MBA 640.01: Human Resource Management

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University of Montana - Missoula
September 3, 2003

MBA 640 – HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT
FALL 2003
Maureen Fleming, Ph. D.


REQUIRED READINGS:

Wall Street Journal
Time, Newsweek, U. S. News & World Report, or The Economist
Business Week, Fortune

OFFICE HOURS: Tuesday 10:15-11:45, Wednesday 10:15-11:45 or by appointment
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HOME PHONE: 549-7901

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE:

The purpose of this course is to provide you with opportunities to improve your ability to make human resource decisions in a variety of organizational situations. Students are required to analyze, discuss, and make recommendations and decisions based on available facts and information consistent with sound business and management concepts. The course should enable you to:

1. Apply human resource knowledge in an analytical manner.
2. Develop an understanding of the personnel/human resource literature.
3. Improve organizational problem solving ability—make effective human resource decisions.
4. Experience "real world" human resource problems.
5. Improve oral presentation ability.
6. Improve written communication ability.
7. Improve ability to work as part of a group.

CLASSROOM PROCEDURE:

The class will be run as a seminar to the extent possible. You are expected to actively participate during class discussion. In order for you to participate, you are expected to read the assignments on a regular basis and to do necessary library research in order to be informed about the assigned topic.

CURRENT EVENTS:

For each class, you are to read current business periodicals to find something current happening in business about a topic to be discussed. Once you find a relevant article, copy it, read it, bring it to class. You must turn in the copy as well as be able to discuss it in class.

CLASS ABSENCE:

You are expected to attend each class meeting. If you miss class, within one week complete the class assignments and turn them in to me.

GRADES:

1 Best Companies Analysis 100
1 HR plan 100
1 research project 100
TOTAL 300 Points

A = 94% - 100%
B = 86% - 93%
C = 78 – 85%
F = < 77%

LATE PAPERS ARE NOT ACCEPTED
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>In-class Activities</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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| SEPT 8 | Ch. 1: The Nature of HRM  
Enterprise Case  
Ethical Dilemmas  
Ch. 2: The Strategic HR Environment  
Building HR Skills  
Chaparral Steel Case  
Ethical Dilemmas | Internet Exercise:  
Chapter 2                                                                 |                                                      |
| SEPT 10| Ch. 4: The Global Environment  
Building HR Skills  
International Mergers Case  
Ethical Dilemmas | Internet Exercise:  
Chapter 4                                                                 |                                                      |
| SEPT 15| Ch. 5: HR Planning  
Dept. CEO Case  
Ethical Dilemmas  
Ch. 6: Recruiting HR  
Building HR Skills (bring job ads to class)  
Recruiters Edge Case  
Ethical Dilemmas |                                |                                                      |
| SEPT 17| Ch. 7: Selecting and Placing  
Building HR Skills  
Ethical Dilemmas  
High Risk Case | 6:30 Pizza with Board of Investment  
Trustees (home of Maureen Fleming and Ray Murray  
directions attached)  
RESEARCH PROJECT  
PROPOSAL DUE |                                                      |
| SEPT 18| 2:00 p.m. GBB 201: World of Investments (Deep Value)  
Bruce Campbell, Pyrford Investments, London, England – ATTENDANCE MANDATORY |                                                      |                                                      |
| SEPT 22| Ch. 8: Performance Management  
Building HR Skills  
Ethical Dilemmas  
Performance Review Case  
Ch. 9: Training and Development  
Building HR Skills  
Ethical Dilemmas  
Boeing Case |                                                      |                                                      |
| SEPT 23| 2:00 p.m. GBB 201: Intro to Branding Yourself  
Professor Campbell – REQUIRED |                                                      |                                                      |
| SEPT 24| Ch. 10: Career Planning & Development  
Building HR Skills  
Ethical Dilemmas  
Case on Multiple Career Paths |                                                      |                                                      |
| SEPT 25| 2:00 p.m. GBB 201: Resumes  
Professor Campbell - REQUIRED |                                                      |                                                      |
| SEPT 29| NO CLASS                                                                 |                                                      |                                                      |
| OCT 1  | Career Fair – attendance is REQUIRED                                      |                                                      |                                                      |
| OCT 6  | RESEARCH PRESENTATION                                                      | RESUME DUE  
ONE PAGE REPORT  
ON CAREER FAIR DUE |                                                      |
<p>| OCT 8  | RESEARCH PRESENTATION                                                      | RESEARCH PROJECT DUE |                                                      |
| OCT 13 | RESEARCH PRESENTATION                                                      |                                                      |                                                      |
| OCT 15 | RESEARCH PRESENTATION                                                      |                                                      |                                                      |</p>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Chapters/Case Studies</th>
<th>Internet Exercise:</th>
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| OCT 20 | Ch. 11: Basic Compensation  
Building HR Skills - Use your own employer Ethical Dilemma  
Walmart-GM Case  
Ch. 12: Incentives & Performance Based Awards  
Building HR Skills Ethical Dilemma  
Continental Case | Chapter 11 |
| OCT 22 | Ch. 13: Employee Benefits and Services  
Case; Dilemma  
Chapter 14:  
Case: Ethical Dilemma | Chapter 13 |
| OCT 27 | Discussion of companies | |
| OCT 29 | Ch. 15: Managing the Work Environment  
Building HR Skills Ethical Dilemma  
Georgia Pacific Case  
Ch. 16: Managing the Diverse Work Force  
Building HR Skills Ethical Dilemma  
Case: The Avon Way | |
| NOV 3  | Ch. 17: Managing New Employment Relations  
Building HR Skills Ethical Dilemma  
Case: Temps | |
| NOV 5  | Discussion of plans | |

PLEASE KEEP A COPY OF EVERYTHING THAT IS GIVEN TO THE INSTRUCTOR.

**HR PLAN**

Develop an HR plan for a company of 50-150 employees. Assume there is no plan in place. Include a brief outline of what is needed. 5-7 pages in length – brevity and clarity will be key factors in grading. Paper due November 5.
RESEARCH PROJECT

Your mission is to investigate a contemporary problem or issue facing managers involving the human element of the organization. Your subject should not be a topic conventionally covered in textbooks or the literature (such as how to motivate employees, flexible benefit plans, work/family issues, etc.) but rather an area that is less developed in both management literature and practice and still presents formidable challenges to those individuals and organizations attempting to manage it.

You should start by consulting periodical literature to determine what research has been done on the topic and its findings. In addition you should do some original field research by investigating first-hand how several organizations are attempting to manage the issue and the consequences of these actions. In a nutshell, your investigation should explain the nature/sources and full extent of the problem and its consequences and examine how a variety of individual managers and/or organizations are dealing with the problem or issue, how successful these attempts appear to be, and general implication of your findings for managers.

You must develop a model which explains the issue and make recommendations for how different organizations might best deal with the issue.

You are free to choose any topic which interests you and fits the above guidelines, pending my approval. Below is a list of some possible topics.

- The Design and Implementation of HR Information Systems
- Managing A Volunteer Labor Force
- The Roles and Uses of Temporary Employees and Work Forces
- HR Strategies In Mergers and Acquisitions
- Employee Stock Ownership Programs
- HR Issues In Entrepreneurial Firms
- CEO Compensation
- Managing HR In Service Organizations
- Management of Professionals
- Team-Based Compensation: Issues, Problems and Successes
- HR Strategies In Nonprofit Organizations

The above are merely representative sample topics. You should feel free to propose any topic that you find particularly interesting or exciting and relevant to the course. You should also feel free and are encouraged to investigate any of these topics from a cross-cultural perspective by which you compare your own field research to secondary research done on the same topic in another cultural setting/country.

By September 17 you should submit a brief proposal outlining your topic, what you hope to find out about it, and your methodology for investigating the topic. This proposal should be as specific as possible and will serve as your foundation in the project. Deviations from it are possible, pending your research, but should be cleared through me.

Your final written paper should present a very thorough investigation, analysis, and discussion of your topic and be no more than 5 pages including executive summary and bibliography. If you cite references or quotes from other people, be sure to reference them in your text and include them in your bibliography, which should be arranged in a standard format.

This paper will be due in class on October 8. You must include an executive summary.

In proceeding with this assignment, please feel free to consult me regarding any issues, problems, early findings, etc. that concern you. I believe that with judicious topic selection you not only will enjoy this assignment but will also have the opportunity to sharpen a number of critical management skills.

You will present your executive summary in class beginning October 6. You will have no more than 5 minutes to present the summary. You should dress as you would for a job interview.
Every year, Fortune Magazine reports on the top 100 best companies to work for. You can find the list on the web or in the actual magazine article. Choose two (2) companies that are very different from each other and read about them. Compare and contrast them in terms of HR practices, culture, mission, etc. What are their keys to success? In other words, how did they get on the list? How would you describe their “people” strategy? What is the "latest" on them (any scandals, problems financially, a merger or acquisition, etc.)? Basically present a case analysis on why these two companies made the list and what about their HR practices seems to be working well.

Due Date: October 27
What is required: a well-written paper (5-10 pages). Discussion in class.
How Can I Establish the Credibility of the Source?

When you venture onto the Internet highway, you will tread a fine line between scholarly materials and junk. That's why some instructors discourage the use of Internet sources. However, there is some magnificent material on the Web, and you should not ignore it. Find the scholarly sites if you can, such as those for the American Philosophical Association (http://www.apa.org/apahome.html) or the National Institutes of Health (http://www.nih.gov). If you cannot determine the validity of the source, give your readers your best estimate of the scholarly value of the source. For example, the citation immediately below provides key information for the reader:

The UCLA Center for Communication Policy, which conducted an intensive study of television violence during 1995, has advised against making the television industry the "scapegoat for violence" by advocating a focus on "deadlier and more significant causes: inadequate parenting, drugs, underclass rage, unemployment and availability of weaponry" (UCLA Television Violence Report 1995).

The passage above identifies the reputable organization that conducted this "intensive" study.

Here’s another example:

John Armstrong, a spokesperson for Public Electronic Access to Knowledge (PEAK), states:

As we venture into this age of biotechnology, many people predict gene manipulation will be a powerful tool for improving the quality of life. They foresee plants engineered to resist pests, animals designed to produce large quantities of rare medicinals, and humans treated by gene therapy to relieve suffering.

The passage above connects the speaker to the professional organization he represents.

To learn more about the source of an Internet article, as in the case immediately above, learn to search out a home page. The address for Armstrong's article is http://www.peak.org/~armstroj/america.html#Aims, but by truncating the address to http://www.peak.org you can learn about the organization that Armstrong represents.

If you are not certain about the credibility of a source, that is, it seemingly has no scholarly or educational basis, make a choice: (a) do not cite it or (b) describe the source so that your readers can make their own judgments.

An Iowa non-profit organization, the Mothers for Natural Law, says—but offers no proof—that eight major crops are affected by genetically engineered organisms—canola, corn, cotton, dairy products, potatoes, soybeans, tomatoes, and yellow crook-neck squash ("What's on the Market").

Consult Usenet news groups with a critical eye. Anybody can publish through a news group so you might have unreliable material posted next to very authoritative and well-documented articles. Sometimes a Usenet group will have a moderator who screens the material that appears at the site, but even then the sources will be uneven in authenticity and accuracy. Having said this, we must admit that Usenet will often provide you with a fascinating thread of discussion on a single topic. You will be exposed to diverse voices with a full range of opinions, some highly subjective and others sober and objective. The whole of the debate can give you focus; the best of the sources will be the ones to cite in your text.

A Listserv program is an email network devoted to a focused topic. It is similar to Usenet in that various people, some novices and some experts, chat about the subject. Discussing the topic outside the classroom setting will place the issues in a larger context. Thus, you can learn something by reading even participating in the email discussions and debates. However, you must cite from these sources with care. Look at the email address to see if the person is affiliated with a university or government organization. Read critically. Weigh the evidence of one source against that of another. Use caution in making judicious selections. A knee-jerk acceptance of questionable material might damage your paper. Finally, comments by members of chat groups where participants do not use their real names should be avoided in a serious research paper.

Citing Electronic Sources in APA Style

Titles of books, journals, and volume numbers may be shown either in italics or with underlining.

Abstract


Advertisement


Anonymous Article


Archival or Scholarly Project

A general reference can be made in your text: Reference to a specific article in the archives will be made in the bibliography:


Article from a Scholarly Journal


Cartoon


Chapter or Portion of a Book

Often, sections and chapters of larger works will have their own URL, so you can send your reader directly to the part cited rather than the home page or title page:


Database
