**Human Resources**

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**The Flow of Personnel In and Out of a Company**
In any business, other than a very small family owned business, there is a continuous turnover of employees. The manager needs to accept the fact that people come into the company at the entry level positions and at advanced level positions and then leave long before retirement. Larger companies with multiple levels of job positions could see less turnover than a small business because of the opportunity to advance into better paying positions in the company.

**Building an Excellent Personnel Team**
A company can only succeed when it has highly qualified and motivated personnel that can work as a team. There are many opportunities to improve the personnel employee team.

**Organization and Division of Labor**
Before employees are hired the company must be organized so that tasks in performing the work are properly divided. If each employee is able to perform at least part of their job duties making a unique or significant contribution to the company, that they can have ownership of, they will be motivated to work and be part of a team. Mutual respect and a sense of interdependence develop among employees when each employee sees their contribution and importance to the company.

A manager who listens to subordinates and discovers their unique ability and strengths is able to possibly adjust their job duties so as to allow the employee to use their unique abilities and strengths leading to greater motivation and productivity. Most employees have much more potential than you initially perceive them to have.

**Recruiting Qualified Candidates**
You want to have enough applications for a position to ensure you are able to hire the most qualified individual. Having an accurate job description that correctly defines minimum qualifications as well the benefits of working at your company is a good starting point.

Annual pay is not the sole incentive for attracting qualified applicants. Duty time, health benefits, vacation time, working conditions, and the benefits of living in your local community are also factors. When setting the pay level the manager must be fair and non-discriminating. Federal law protects against hiring based on race, gender, age, or religion, and some law makers are even trying to include sexual orientation in the definition.

Education, work experience, relevant test performance, and what other companies in the industry pay for the same position and experience level are acceptable criteria to determine the worth of an employee in setting the level of compensation. You are unlikely to attract a person with the perfect qualifications; therefore, you need to set truly minimum qualifications and preferences to attract a greater number of applicants. For entry-level positions, colleges and trade schools who train people for these positions should be contacted to see if they can provide contacts of recent graduates.
Screening Applicants and Selecting Employees
A well-constructed job application that also requires submission of copies of licensure, can be used to screen out unqualified employees by comparing application data with predetermined criteria. In larger companies, several middle managers can work with the Human Resources Department to develop a criteria sheet for ranking candidate applications. The direct supervisor of the employee position being filled must be sure to supply the technical criteria to ensure that only qualified applicants are selected.

After application screening, the top 3-5 candidates are determined from the criteria based ranking and contacted for an interview. An option for a company would be to have a telephone interview conference call with the top candidates to select, if possible, just two of the candidates to come in for a personal face-to-face interview.

When interviewing candidates for a position, you are trying to answer three questions:

1. Can the candidate do the job?
2. Does the candidate really want the job?
3. Can the candidate work with my team?

You must realize that the candidate is checking your company out as much as you are checking the candidate out for the position in your company.

After the interview the department managers and the HR Department manager should meet and share perceptions and insights gained during the interview and make a decision to hire one of the candidates or decide to restart the whole recruiting process to get more candidates.

Before making a job offer to a candidate, a manager needs check references such as past employers or character references for the employee to make sure there is not a criminal record or if the candidate has provided false information. If possible, have a second candidate that you are able to hire if the first candidate turns down the position. Any firsthand knowledge you can gain about the candidate is very valuable in determining the quality of the applicant. For example, a flight school may hire a recent graduate of their Flight Instructor training program because the candidate was a very good student.

Orientation and Training
The new employee needs a comprehensive orientation and training program. Another employee should be assigned to the new employee so the new employee knows who to go to for questions and to help the new employee gain a sense of belonging to the company team.

Every company should have a Personnel Policy Manual that is made available to each employee. Policies such as time off for family or sick leave and vacations are contained in the manual in black and white so that no claims can be made that certain employees are getting special treatment. Procedures for disciplinary action are contained in the Personnel Policy Manual to make employees aware of the expectations and consequences of inappropriate actions.
**Motivation**

Good management naturally leads to improved employee motivation. Managers must provide incentives for employees to succeed such as an increase in pay once a certain level of performance is achieved. The performance of all employees must be measured objectively and this is the challenge. The employee may share your interests or may have a personality type you can better connect with. Other employees that you naturally do not connect with may actually be out performing other employees.

Performance should be measured directly from business work activity results that can be verified in accounting records if possible. Also, feedback from customers or other people inside and outside the company should be considered in determining employee performance. For example, a charter pilot can be evaluated by the company by figuring the average cost per hour of operating an aircraft compared to other pilots flying the same aircraft. A customer satisfaction survey reveals which pilots provide the best customer service which leads to greater future sales. Input from FAA check airmen on proficiency flight checks will show strength and weaknesses in piloting abilities. All of these indicators collectively can be used to measure employee performance. When employees are awarded for their increase in performance, employee motivation increases. The key is to communicate to the affected employees the performance criteria and the level of current performance.

As a result of the humanist movement in the United States in the late 60s and 70s influencing business management philosophy, many companies have created useless reward programs. The humanist philosophy basically says that every person has a hidden giftedness inside that can be activated with the right leadership or just believing in you. The mantra of the humanist business leader is “catch my vision and you can be successful someday just like me.”

My philosophy aligns with traditional values of reward for hard work and innovation. My advice is to give the employee the tools and opportunities to do the best job they can do, and then reward them with more money or benefits. The humanist approach is to give lip service to employees as to how wonderful the company is and to grant recognition to persons who have not accomplished anything significant or even measurable. If employees are rewarded in their pocketbook for truly improving the company’s bottom line, employees are best motivated.

**Promotion**

At larger companies, you will find middle managers who are required to have both significant technical experience as well as management skills. Most management skills are gained through years of experience. Promoting within the company has advantages and disadvantages. The advantage is that the person promoted within the company understands the details of the company operation and has much insight. A disadvantage of promoting from within rather than hiring someone from outside the company is that the company does not gain “new blood” and may not be willing to change and try new ideas that may improve the company.

When promoting from within, the company can provide opportunities for current employees to acquire leadership training. Some companies pay the employee’s tuition in obtaining a higher business degree in an evening program or online program. If current employees are made aware of the advancement
opportunities and criteria for promotion in the company, they are likely to be more motivated to perform at a higher level and may stay with the company longer.

**Discipline**
Sometimes employees will violate company policies and an appropriate disciplinary action must be taken. The process must be spelled out in the Personnel Policy Manual. The policies should provide for multiple levels of infractions with more severe disciplinary action associated with more serious infractions.

For example, an infraction of a required flight crew member reporting ten minutes late for duty before a flight may result in a warning and a recording of the incident in the employee’s record. A more serious infraction of a crewmember being so late in reporting for duty that the flight has to be delayed or cancelled may result in suspension from work without pay for a certain time period. A repeat of this serious infraction may result in dismissal.

Any infraction must be dealt with immediately and appropriately. The incident must also be properly documented. The wise manager will determine if there are any special circumstances or external factors that may have motivated the employee to violate policy that could be eliminated in the future. For example, a line service technician may be having difficulty adapting to a new second or third work shift sleep cycle and may be having serious medical problems as a result. This situation may have contributed to the problem of being late. The problem might have a solution short of firing the employee.

**Separation**
Separation is when an employee leaves the company either voluntarily or involuntarily. An employee who cannot comply with company policies needs to be let go – fired. In some cases, the employee is trying hard but is simply not able to perform at an acceptable level and also needs to be let go. The manager should do everything possible to make the separation positive without hard feelings.

An employee moving on to another company should leave on the best of terms. On way to accomplish this end is to have an exit interview and acknowledge the employee’s contribution in their service with the company. The employee that is let go should also be treated with respect and the reasons for the separation should be clearly communicated to the employee. The task of letting someone go is never easy but having established policies and procedures will definitely help.

**Workplace Safety**
Workplace safety and health laws are in place to try to eliminate personal injuries at the workplace and illness resulting from work. For example, the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) establishes regulations for the workplace such as use of safety glasses, standards for clean air, protection from hazards, and other safety items.

Each state has established workman compensation law that provides workman compensation to employees who are injured and/or disabled on the job. The business must purchase workman’s compensation insurance for certain employees which increases the cost of doing business. Improved work safety, however, results in loss of productivity caused by work injuries.
In summary, the manager has many opportunities to improve the workplace to ultimately make the business successful.