This assignment covers the following units/topics:

Unit 1: Historical Development of Human Resources
Unit 2: Organisational Structures and Grouping Work Activities
Unit 3: Line and Staff Aspects of Human Resource Management and Formal and Informal Relations
Unit 4: Work Teams
Unit 5: Job Design
Unit 14: Record keeping

The learning outcomes for this specific assignment

Upon completion of this assignment, you will be able to:

- Outline the difference between the personnel management and human resources management.
- Understand types of organisational structures.
- Explain the ways of grouping work activities.
- Indicate the difference between line and staff functions.
- Distinguish between formal and informal relationship.
- Understand the benefits and characteristics of work teams.
- Analyse the different methods of job design
- Apply the various HR record keeping methods.
ASSIGNMENT 1  [100 Marks]

Read the fictional case studies below and answer all the questions.

Case study 1: The HRM Value Addition

Ngapathimo Trading is a Namibian owned company specialising in engineering and architecture. Judith Masule is the founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO). In the past five years the business grew resulting into the establishment of branches locally and internationally. The expansion led to the review of the organisation structure and as a result, the Manager for Human Resources position (among others) was created, a position occupied by Mr Tunya Witbeen. The company also has other departments such the Office of the CEO, Engineering and Architecture, Finance and Procurement, Operations and Logistics.

Since the business expansion, there has been misunderstandings within the workforce. Some departments hardly engage or consult other departments as they feel they are more important than others. For example, the Engineering and Architecture General manager told Witbeen to stop meddling in the affairs of his department because he has no authority whatsoever.

On the other hand, the Safety, Health, Environment & Quality (SHEQ) Manager (under the CEO) also received unfavorable remarks from departments. “...you think this is your house, how dare you telling us what to do! Go play far with your office Ergonomics and Compliance stories, we know these things better than you. Your position is useless, we never had accidents or safety-related incidents in this company. Why are you here anyway?” One of the general managers remarked. The SHEQ Manager was shocked and reported the matter to Judith. The CEO instructed Witbeen to investigate the allegations and provide feedback with recommendations in a week. Among others, Witbeen recommended to Judith that an Employee Climate Survey (ECS) (aimed at assessing employee perception of job satisfaction, leadership, inter-departmental communication and staff and line function issues) be conducted without delay.

The findings of the survey were not surprising because misunderstanding, insubordination, interpersonal relations, incompetency, sabotaging, toxic working atmosphere, dictatorship, lack of leadership, and job dissatisfaction are a common feature in the company daily operations. What was interesting about the HR-initiated survey is that it cemented and transformed allegations into a proven and factual narrative to which management future decisions of leading and growing the company can be based.

Questions 1

1.1 The management of Ngapathimo Trading reviewed its organisational structure and added different positions including that of Human Resources. Explain the role of the human resources department at Ngapathimo Trading. (7)

Answers:
Some of the functions that are associated with effective human resources management:

- **Staffing**: HR Planning, Recruitment, Selection, Job analysis.

  Staffing consists of all the processes through which an organization ensures that it has a sufficient number of employees with the right skills in the right jobs, at the right time, to meet the organization’s goals.

- **Training and Development**

  The organization’s need training and development in order to increase the quality of working life for workers, improve the productivity of the workforce and promote self-employment. Continuous skill development is aimed at ensuring that employees have key competencies, not only for the jobs that they currently do, but also for future jobs that they aspire to.

- **Performance Management**

  Performance Management is a process of creating a work environment in which employees can perform to the best of their abilities and to the benefits of the organization.

- **HR Research and HR Information Systems**

  It is important for human resources department to have information base to eliminate guesswork and gut reaction. This information assists the organization to make informed HR decision.

- **Rewards and compensation**

  This refers to the total rewards provided to employees in return for their services. Compensation is used to attract, retain and motivate employee to perform to the best of their ability.

- **Employment relations**

  The employment relations are aimed at promoting healthy relationships and effective interaction between employers and employees.

- **Employee Health and Safety**

  The match between the organization and the individual includes the management of health and safety in the workplace. The employer has the right to expect the employee to adhere to rules and regulations to ensure a safe working area, and the employee in the return has a right to expect a working environment conducive to health and safety.

1.1.1 The Safety, Health, Environment & Quality (SHEQ) Manager (under the CEO) also received unfavorable remarks from departments. “...you think this is your house,”
how dare you telling us what to do! Go play far with your office Ergonomics and Compliance stories, we know these things better than you. Your position is useless, we never had accidents or safety-related incidents in this company. Why are you here anyway?” Discuss the role of the Safety, Health, Environment & Quality (SHEQ) position at Ngepathimo Trading. (7)

Answers:

- Employers have legal responsibilities to ensure a safe and healthy workplace. As an employee you have rights, and responsibilities for their own wellbeing and that of their colleagues.
- The enforcement and application of the employee health and safety policies and regulations.
- They should conduct risk assessment to spot possible health and safety hazards. Produce reports with recommendations.
- Make sure safe working practices are set up and followed
- make sure that all materials are handled, stored and used safely
- provide adequate first aid facilities
- tell you about any potential hazards from the work you do - chemicals and other substances used by the firm - and give you information, instructions, training and supervision as needed
- set up emergency plans
- make sure that ventilation, temperature, lighting, toilet, washing and rest facilities all meet health, safety and welfare requirements
- check that the right work equipment is provided and is properly used and regularly maintained
- prevent or control exposure to substances that may damage your health
- take precautions against the risks caused by flammable or explosive hazards, electrical equipment, noise and radiation
- avoid potentially dangerous work involving manual handling (and if it can’t be avoided, take precautions to reduce the risk of injury)
- provide health supervision as needed
- provide protective clothing or equipment free of charge (if risks can't be removed or adequately controlled by any other means)
- make sure that the right warning signs are provided and looked after
- report certain accidents, injuries, diseases and dangerous occurrences

1.2 Some departments hardly engage or consult other departments as they feel they are more important than others. For example, the Engineering and Architecture General manager told
Witbeen to stop meddling in the affairs of his department because he has no authority whatsoever. **What does this mean/suggest?**

**Answers:**

Here students are expected to have a discussion revolving around the concepts of line and staff authorities. For instance, the line authority is defined that it gives managers the right (or authority) to issue orders to other managers of employees. It creates a super-subordinate relationship. Whilst staff authority gives the managers the right (authority) to advise other managers or employees. It creates an advisory relationship. In nutshell, the line managers have line authority and staff managers have staff authority. Line manager they are directly involved in doing the work for which the organization was created. Is it understood that they perform the core function of the organization. Staff managers provide planning and control functions for the organization, for example building engineering department personnel will assist with the planning and layout of the building. Human resources departments will for example assist in policy, formulation involving remuneration, organization development, recruitment and selection, training and development and so others.

However, having no crystal-clear distinction between line and staff authority will result in confusion and possible conflicts. Therefore, it will be important to understand the difference between line and staff functions to curb conflicts which may arise.

1.3 According to the case study, the findings of the survey were not surprising because misunderstanding, insubordination, interpersonal relations, incompetency, sabotaging, toxic working atmosphere, dictatorship, lack of leadership, and job dissatisfaction are a common feature in the company daily operations. **Discuss the possible causes of conflict between departments at Ngopathimo Trading and how it can be addressed in practice.**

**Answers:**

- A line person lower down in the organisation may be faced with dual authority when staff tries to put orders to line personnel.
- Staff specialists may aim to initiate change and improvement while line personnel are orientated to achieving present goals - usually by using trusted methods.
- Line personnel are more generalised while staff personnel are usually specialists. Staff personnel are using their specialist base as a reference to diagnose problems arising within a line function. The result may be two vastly different solutions to the same problem.

2. As per the case study, what was interesting about the HR-initiated survey is that it cemented and transformed allegations into a proven and factual narrative to which management
future decisions of leading and growing the company can be based. **Explain the importance of HR data to Ngopathimo Trading management.** (6)

**Answers:**

➢ To facilitate the decision making related to management.
➢ To facilitate feedback to other stakeholders regarding human resource related matters.
➢ To store personal details of individual employees’ reference.
➢ To provide a basis for decision making in every area of personnel work.
➢ Employee personnel folders must be maintained in a secure area that guards against unauthorized access yet is readily accessible for supervisors to enter notes and other documentation.
➢ Compile only job-related information in the personnel file.
➢ Generally, and if administratively viable, a separate confidential folder is maintained for information which is to be revealed on a need-to-know basis.

2.1 Discuss in detail the evolution of Human Resources domain over the years. (10)

➢ **Industrialization**

The industrialization in the latter half of the 18th century. People worked in factories and the jobs required little or no skills. Little job security and they can be discharge and replaced at the whim of the factory owner. Welfare Secretaries to deal with human problems related to industrialization.

➢ **The emergence of Scientific Management**

Frederik Tylor develops ideas on scientific Management. Propagated the use of scientific techniques to elicit higher output, higher profits through wage incentive system. He strongly believed in using the scientific methods to study the working conditions and jobs in order to identify best working methods. As a results of scientific management movement welfare secretaries were replaced by a personnel department and took over the responsibilities of:

- Maintaining wages at proper level
- Improving the working conditions
- Dealing with employees’ grievances
- Dealing the unions

➢ **Hawthorne Studies**
study begin in the 1920’s. To determine the effects what effect hours of work, periods of rest, and lighting might have on worker fatigue and productivity. The study was conducted by Elton Moyo and others. The study spurred the efforts to humanize the workplace. Find more-sensitive ways to motivate workers, rather than continue regarding them as assembly line robots who could be kept producing through fear and discipline. Another result of the Hawthorne study was the development of the non-directive approach counselling, the emotions of the employees are taken into considerations.

➢ Human Relations Movement

During the period 1924 – 1933, Elton Moyo and some colleagues at Harvard University also conducted a series of research studies.

The human relations movement emphasised the following social and psychological factors:

- Individual differences among employees
- Relationships with other workers and managers
- The leadership style of and support from managers
- The involvement of employees in decision making.

The Human relations approach was undoubtedly responsible for improvement of work conditions.

➢ Behavioural Sciences

When the managers and psychologists became aware of the need to regard people as different from other, inorganic (no-living) resources in the organisation, they started examining other social and biological sciences concerned with the study of human behaviour for the sake of improving productivity. The study field of organisational was born. Organisational behaviour become a subject of organisational development, also popularly known as “OD”.

Case Study 2: ‘Youth Growing With the Nation’

The Olukonda Youth Forum (OYF) was established in 2001 to ‘foster among the [Olukonda] youth a spirit of national identity, a sense of unity and self-respect, as well as in depth awareness of social, economic, political, educational and cultural prospects and adversities (NYC, 2021). The association was established in line with The National Youth Council (NYC) mandate.

The Association strategic plan consists of various strategic themes which are broken down into annual & monthly activities. Computer literacy, career guidance, volunteering, making job applications and interview preparations, emotional intelligence, people skills, networking and
teamworking, financial literacy, mentoring, project management and negotiation skill are priority areas for training and development for young people. Its management structure consists of the chairperson, deputy, secretary, and treasurer. Below management are public relations volunteer, project coordinator volunteer and community liaison volunteer. The internal auditor volunteer and legal affairs volunteer also forms part of the structure with an additional reporting line to the board of directors.

To support OYF endeavors, a senior youth officer from the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sports and Culture Megameno !Oas (a graduate of OYF) has been assigned to ensure unity, provide leadership and support. She ensured that tasks and activities are well coordinated and installed a culture of teamwork and unity at every stage of the association structure. A fitting example is a recent campaign to encourage people to get vaccinated against COVID-19. Volunteers were divided in teams as per the association structure mixed with community volunteers to which they serve as the leading team. The campaign success is owed to cohesion within the team and good communication across the entire organisation and ministerial support (Megameno in particular).

Hitherto, the Association graduated countless leaders and successful businessman and woman, a resounding success and a testimony of hard work, teamwork, and unity.

**Question 2**

2.1 The OYF management structure consists of the chairperson, deputy, secretary, and treasurer. Below management are public relations volunteer, project coordinator volunteer and community liaison volunteer. The internal auditor volunteer and legal affairs volunteer also forms part of the structure with an additional reporting line to the board of directors.

**Sketch the OYF organisational structure with clear reporting lines as indicated in the case study. Also, provide a short description/motivation of your diagram.** (10)
As depicted in the board of directors is the highest decision-making body for the OYF organization. The Chairperson as a head is the ex-official and form part of the board of directors. The Chairperson reports to the board of director. Whilst the Deputy Chairperson reports to the Chairperson and in the absence of the Chairperson, he/she act as an Accounting Officer. Both Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson form part of the management structure. The Secretary and the Treasurer are also members of the management structure, and they report to the Deputy
Chairperson as second in command and in the event where the Deputy Chairperson is not present, they both report to the Chairperson. Below management members such as Public Relations Volunteer, Project Coordinator Volunteer and Community Liaison Volunteer, they all report to management structure either Secretary or Treasurer. However, Internal Auditor Volunteer and Legal Affairs Volunteer reports directly to the board of director due to the nature of their job and to avoid conflict of interest from the chairperson or management structure.

2.2 Your answer to the above question suggests different types of teams that exists in the organisation. Discuss the functions of each of those teams/departments at OYF. (10)

**Answers:**

➢ **Quality Circles**

Quality circles are groups that consist of a number of workers who meet regularly with their superiors to discuss quality problems and to find joint solutions through the process of group problem-solving.

➢ **Project teams**

Project teams are also referred to as task forces. They are work groups that are brought together for a specific purpose. They dissolve when a project is completed.

➢ **Self-directed work team (SDWT)**

Also known as an autonomous work group or self-managed work team this is usually a relatively small group (6-8) of well-trained employees that is fully responsible for achieving complex goals such as producing an entire new product.

➢ **Problem –Solving teams**

Problem-solving teams comprise of employees who meet on a weekly basis to discuss ways of improving the quality of products, efficiency of work methods, and environment.

➢ **Virtual teams**

These are teams that comprised of members in different locations who develop and manage new products such as an electronic advertising board.

2.3 From the case study and beyond, explain the characteristics of a high-performance work teams. (10)

**Answers:**
➢ The group has a clear vision and goal, which are internalised by each member.
➢ The group consists of a diverse number of individuals who, due to their unique characteristics, make unique contributions to the group’ success.
➢ Disagreement is viewed as constructive, and members are willing to consider all ideas with an open mind.
➢ Interpersonal relations are relaxed, with ample open communication and mutual support.
➢ Group members identify strongly with the group, and feel proud of the way the group functions, as well as its achievements.
➢ Change is not feared but initiated.

2.4 In attempting to design an effective work unit for the employees, one may take the various factors. Discuss five factors which influencing job design. (10)

Answers:
➢ The values that specialisation and repetition have on the operation
➢ Changing technology
➢ Labour union policy
➢ Abilities of present personnel
➢ Abilities of potential employees
➢ The interaction requirements of jobs within the organisation
➢ Consider the psychological and social needs of human beings that may be met at work.
➢ The organisational objectives the job was created to fulfil.
➢ Industrial engineering considerations, including ways to make the job technologically efficient.
➢ Human engineering concerns, including workers’ physical and mental capabilities.
➢ Quality of work life changes.

2.5 In a short summary, how did the six units/chapters (covering this assignment) shape your understanding of the human resources field in the organisation? Do you foresee applying what you have learned thus far, how? (10)

Answers:
Here, students are required to express own understanding in their own words and not listing topics or themes appearing in prescribed course materials. Also, the question is twofold, the latter requiring students to relate theory to practice. Lastly, the students’ answers should revolve around the following topics which are covered so far in this tutorial letters. Topics are; Historical Development of Human Resources, Organisational Structures and Grouping Work Activities, Line

The lecturer's judgement is key to awarding marks.

Total Marks for Assignment 100