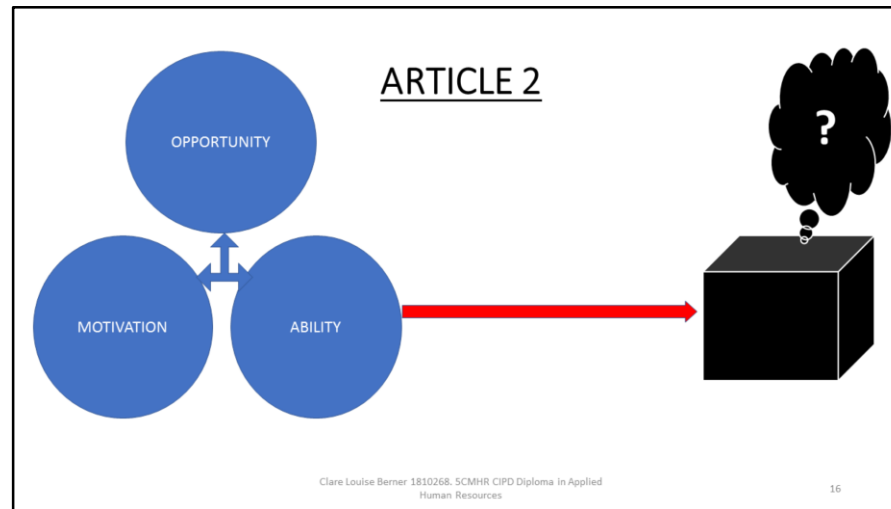
Analysed a large sample of data from HR managers and CEO's. Data collected on HR practices and effectiveness. Two of three areas were tested for HR effectiveness; local HR implementation wasn't tested but should in future research.

Being cross-sectional study affects effectiveness because knowledge of performance; longitudinal studies should be incorporated in future research and independent measures. No agreement on interaction between HR effectiveness and outcomes. Future research/fuller testing required of extensive sources.

HR effectiveness and outcomes are associated; HR effectiveness is more important than HR practices. No association with Bowen and Ostroff's strong HR system/outcomes.

Components of a logical model of effectiveness; HR practices must be present; effective and implemented; the study focused on two. Further research on all three should be carried out along with wider stakeholder group in order to further explore HR effectiveness.

(Guest and Conway 2011)



4.2 Article 2

Demonstrate whether the AMO model links HR practices and performance. The aim: identify the investigations which have tested it, approach taken, how effectiveness of HR practice and performance was measured; whether the model explains HRM and performance link.

Little research has been done on AMO model; a systematic study was required on the model. The results could inform problems that organisations have when implementing HR practices.

All three elements of the AMO have to be present for successful performance.

The study mentions high practice configurations; high performance/high commitment management can create the effects of synergy; having a positive effect on performance, but previous investigations haven't clarified this.

It's not clear how they reach the objectives, the precise mechanism utilised in HR. The 'Black Box' is the missing high-performance link in the AMO framework.

The study was via the internet, three databases were searched: scopus, web science and google scholar using an inclusion criterion.

Results showed a direct/indirect link to AMO framework, 33 articles had statistical information; measured relationships between ability, motivation and opportunity that increase practices and performance; 15 didn't have numerical information, but nearly all had increased practice in performance and AMO. Which concluded that for validating the model there was lack of research.

Most investigations were on cross-sectional data, a longitudinal analysis was necessary to compare primary measures once HRM actions are implemented.

Methodologies/Results were diverse, developing new approaches causes difficulties drawing firm conclusions regarding validity of the model and lack of scientific confirmation. Studies need to be carried out in different context for comparable/precise conclusion.

The model's characteristics enhanced practices; reinforcing high performance, meaning using one or two dimensions of the model, but lack of research.

The AMO model provided an understanding between HRM and performance; effectiveness was definitive; to develop a perfect fit model would be complicated or impossible.

Further research and use of this study, to replicate in different context, investigations that have positive results, which could strengthen the conclusions obtained, getting closer to unlocking the 'black box' of HRM.

(Marin-Garcia and Tomas, 2016)

Conclusion/Summary

The function helps deliver Organisational goals, vision, objectives and strategy. Change is a continuous process to enable organizations' to evolve and survive, adding value. People and purpose are at the core, looking at the outside in is said to be the next approach for the function (Ulrich, 2016). The CIPD have played a significant role in developing and shaping the HR function, which is still evolving today.

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