

Tutorial Letter 202/1/2018

Human Resource Management for Line Managers

HRM2605

Semester 1

Department of Human Resource Management

This tutorial letter contains feedback on Assignment 02 and further information on the examination.

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Dear Student

1 INTRODUCTION

We trust that you are making good progress in mastering the study material. Bearing in mind that the volume of work is substantial, we strongly advise that you work through the study material and all the assignments carefully and thoroughly. The main purpose of this tutorial letter is to provide you with feedback on Assignment 02. This tutorial letter is important because you will need to study the feedback contained in it for examination purposes.

By now, you should have received the following study material for HRM2605:

Tutorial letter	Description of the content
HRM2605/101/3/2018	Introduction, information about the online module, the purpose and outcomes of the module, contacting the lecturer, department of human resource management, the university and fellow students, the prescribed book, how the module should be approached, student support systems and services at Unisa, myUnisa, due dates for the module, how you will be assessed for this module, information about the SABPP, frequently asked questions (FAQs), conclusion, appendix A, B, C and D.
HRM2605/201/1/2018	introduction, guidelines for answering Assignment 01, important notice regarding Assignment 2, the examination, and conclusion
HRM2605/202/1/2018 (<i>this tutorial letter</i>)	Introduction, guidelines for answering Assignment 02 and a marking schedule, the examination and conclusion

If you have not received these tutorial letters, please download them from myUnisa. Unfortunately, lecturers cannot send tutorial letters to students.

2 FEEDBACK ON ASSIGNMENT 02 (FIRST SEMESTER)

We trust that you found Assignment 02 interesting and stimulating. The questions for this assignment were specifically designed to help you gain a better understanding of the study material.

The purpose of this assignment was to test your understanding and integration of the theory and to determine whether you were able to link and apply the theory to a practical situation.

Learning outcomes

Workbooks 02, 03, 04, 06, 07, 08, 10 and 11

Chapters 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12 and 13

After completing this assignment, you should be able to;

- apply basic knowledge of HRM principles to human resource activities related to line management duties
- indicate how line managers can contribute to organisational success through the implementation of HR policies and procedures
- illustrate the legislative framework for managing employees in the workplace

Question 1

You were required to read the scenario on page 27 in Appendix A in Tutorial Letter HRM2605/101/3/2018 and then answer the questions that followed.

Question 1.1

Discuss the role of the line manager in performance management. (3)

Reference in the prescribed book: Section 9.4.1

You were required to discuss the role of the line manager in the performance management function for three (3) marks.

Line managers should

- discuss the methods that will be used prior to the appraisal interview (1 mark)
- specify which areas of performance are evaluated, how often, how the evaluation takes place and its significance to the employee (1 mark)
- appraise the employee's performance according to the set standards (1 mark)
- discuss the appraisal with the employee, allowing employees to discuss areas of agreement and disagreement (1 mark)
- identify performance problems (1 mark)

Question 1.2

Identify and briefly discuss the rater error that the line manager is guilty of in the scenario. (2)

Reference in the prescribed book: Section 9.8

You were required to identify (1 mark) and briefly discuss (1 mark) the rater error that the line manager in the scenario was guilty of.

The line manager is guilty of being too strict. **Strictness** is defined as being too critical of an employee's work performance. The line manager therefore gave low ratings to all his subordinates, even though some employees might have achieved an average or above-average performance level. Strict managers are often very demanding and feel that their subordinates are not living up to the manager's desired standards.

Question 1.3

What could the line manager have done to ensure that the performance appraisal interview is productive and helpful to the employees? (5)

Reference in the prescribed book: Section 9.13

You were required to discuss the steps that the line manager could have followed to ensure that the performance appraisal interview is productive and helpful to the employees (5 marks). Although there are no rules for how to conduct an appraisal interview, there are some guidelines or steps that line managers can follow that will increase the employees' willingness to discuss their performance, accept

feedback and increase their overall satisfaction with the appraisal interview. These steps are outlined in section 9.13.2 in the prescribed book:

- Step 1:** Prepare for the interview
- Step 2:** State the purpose of the interview
- Step 3:** Indicate specific areas of good performance and areas that need improvement.
- Step 4:** Invite participation
- Step 5:** Focus on development

Question 1.4

Explain why it is important to identify training and development needs in a performance appraisal interview. (2)

Reference in the prescribed book: Sections 9.2 and 10.2

You had to explain why it is important for line managers to identify training and development needs during the performance appraisal process (2 marks).

The results of a performance appraisal can influence decisions about the training and development of employees. Below-average or poor performance evaluations can, for example, signal areas of employee behaviour that could be strengthened through training and development. Although training and development cannot solve all performance problems, a sound training and development programme is often instrumental in minimising and/or addressing these problems. Training and development is therefore necessary to fill the gap between the employee's predicted and actual performance.

Question 1.5

Briefly discuss the process that the employees should follow to lodge a grievance against their line manager. (5)

Reference in the prescribed book: Section 13.8.1

You were required to outline and briefly discuss the procedure for handling grievances in the organisation (5 marks).

The procedure for handling grievances is not regulated by legislation, but is agreed upon between the parties to a collective agreement. It therefore varies from organisation to organisation. The following steps can however be identified:

- Step 1:** The employee informs his/her supervisor verbally of the grievance. The supervisor and the employee will first attempt to resolve the matter informally before it is referred to the next step.
- Step 2:** The employee will discuss his/her grievance with a shop steward. The shop steward will investigate the grievance and complete a grievance form. The written grievance is delivered to the supervisor and a meeting is held to discuss the grievance. During this stage, an attempt should be made between the three parties to resolve the grievance. If the grievance

cannot however be resolved, the employee and union may appeal the decision to step three of the process.

Step 3: During this stage, higher-level union and management officials meet with the employee and supervisor to discuss the grievance. If the employee and union representative are not satisfied with management's decision, they may appeal to the next step.

Step 4: At this step, the employee is often represented by a higher level union representative. The plant manager and the labour relations director can for example represent management. Again, management listens to the arguments and then issues its ruling on the matter. This process continues to the highest level of management.

Step 5: If the employee and union is still dissatisfied with the results, they may declare a dispute and follow the dispute resolution procedure. The final step could entail mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement or a strike.

Question 1.6

Outline at least three (3) reasons why an organisation needs a compensation system. (3)

Reference in the prescribed book: Section 11.1

You had to outline (name) at least three reasons why an organisation needs a compensation system (3 marks).

The basic objectives of the compensation system, which help outline why an organisation needs a good compensation system, include to:

- (a) attract good applicants
- (b) retain good employees
- (c) help motivate employees
- (d) comply with relevant laws and regulations

Total marks for question 1 = 20

Question 2

To accommodate employees living with HIV/AIDS managers should develop workplace policies and programmes to manage HIV/AIDS in the workplace. Explain how line managers could accommodate employees living with HIV/AIDS by discussing the objectives of the Code of Good Practice on Key Aspects on HIV/AIDS and Employment, which are of relevance to employers. (5)

Reference in the prescribed book: Section 12.3.5

You had to explain how line managers could accommodate employees living with HIV/AIDS by referring to the objectives of the Code of Good Practice on Aspects of HIV and AIDS and Employment (5 marks).

The following principles set out by the Code are of relevance to employers:

- No employer may require an employee or applicant for employment to undertake an HIV test in order to ascertain the individual's HIV status.

- Where employees choose to disclose their HIV status to an employer, such information must be kept confidential.
- Employers should provide reasonable accommodation to employees living with HIV/AIDS. Such reasonable accommodation includes adapting existing facilities and equipment, restructuring jobs and adjusting working time and leave.
- Workers with HIV/AIDS must not be discriminated against.
- Where an employee is too ill to perform his/her duties, an employer is obliged to follow the guidelines for dismissal for incapacity.
- Employers must provide a workplace that is safe and without risk to the health of its employees.
- Employers should design and implement a monitoring and evaluation plan to address HIV/AIDS in the workplace.

Question 3

You were required to read the scenarios on page 28 in Appendix A in Tutorial Letter HRM2605/101/3/2018 and indicate if the employees in the three scenarios should receive orientation or not (one mark each). You then had to give a reason for your answer (1 mark).

Reference in the prescribed book: Section 7.6

Mary, Thomas and Jackson should receive orientation. When an employee has been promoted (Mary) or transferred (Thomas) within an organisation, they should receive orientation because the new position typically involves a change in environment and duties. New employees (Jackson) should receive proper orientation that includes introducing the new employee to wo-workers, explaining job duties and responsibilities, as well as policies, procedures, rules and regulations and taking the employees on a familiarisation tour of the company.

Question 4

Oniccah is the HR manager of a large manufacturing company in South Africa. About a year and a half ago, the company employed Alex as a marketing manager. Management is however not satisfied with Alex's performance, as he never really received any formal training and he is still unfamiliar with the company's product line and computer system. Oniccah has approached you for advice about how to handle the situation.

- 4.1 Explain to Oniccah what needs to happen in order to improve Alex's performance by describing which HR process should be implemented for Alex. (2)**
- 4.2 Describe to Oniccah which HR processes (or functions) need to be reviewed to ensure that this situation does not happen again. (10)**

Reference in the prescribed book: Introductory sections to chapter 10 and 10.2, as well as chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9

You firstly had to explain that a **training and development (T&D)** programme needs to be implemented, because Alex is not performing according to the set standards. Employees who perform unsatisfactorily because of a deficiency in skills are prime candidates for T&D. Although T&D cannot solve all performance problems, a sound T&D programme is often instrumental in minimising and/or addressing these problems.

Secondly, you had to discuss the HR processes that need to be revised to ensure that poor performance does not happen again. The first step is: revise the company's **performance appraisal system** to determine why Alex's poor performance was not detected sooner (he has been working there for a year and a half). If a proper performance appraisal system was in place Alex could have received training and development sooner, which would have led to better performance. Secondly, the company's **recruitment and selection** process needs to be investigated and revised to determine why the right person was not appointed. They must revisit their recruitment methods and the criteria that they set; and they should also investigate the selection process to determine if there are any aspects that need improvement to ensure better results. Thirdly, the **orientation process** that Alex was subjected to when he commenced duty also needs to be scrutinised to establish whether he was acquainted properly with his duties, tasks, goals and the job requirements. Fourthly, **strategic human resource planning (SHRP)** was necessary to ensure that employees with the appropriate talent, skills and desire are available and appointed in the right position, at the right time. SHRP therefore ensures that experienced talent is recruited well in advance. Lastly, the HR professional has to ensure that the information obtained from the **job analysis** is an accurate description of the position, because the job description and specification is used in various human resource functions.

Question 5

You were recently appointed as an HR officer at Prime Media. Even though Evelyn has welcomed you warmly, you still have to convince Evelyn that a proper internal staffing programme is needed. Evelyn has however made it clear that she is not interested in developing any "programme". The only thing she is interested in is solving the current problems at the company.

Prepare a presentation in which you explain at least four (4) reasons for a proper internal staffing programme to Evelyn. Be sure to emphasise the positive contribution such a programme could make in solving her problems by outlining at least six (6) advantages of internal staffing. (7)

Reference in the prescribed book: Sections 8.1 and 8.3

To answer this question successfully, you first had to discuss four reasons why it is important to design a proper internal staffing programme (4 marks). You then had to outline at least six advantages of internal staffing for three marks (6 x ½ mark = 3 marks).

A number of reasons why it is important to design a proper internal staffing programme can be identified. These include, for example (1) employee dissatisfaction, (2) increasing concerns with job security, (3) changing employee attitudes and concerns, (4) employment equity issues, and (5) a labour union presence. You had to identify and briefly discuss four of these reasons.

Internal staffing has many advantages, both for the organisation and the employee. Placing the right person in the right job will not only contribute to organisational effectiveness, but also to the survival of the organisation. Utilising the employee's abilities to the maximum will, in turn, contribute to greater employee satisfaction and commitment. Section 8.3 in the prescribed book will also provide you with additional information on potential advantages of internal staffing for both the employee and the employer.

**Total for Assignment 02 = 50 marks
(50 x 2 = 100%)**

3 ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The following assessment criteria was used to evaluate your unique answers to this assignment:

Question 1
Question 1.1 Discuss three (3) roles of the line manager in the performance management function (3 marks).
Question 1.2 Identify (1 mark) and briefly discuss (1 mark) the rater error that the line manager is guilty of in the scenario.
Question 1.3 Discuss the steps that the line manager could have followed to ensure that the performance appraisal interview is productive and helpful to the employees (5 marks).
Question 1.4 Explain why it is important for line managers to identify training and development needs during the performance appraisal process (2 marks).
Question 1.5 Outline and briefly discuss the procedure for handling grievances in the organisation (5 marks).
Question 1.6 Outline (name) three (3) reasons why an organisation needs a compensation system (3 marks).
Question 2 Explain how line managers could accommodate employees living with HIV/AIDS by referring to the objectives of the Code of Good Practice on Aspects of HIV and AIDS and Employment (5 marks).
Question 3 Indicate if the employees in the scenario should receive orientation or not (one mark each). Give a reason for your answer (1 mark for each scenario).
Question 4 First, explain which HR process/function needs to be implemented in the organisation to improve Alex's performance (2 marks). Secondly, identify and briefly discuss five (5) HR functions that need to be reviewed to ensure that situations involving poor performance does not happen again (5 functions x 2 marks each = 10 marks).
Question 5 First, explain at least four (4) reasons why an organisation needs a proper internal staffing programme (4 marks). Secondly, outline at least six (6) advantages of internal staffing (6 advantages x ½ mark each = 3 marks).

4 THE EXAMINATION

In section 3 in Tutorial Letter HRM2605/201/1/2018 we provided you with guidelines regarding the examination. To assist you further we have provided you with additional information as discussed below.

4.1 Examples of examination questions

The multiple-choice questions that you will find in the examination paper will be similar in format to those in Assignment 01, which is contained in Appendix A in Tutorial Letter 101. The following is an example of a more theoretical, essay-type or paragraph-type question from a previous examination paper:

Name and briefly discuss five external recruitment methods that the human resources (HR) manager can use during the recruitment process. (10)

When you answer a question like this, you may choose any **five external recruitment methods as discussed in your prescribed study material** and discuss each of them briefly. In your discussion you should ensure that you explain each method clearly by stating what each entails. **Do not make the mistake of including internal recruitment methods in your discussion.**

4.2 General information

In the past students have asked us to provide them with **hints and tips** for the examination. Please see Tutorial Letters HRM2605/101/3/2018 and HRM2605/201/1/2018. These contain detailed information about the examination and the myUnisa course page for this module. **We cannot provide any additional information, but please do not hesitate to contact us if you are struggling to master the content of the module for the examination.**

5 CONCLUSION

We trust that these guidelines are clear and will assist you to prepare yourself sufficiently for the examination. Please ensure that you start preparing for the examination well in advance, and that you read the questions in the examination carefully. We wish you every success in the examination.

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