

MGT/B 224: Managing Human Resources

Course Overview, Readings, Requirements, and Schedule

Course Overview

In the course of your career you will need to make decisions regarding how to manage, compensate, and motivate people. These are not trivial decisions; they have distinct consequences that can affect the success of your organization. As many managers and organizations now realize, effectively managing an organization's human assets can serve as a key source of competitive advantage. As such, decisions about managing people must be carefully thought out with regard to the organization's strategy, culture, and goals.

This course is designed for students to gain understanding and sensitivity to fundamental issues involved in the successful management of policies and practices related to human resources. In MGT/P/B 224, we will explore the different choices firm make in governing and managing their workers--decisions as to wages, benefits, performance evaluation, working conditions, etc. We will analyze employment systems' fit with firms' strategies, and the consequences of choices managers make regarding policies and practices. The general goal is to enable you to think both strategically and systematically about managing an organization's human assets.

It is important to note that this course is not specifically geared towards those interested in specializing in human resource management. Its primary focus is not on the technical or operational details of personnel administration, but rather on establishing the connections between human resource management and other concerns of general management.

This course is divided into three sections. In the first, we consider the importance of alignment: the alignment of human resource practices with a firm's strategy and aligning human resource practices so they are internally consistent. In the second section, we focus more specifically on a set of elements that constitute an HR system (e.g. recruitment, selection, performance evaluation). In the third, we consider a set of issues particularly relevant to managing current organizations (e.g. managing geographically dispersed teams, work-life balance, diversity).

Course Requirements and Grading

Group Project	35%
Individual Case Analyses	20%
Work/Life Issues Report	10%
Participation	35%

Required Readings Course packet

There is no textbook for the course. The readings are drawn from a number of sources. They include some academic articles, excerpts from longer works, cases, and short articles from the popular and business presses. Some additional materials may be distributed as the course progresses.

Your grade will be based on

- (1) A group project analyzing the employment systems and management practices of 1 organization of your choice. The project will consist of a 10 minute group presentation on the final day of class. It is due **Session 10** and is worth **35%** of your grade. More details will be given on the project as the quarter gets underway.
- (2) Two individual case analyses of your choosing (based on the Case Analysis Questions for Sessions 2-5, 7, and 9), which are together worth **20%** of your grade. Papers cannot exceed 3 double-spaced pages in length. Good analyses will present the case issues in relation to the course concepts and the other readings for relevant sessions. Written case analyses are due at the beginning of their respective class sessions.
- (3) A report due Session 8 in which you analyze how work/life issues were addressed in your most recent or current job. (NOTE: If you do not believe your most recent/current job provides an adequate example for this analysis, you may alternatively interview someone not currently enrolled in MGT/B/P 224 and analyze how work/life issues were addressed in their most recent or current job.) Good analyses will provide a clear, detailed description of the relevant HR system (using examples wherever possible) and a thoughtful analysis of what the consequences of these were for the firm and the affected workers. You should also provide specific recommendations for the firm as well as consideration of how these recommendations would affect both the firm and its workers. Papers cannot exceed 3 double-spaced pages in length. This will be worth **10%** of your grade.
- (4) Participation. Participation counts for **35%** of your grade, and includes class attendance, informed involvement in class discussions, cases and exercises. Attendance is critical for your learning in the class – if you cannot attend class, make sure to notify me in advance via e-mail. Participation is evaluated seriously: I appreciate timely, relevant, and interesting contributions that are constructive and contribute toward moving the discussion forward.
- (5) I use the following scheme to grade student participation in each class:
 - 3: Excellent
 - 2: Good
 - 1: Satisfactory
 - 0: Absent with reasonable cause and advance notification;
 - 3: Absent without cause

Notice! For all written assignments:

1. I do not accept late papers.
2. Please adhere to all page limits, using double spacing (and no fiddling with margins, either!). Any excess material will be ignored.
3. In my evaluations I take into account the quality of writing and presentation, the use of examples, and correctness of spelling and usage in assigning a grade.

Academic Integrity: All students who take this course are governed by the Univ. of California's standards of ethical conduct for students. These sections set forth the responsibilities of students and faculty to maintain a spirit of academic honesty and integrity. It is essential that you are aware of this code of conduct and the disciplinary actions that may be taken in the event of a violation. A copy of the Code of Academic Conduct may be found in your student handbook. Further details may be obtained from the GSM Associate Dean or the Office of Judicial Affairs.

Winter 2015: Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Session 1: HRM as Competitive Advantage

Assigned readings:

- Barlett and Ghoshal. Building Competitive Advantage Through People.
- Case: Reinventing Human Resources at the School District of Philadelphia

Session 2: Internal alignment of HR Practices

Assigned readings:

- “Consistent HR Practices,” Baron and Kreps, *Strategic Human Resources*, Ch. 3.
- Case: “Club Med” A and “Club Med” B

Case Analysis Questions:

1. Evaluate Club Med’s HR system, including recruitment, training, placement, and performance evaluation. Is this system internally aligned?
2. How do these HR practices fit with Club Med’s strategy?
3. What would you change at Club Med?

NOTE: Make sure to sign up for HBS Change Management Simulation (Session 6) by Jan, 23 2014. Pay attention to the section you sign up under!!

Full Time Students (MGT224): <https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/32089743>

Bay Area Students (MGP224): <https://cb.hbsp.harvard.edu/cbmp/access/32089756>

Session 3: Staffing & Recruitment

Assigned readings:

- Baron & Kreps, Staffing and Recruitment, Ch. 14. Pgs. 338-353.
- Case: S.G. Cowan: New Recruits

Case Analysis Questions:

1. What are the key decision points used by S.G. Cowen in making hiring decisions?
2. What is your evaluation of the process used by the firm? What is your evaluation of the criteria used by this organization in making hiring decisions? What, if anything, would you recommend they do differently?
3. Which two candidates would you select if you were a member of the recruiting committee?

Initial Project Status Report Due

Your group should submit a short written summary that includes:

- *Group members’ names and emails*
- *The organization you plan to study*
- *The contacts you plan to establish*

Have one representative from your group prepared to give a quick summary to the class that includes the organization you plan to study and contacts at that organization you plan to interview (or how you plan to go about establishing those contacts). You should also note any interesting issues you hope to investigate and any questions/concerns you have regarding your project during this report.

Session 4: Performance Evaluation

Assigned Readings

- Baron & Kreps. Performance Evaluation, Ch. 10. Pgs. 210-235.
- Case: National Semiconductor's India Design Center

Case Analysis Questions:

1. What is your assessment of the 360-feedback process used by the IDC team? What are its potential benefits? What are its risks?
2. If you were one of the senior managers at the IDC, what would you want to happen during the team feedback meeting? What concerns, if any, would you have going into this meeting?
3. What actions should Ashok and the other managers take to integrate senior managers into their team?
4. What types of teams would benefit from this 360-feedback intervention? What conditions need to be in place to make it successful?

Session 5. Incentive Systems & Goal Setting

Assigned Readings

- Baron & Kreps. Pay for performance. Ch 11. Pgs. 245-271.
- Case: Harrah's Entertainment, Inc.

Case Analysis Questions:

1. What are Harrah's HR practices, and how are they aligned (or misaligned) with its strategy?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of Harrah's gainsharing program?
3. What advice would you have for Winn about her recommendation to Loveman?

Session 6: Managing Organizational Change

Assigned Readings

- Kotter. Leading Change: why transformation efforts fail.
- In-class simulation, must sign up in advance!
 - Change Management Simulation: Power and Influence

Session 7: Managing Geographically Dispersed Employees and Teams

Assigned Readings

- Greenberg et al. Creating and sustaining trust in virtual teams.
- Case: The Leo Burnett Company LTD: Virtual team management.

Case Analysis Questions:

1. How was the Forever Young global advertising and communications team structured? Describe how roles, responsibilities, and relationships were structured between the different geographical teams.
2. What are key difficulties the Forever Young global team faced throughout the launch process? To what do you attribute these difficulties?
3. As Janet Carmichael, do you maintain centralized team control? Why or why not?
4. If you maintained centralized control, what actions would you take to improve team dynamics?

Session 8: Work-life policies and practices

Assigned Readings

- Hochschild. The Time Bind. Chapters 2 – 4.
- Case: Alex Montana at ESH Manufacturing Co.

Work-Life Issues Report due!!

Session 9: Managing Diversity in the Workplace

Assigned readings:

- Groysberg and Connolly. Great leaders who make the mix work.
- Case: L'Oréal S.A.: Rolling out the Global Diversity Strategy

Case Analysis Questions

1. How does L'Oréal diversity strategy fit with the firm's overall strategy?
2. How successful has the firms' efforts to implement a diversity strategy been thus far?
3. What are the major challenges facing Balustre-D'Erneville?
4. If you were in Balustre-D'Erneville's shoes, what steps would you take to promote diversity at L'Oréal? Where applicable, use Kotter's eight-step process for managing change as a guide for your recommendations.

Session 10: Final Project Presentations