

BINDURA UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE EDUCATION
FACULTY OF COMMERCE
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MASTER OF BUSINESS LEADERSHIP
STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (MBL 525)
EXAMINATION PAPER
DURATION: 3 HOURS 30 MINUTES

INSTRUCTIONS AND INFORMATION TO CANDIDATES

1. Section A is compulsory and carries 40 marks.
 2. Answer Question 1 from Section A and any three (3) questions from Section B.
 3. The paper carries six questions.
 4. All questions in Section B carry equal marks of 20 each.
 5. The use of cell phones is not allowed in the examination.
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JUN 2024

SECTION A : [COMPULSORY]

QUESTION 1.

CASE STUDY: EMPLOYABILITY -THE KEY BEHAVIOURS FOR AN EFFECTIVE EMPLOYEE

The increasing globalization of the world economy has arguably made the world a 'smaller place' suggesting that employment relations practices may be becoming more similar or 'converging' across different countries regardless national borders, This may be driven in part by various management practices such as human resource management and other internationally recognised standards, some of which may be driven by multinational enterprises (MNEs). However, while it may be true that there are pressures for such convergence, there is a continuing and substantial variation in employment relations practices in different countries. This is largely due to the fact that employment relations are strongly embedded within different national societal arrangements reflecting different systems of law and political ideologies which produce a variety of institutions, attitudes and custom and practice in different countries.

One of the greatest challenges for all modern businesses in the 21st Century is to ensure that as many people as possible in their organization are economically active and are contributing to the organization. It's now cliché but none the less true - their most important resource is people.

And it is important for people too. As Abraham Maslow suggested, personal motivation is often driven by factors such as a sense of belonging, a sense of achievement and a sense of self actualisation – personal growth.

For employers, the challenge is generally:

- What kind of skills, knowledge and behaviours will we need to be able to run a great organization and meet the needs of our clients
- To what extent are these in place - what must we do to attend to any gaps - Can we recruit? Can we develop the people we already employ?
- What will this mean for people in our organization - especially in terms of adaptability and agility?

In organizations, this is often captured in talent management programs.

What is happening all over the world is that employers and societies are beginning to understand that employability is more than thinking about skills, knowledge and preferences. It embraces what most call attitude. With a good attitude, an individual can do many jobs and can consider and adopt many careers. This often enables them to take different career paths to their ultimate goal.

So, what does Employability look like?

In 2013 AQR International consulted with almost 500 employers, large and small, to identify the qualities that they found to be essential in the very best employees. Although skills, knowledge and qualifications all had their place, the overriding requirement was for something most called 'Attitude'. Employers seemed to value this above all else. This required further analysis to be able to understand this clearly. The outcome was that a good 'Attitude' was, for almost everyone, the combination of a positive mindset and a specific set of positive behaviours around three core areas. Those behaviours are summarized below:

POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS – 'how the most employable act'

Skills in Dealing with People (Who)

1. Team-working and Self Reliance – being able to work in either setting
2. Altruism – working for the good of others
3. Emotional Intelligence – being aware of one's impact on others and of their impact on you – and responding accordingly
4. Assertiveness – being able to deal effectively with others to achieve objectives

Skills in Dealing with Problems (How)

1. Problem Solving – to recognize problems and know how to solve them
2. Creativity – to be able to offer solutions or work with others to do this
3. Organization – to understand and accept processes and systems
4. Continuous Improvement – to reflect, even when doing well, and seek to do better

Motivation and Drivers (Why)

1. Conscientiousness – delivering on time and on target – particularly service to others
2. Concern for Standards – ensuring delivery of high quality work
3. Ambition – to be aspirational and want to grow

4. Continuous Personal Development – investing in self to be better and not just wait for an employer to do this.

These three elements are now embodied into the CARRUS employability model which also has an accompanying measure to assess these qualities in individuals.

This provides a framework for employers (and schools, colleges and universities) against which they can assess and evaluate the 'work readiness' of their people and from that, do something about that. The key here is effective assessment of what you have.

Interestingly in 2016, the World Economic Forum published its Future of Jobs Report and it forecast that the top ten skills that employees of all types will need by 2020 will be:

1. Complex Problem Solving
2. Critical thinking
3. Creativity
4. People Management
5. Co-coordinating with Others
6. Emotional Intelligence
7. Judgment and Decision Making
8. Service Orientation
9. Negotiation
10. Cognitive Flexibility – the ability to think about two or more things at a time.

(Source: Future of Jobs Report, 2016, World Economic Forum)

They, too, estimated that five years from now, over one-third of skills (35%) that are considered important in today's workforce will have changed. Although this looks at what a successful employee will need from the perspective of their skills, it is not difficult to see the connection between these specific skills and the mindset and behaviours identified in the AQR International study.

The world of work is changing quickly whether it is being driven by new demands from the economy/society or from customers for new products and services. It is perhaps vital to ensure that people are developed to respond to the challenges and opportunities in a way which is:

- Productive – achieving more with the resources available
- Healthy – enabling wellbeing and good mental health when adjusting to the change
- Positive – enjoying the change and achieving “happiness”
- Aspirational – creating a mindset based on continuous improvement and personal growth

The research and studies carried out by AQR International and The World Economic Forum have produced frameworks which are valuable for all those who are involved in leading, managing and developing people who are the life blood of the economy and the organizations within it.

Source: Adapted from: Strycharczyk D, co-author with Charlotte Bosworth of OCR, of Developing Employability and Enterprise (Kogan Page 2020).

Required:

- What is meant by employee “attitude”? (10 marks)
- What is driving the World of Work to change so fast? (10 marks)
- Briefly explain the CARRUS employability model. (10 marks)
- Explain why it is said that people are the most important resources of the organization? (10 marks)

[Total: 40 marks]

SECTION B: Answer any three (3) questions from this section.

QUESTION 2

Examine the major functions of the Human Capital Department. **[20 marks]**

QUESTION 3

Giving examples, explore how Human Resources Management functions can be aligned to the vision and objectives of an organization that you are familiar with. **[20 marks]**

QUESTION 4

Explore the implications of poor employee selection strategies to the organizations you observed in Zimbabwe. **[20 marks]**

QUESTION 5

Explore the relevance of Employee Costs and Benefits to employers under the VUCA environment giving examples from your experience. **[20 marks]**

QUESTION 6

Examine the effect of Covid'19 to Human Resources Information System and Technology with examples from different sectors of the economy. **[20 marks]**

END OF EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER