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A human resource evaluation toolkit for mega size industrial projects

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Abstract

Human resource management (HRM) is subject to a level of organizational improvement and strategic change. This study improves our understanding about processes of HRM within an organizational level. It contributes to the existing literature about processes and decision-making of HRM. It develops a theoretical model, which can evaluate the needs of all parties, relevant to HRM especially in mega size industrial projects. The model is an evaluation tool for employees responsible at both organizational and project level. This study has generated a new practical framework, which reveals the factors influencing HR indexes within the project-oriented firms.

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1. Introduction

Today, Human Resource Management (HRM) is being renewed in organizations and gradually affirming its strategic role (Belout & Gauvreau, 2004). According to this, Human Resource (HR) management includes the assembly of the staff (Organization Chart, Defining Roles & Responsibilities and Job Descriptions) and the staff workload. Many of these outputs are available off the project's Gantt and other reports produced by project management planning. The project manager will also need to lead and manage the team by extracting training needs,

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motivation, resolve conflicts, appraise staff performance, and facilitate proper decision making to work effectively (Figures 9-1 and 9-2, PMBOK® Guide 5th Ed, 2013). However, regarding the assessment of HR teams in a mega size cross cultural projects, the PMBOK does not have much to say about the social and behavioral aspects, including organizational culture, team dynamics and leadership styles (Pons, 2008). (From this section forward, wherever PMBOK, OPM3 and PMCDF are mentioned, respectively, there are referring to the “PMBOK® Guide 5th Ed”, “OPM3® 3th Ed” and “PMCDF 2nd Ed”).

While individual team members need only to know their responsibilities, the project manager needs to create the project plans and keep the overall objectives in sight (Keegan, Huemann, & Turner, 2012; Chen & Lee, 2007). The uncertainty and possibility of failure is very much more proximal in projects than in general management, creating stress in the position. Time and cost constraints alongside less job security are more intense than ongoing management. In addition, team members are more difficult to coordinate, as they are from different professional backgrounds and may have no long-term relationships to maintain with colleagues. Also, the team may consist of people from both client and service provider organizations, with different and conflicting strategic objectives. It can be frustrating to have a task to do but have to rely on other’s people to do their part when those are not task-focused and do not feel to be fully accountable to daily issues of the project (Pons, 2008). Therefore, through human resource planning, management prepares to have the right people at the right places at the right times to fulfill both organizational and individual objectives (Walker, 1974). These are normal daily challenges for a project manager to evaluate his Human Recourse while HR behavior and reflection in a project oriented organization is far beyond companies with production line organization structures and may not get fitted/covered completely when evaluating them with ordinary evaluation tools (Keegan, Huemann, & Turner, 2012; Chen & Lee, 2007).

A common defect normally observed in industrial mega project environments is because of no predefined framework is implemented by a project manager, who is normally coming from an engineering background. (Stulgienė & Čiutienė, 2012; Sully de Luque & Arbaiza, 2005). Therefore, the HR workforce gets into a limbo situation to understand the norms and expectations under which they can get evaluated and scored at least above medium (Kumpikaite, 2007). To be optimistic a very professional project manager usually develops a framework for his own project and employees it all through the project life cycle. By this isolated and standalone process, an employee may get assessed as “High” in one project and different score in another project. Obviously this is because neither the project managers intend to use company’s framework (would love to develop their own), nor there is anything presented from organization’s HR department compatible with other project managerial processes in use inside projects (Liang, Marler, & Cui, 2012; Rudy & Fratričová, 2015; Stulgienė & Čiutienė, 2012). In most industrial mega projects, as soon as the final product is delivered to customer, all stakeholders are happy enough to forget the HR assessment, line up HR lessons learned and fine-tune the performance of this very important asset to build a “Ready to Mobilized” team for the next project/program (Liang, Marler, & Cui, 2012). Major target points for developing this model was: How can a model satisfy both organizational HR management needs and the HR perspective of real world project managers?

It should be highly noted that this study and model has been extracted based on input data from international standard guidelines and expert judgment to validate the outcomes while considering concerns from cultural/sub-cultural, enterprise environmental situation and unique company’s norms and beliefs.

Based on a fore mentioned challenges a model was developed and summarized in this paper to address an applied and tested HR performance evaluation toolkit for which it reviews both organizational enablers and quality of implementation of HR managerial process in the project’s organization (Medina, 2014; Delaney & Huselid, 1996).

2. Literature Review

Most organizations, design their HR processes to encourage certain desirable staff behaviors (norms) which is believed to maximize the chance of organizational success. This set of processes is called strategic human resource management (SHRM) (Pons, 2008). The Study of SHRM emerged out of researchers’ interests in understanding the relationship between human resource management and organizational performance (Delery & Doty, 1996; Kaufman, 2007). A large and immense literature on SHRM indicates that, the resource-based view (RBV) of SHRM drives the organization to gain competitive advantage from resources who are rare, valuable and inimitable (Barney, 1991). SHRM set of mind drives a manager to create his workplace trustworthy toward subordinates, providing

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