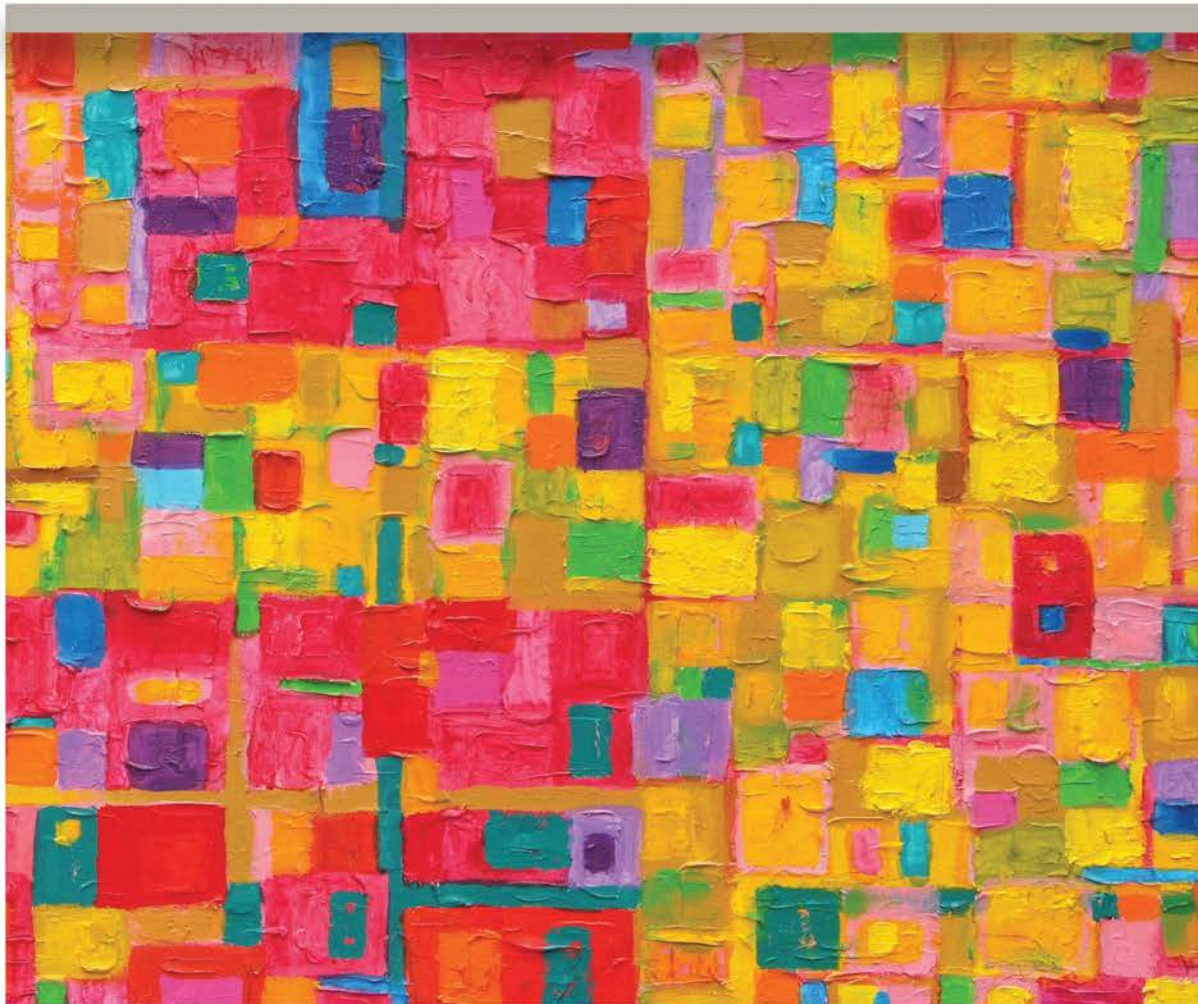VALENTINE   MEGLICH   MATHIS   JACKSON

HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT

SIXTEENTH EDITION

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MANAGEMENT

SIXTEENTH EDITION

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TO

Page and Will,
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In comparing the sixteenth edition of *Human Resource Management* with the first edition, the evolution that has occurred in the HR field is very apparent. Because we have carefully researched and recorded the changes in this book, we are told it has become the leader in both the academic and professional segments of the market. The book is a longtime standard in HR classes, and the authors are very gratified that their efforts are appreciated by so many.

While developing this text, we paid close attention to presenting information at an appropriate reading level and length, using many practical examples, and offering other learning devices to make the book more "student friendly." It is also worth noting that the authors have all received teaching and/or research awards, which illustrates knowledge of what it takes to effectively communicate the latest HR information both orally and in written form.

Casual comments from colleagues reveal a lack of clarity about how one successfully revises a textbook in a field that changes as rapidly as Human Resources. There are many hundreds of articles in the academic and professional literatures that have appeared in the three years since our last book was researched. When business examples from the *Wall Street Journal*, *Bloomberg Businessweek*, *HR Magazine*, and other trade publications are added, the number is staggering. These articles, as well as the themes that appear in them, represent the changing nature of the subject matter in HR and supplement the overall knowledge of the field. Consequently, this information must be added to a university text that effectively summarizes key HR issues. This book has provided a comprehensive overview of the HR profession for many editions, and it has successfully done that again in this current edition. You can be confident it contains the most current content that reflects the current HR practices used in organizations.

The field of HR management is different from some other areas of business. There is a definite academic/research side that explores new theories and knowledge, but HR has a more professional/applied side as well. Just ask leaders who deal with HR issues on a daily basis. This text focuses on both sides of the HR field, which has resulted in the book being used by many individuals to prepare for certification in the HR profession. Our approach has always been that both perspectives are very important in understanding the field, and this strategy is continued in the sixteenth edition.

The Sixteenth Edition

HR takes place in an environment that changes rapidly and impacts practice, resulting in necessary changes to the book being recognized between editions. The sixteenth edition identifies these changes and explains how they are being managed in the field. A few of the most significant characteristics of the sixteenth edition are detailed next. This new edition also contains a number of other positive content attributes that have been carried forward from previous editions, and you will find them throughout the text.

Global Human Resource Management

Business is global in scope and practice, a reality that has dramatically changed the HR profession over the years. Offshoring, global mergers and acquisitions, and cultural differences represent some of the issues that HR departments face. The sixteenth edition includes a chapter dedicated exclusively to the global opportunities and challenges that exist within the field of HR. In addition, various global topics are investigated to provide additional coverage of international HR concerns in this textbook. Global material is highlighted with a "global" icon.

Compensation Chapter Consolidation

To more efficiently present topics related to essential compensation issues, we combined two previous chapters on pay into one more succinct chapter on compensation. This streamlined

approach to compensation focuses on the issues that are most likely relevant to the new HR practitioner or line manager.

"What's Trending" Chapter sections

Human resource management is a complex field, so highlighting all the current trends can be difficult. However, there are a number of issues that are currently affecting organizations, particularly with regard to how they manage people at work. Employees are expected to have the proper knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform in a workplace that has many challenges and new expectations, which requires organizations to implement practices that help employees get better at what they do and perform well. Each chapter provides an overview of the current trends pertaining to the particular topics explored.

HR Highlight Feature

A new HR Highlight feature appears in the sixteenth edition that explores topical HR issues in the profession. This feature focuses on generalized subject matter not specifically tied to companies, making the content different from the HR Perspective and HR Competencies & Applications features that have been mainstays in this textbook over many editions. The HR Highlight feature instead introduces specific topics that require concerted intervention on the part of HR professionals, as well as the development of sound organizational practices by HR departments.

HR Ethics

The study of ethics is emphasized in the academic business community, and HR is a fertile area for the practical application of ethics material. The potential for unethical dealings in compensation, staffing, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO), and other areas is significant and problematic. At a minimum, investigation of these issues can provide a basis for discussion of HR ethics in the classroom, hopefully leading to greater consideration of ethical challenges in the HR profession. There is an HR "ethics" icon where HR ethics issues are covered.

Measuring HR Effectiveness, Strategy, and Leadership

The trend toward holding HR groups accountable for corporate performance has expanded, giving HR professionals a "seat at the strategic table." The days when HR managers could be successful because "they just love working with people" are long gone. HR leaders must be effective leaders who effectively shape the strategic direction of organizations. Benchmarking, metrics, and now analytics are a part of the analysis of how well HR is doing its job. The sixteenth edition uses a "metrics" icon to indicate where material on measuring HR is covered throughout the book. In addition, new "strategy" and "leadership" icons are included in various chapters to highlight where these topical areas are covered. Such attention to measurement, strategy, and leadership is welcome, as it documents how HR shapes and contributes to organizational goals in tangible ways.

Organization of the book

- Each chapter opens with a new "HR Headline" designed to introduce chapter material with a real company dilemma or problem. Learning objectives are provided at the beginning of each chapter.
- The latest trends and cutting-edge practices are highlighted at the beginning of each chapter in the "What's Trending" feature.
- Chapters contain a mix of four boxed features designed to convey different types of content: *HR Perspective* sections provide real examples of how companies deal with the issue covered. *HR Competencies & Applications* provide a "how to do it" view of the material based on key competencies identified in many professional models of HR. *HR Ethics* features highlight

some of the ethical issues encountered in the profession. Finally, *HR Highlight* features navigate current issues in the field of HR.

- Each chapter ends with a point-by-point "Summary."
- The "Critical Thinking Challenges" at the end of each chapter provide questions and exercises that allow readers to apply what has been learned in each chapter.
- New in-depth end-of-chapter cases showcase HR innovations in current organizations and present readers with a chance to critically assess the effectiveness of innovative people practices.

Material is organized around five sections:

- The Environment of Human Resource Management
- Jobs and Labor
- Talent Development
- Compensation
- Employee Relations and Global Human Resource Management

This edition presents both the continuity and changes occurring within human resource management. The chapters in each section will be highlighted next, along with some of the topics explored in each chapter.

Section One: The Environment of Human Resource Management

Section One contains chapters emphasizing the changing environment in which HR operates, as well as how HR can effectively adapt. *Chapter 1* explains why HR is needed and how employees can function as key assets for an organization. Basic HR functions and current HR challenges are covered, and ethics and HR as a career field are discussed. Different HR competencies that are important in the profession are also explored in this edition. *Chapter 2* discusses two primary ways of dealing with the changing environment—strategy and HR planning. The strategic planning process and HR's role in it are covered. A process for conducting HR planning is identified, including environmental analysis, assessing internal and external labor markets, and managing imbalances. The chapter also covers HR metrics and analytics and presents benchmarking and balanced scorecard processes. Good and bad strategy distinctions, HR analytics, and the HR audit are among topics investigated. *Chapter 3* deals with the EEO environment, including legal requirements and concepts. This comprehensive chapter also investigates the challenges presented by EEO issues. Gender inequity in compensation, discrimination based on sexual orientation, and religious discrimination/accommodation are discussed.

Section Two: Jobs and Labor

Section Two looks at people, the jobs they do, and how to bring these two factors together for the purposes of accomplishing work requirements. *Chapter 4* profiles the U.S. workforce participation rates and skills gaps, before turning to the nature of jobs, including job design and redesign, flexibility, telework, and work–life balance. The chapter then presents the most comprehensive coverage of job analysis available in a basic HR text. Treatment of the workforce is also covered, as is presentation of jobs and flexible work opportunities. *Chapter 5* investigates the individual–organizational relationship and retention. Individual performance factors, including a very brief summary of the leading work motivation ideas and the psychological contract, are identified. Absenteeism and turnover, including measurement issues, are covered. The discussion then turns to retaining employees and the available management options for improving retention. The focus on individual performance factors is emphasized, as is employee engagement, loyalty, and drivers of retention for high-performing employees. *Chapter 6* considers labor markets and recruiting. Online recruiting and the other common recruiting methods are examined, and this information is followed by a comprehensive look at measuring the success of recruiting. Recruiting and employer ethics and the use of technology and social media in recruiting are expanded. *Chapter 7* looks at placement, selection testing, interviewing, and background investigations, among other topics. The concept of person/environment fit as part of the selection and placement processes is also presented.

Section Three: Talent Development

Section Three considers bringing people along in their careers in organizations through training, talent management, and career and performance management. *Chapter 8* explores different potential strategies for training in the organization. A comprehensive model of the training process leads ultimately to training delivery and evaluation. Issues associated with sales training, the expansion of e-learning (online training) and m-learning (using mobile devices) based on new research, and the increased use of simulation and games in training are also covered. *Chapter 9* looks at talent management, leadership development, succession planning, and career issues, topics that have been very much in the literature since the last edition. This is reflected through the entire chapter, with special emphasis on integrating talent management into the organization's strategy and ideas for keeping high performers invested in their jobs. *Chapter 10* considers identifying and measuring employee performance. Performance appraisal with all its pros and cons is covered, as well as hints for the appraisal interview. In this edition, various issues surrounding performance appraisal are reviewed, and the voluminous new literature in performance has been reviewed and integrated.

Section Four: Compensation

Section Four summarizes compensation, incentives, and benefits. *Chapter 11* introduces basic compensation, incentive pay programs, total rewards, and the development of a pay system. This edition covers strategic compensation decisions, linkage of pay to motivation theories, and current compensation challenges, including gender parity and variable pay options. *Chapter 12* explains the different types of benefits that organizations offer, as well as how to effectively administer and manage these benefits so that employees are satisfied. New or expanded content includes international benefits, the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, outsourcing benefit administration, and technology-driven, self-service benefits administration.

Section Five: Employee Relations and Global Human Resource Management

Section Five covers risk and safety, employee rights and responsibilities, unions, and global HR. *Chapter 13* looks at threats to the well-being of both organizations and employees. OSHA, legal requirements for well-being, safety management, and security concerns are specified. Expanded discussions of medical marijuana, counterproductive employee behaviors, and drug testing are provided. *Chapter 14* looks at rights existing in the employment agreement, including privacy rights, workplace monitoring, investigations, and discipline. This edition also covers alternative dispute-resolution techniques, as well as employee rights and ethical issues. *Chapter 15* evaluates the union-management relationship through labor laws, history, collective bargaining, and grievance management. Material on politics and unionization, changes in union membership, and union tactics is also presented. Finally, *Chapter 16* explores global issues in the HR profession. Particular emphasis is placed on the various opportunities and challenges that HR practitioners face when they manage others in international contexts.

Appendices

To keep the chapters sized appropriately, yet provide additional specific information, the book contains seven appendices. These provide HR job descriptions, details on the PHR® and SPHR® Bodies of Knowledge/competence for HR certification, HR literature, EEO laws, Uniform Guidelines, illegal preemployment inquires, and EEO enforcement.

Supplements

Instructor's Resource Website

The Instructor's Resource website puts all of the core resources in one place. The website contains the Instructor's Manual, Test Bank, and PowerPoint presentation slides.

- *Instructor's Manual*: The Instructor's Manual represents one of the most exciting and useful aids available. Comprehensive teaching materials are provided for each chapter—including overviews; outlines; instructor's notes; suggested answers to end-of-chapter Critical Thinking Challenges; suggested questions for the "HR Headline," "HR Perspective," "HR Ethics," "HR Competencies & Applications," and "HR Highlight" features; suggested answers to the end-of-chapter case questions; and suggested questions and comments on the supplemental cases for each chapter.
- *Cognero Test Bank*: The test bank contains more than 1,600 questions, including multiple-choice, true/false, and essay questions. Questions are additionally identified by type—definition, application, and analytical—and also include AACSB tags for general (NATIONAL) and topic-specific (LOCAL) designations.
- *PowerPoint Slide Presentation*: The PowerPoint presentation contains approximately 400 slides to aid in class lectures.

MindTap

MindTap is the digital learning solution that helps instructors engage students and relate HR management concepts to their lives. Through interactive assignments, students connect HR management concepts to real-world organizations and say how managers should perform in given situations. Finally, all activities are designed to teach students to problem-solve and think like management leaders. Through these activities, real-time course analytics, and an accessible reader, MindTap helps you turn cookie cutter into cutting edge, apathy into engagement, and memorizers into higher-level thinkers.

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As the authors, we are confident the sixteenth edition of *Human Resource Management* will continue to set the standard for the Human Resource field. As the users of the text, we certainly hope you agree.

<div align="right">

Sean R. Valentine
Patricia A. Meglich, SPHR, SHRM-SCP
Robert L. Mathis, SPHR
John H. Jackson

</div>

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The Environment of Human Resource Management

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CHAPTER

1

Human Resource Management in Organizations

Learning Objectives

After you have read this chapter, you should be able to:

LO1 Understand human resource management and define human capital.

LO2 Identify how human resource management and employees can be core competencies for organizations.

LO3 Name the seven categories of HR functions.

LO4 Provide an overview of four challenges facing HR today.

LO5 Explain how ethical issues in organizations affect HR management.

LO6 Explain the key competencies needed by HR professionals and why certification is important.

WHAT'S TRENDING IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

There are a number of current HR trends that affect how companies manage people at work. Employees are expected to have the proper knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to perform in an environment that presents constant changes and new expectations. This requires HR professionals to be at the top of their game when it comes to developing policies that help people get better at what they do. Here are some issues that are currently trending in HR:

1. The rapidly changing workplace focuses HR efforts on the development of human capital factors that address organizational needs (e.g., productivity, customer service, quality, and innovation). Once employees are developed, they need to be placed in the proper jobs with positive work cultures that enable them to effectively use their talents.
2. Globalization and workforce diversity present a number of ways for individual differences to help companies. However, challenges associated with the proper placement of employees and the development of positive HR policies in diverse environments are common.
3. Technology is viewed as a key means to an end when it comes to managing human resources. Increased social media, online interactions, and the use of software to manage traditional HR functions can enhance how individuals interact with their employers, supervisors, and coworkers.
4. The importance of ethics policies, social responsibility, and sustainable practices has never been greater. Misconduct in organizations has raised the profile of organizational culture and sound HR practices to ensure appropriate workplace behavior. Developing an ethical culture, providing ethics training, and encouraging employees to report offenses are all ways that HR leaders can help improve business ethics.

Cool Commitment at Igloo

Most people would easily recognize the red and white Playmate coolers as the signature product of Igloo brand. What is not so obvious is the commitment of the employees who design and produce the Igloo line of products. Competitors in the industry can purchase the same technology used at Igloo and might be able to duplicate its process. But, Igloo achieves its competitive advantage through the contribution of its employees. Engagement surveys show that 93 percent of the company's associates believe that they do their best every day and are happy to learn new tasks. This is a remarkable result in light of national statistics showing that only 15 percent of employees are actively engaged with their work.

The CEO, Mark Parrish, has been intentional about creating an organization where all associates feel committed to a larger purpose. He adopted a servant leadership approach that focuses on building trust, withholding judgment, creating a dialogue, empowering employees, and instituting a culture of collective success. The company measures that collective success in four areas (in this order): people, quality, service, and cost. All financial and human capital decisions are based on those four measures. Parrish's belief is that building shareholder value is best achieved by creating an organization that is worthy of every employee's full commitment. He sees that building value for shareholders should not be done at the expense of building value for associates.

Supporting employees rather than asking employees to support those higher up results in committed employees who are dedicated to create a great experience for the customer. Igloo's chief HR officer plays an instrumental role in ensuring that diversity, wages, and training at the company are all exemplary. The company pays well over minimum wage levels and provides the best employee benefits in the industry. More than that, however, is the company's commitment to training for each associate. Employees are trained, coached, and counseled to perform well in their current roles and to prepare for future job opportunities. Igloo commits to its employees, who return that commitment through their personal dedication to the company's success.[1]

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3

Employees are essential resources that organizations use to achieve important business objectives. Having talented individuals employed in a company is the cornerstone of developing a competitive advantage. Qualified and motivated employees are critical for an organization to compete on whatever distinctive core competencies are considered important in its industry (e.g., customer service, quality, and strategic planning).

By earning the reputation as good employers, companies can attract and retain productive, creative, and motivated people with competitive advantages to reach strategic goals. Finding knowledgeable and motivated employees, training them to perform critical jobs, rewarding them appropriately, giving them important work responsibilities, and providing them opportunities to succeed and earn recognition are but a few of the issues that an organization must address. But how does an employer create these policies and earn such a positive reputation? Most often, it is an HR department that develops and coordinates practices that enable people to make important contributions at work. However, these people management activities must also be carried out in small firms where an owner/founder may address these issues.

Utilizing sound HR practices can enhance an organization's reputation as a desirable place to work. A company must also look ahead and address emerging challenges and opportunities to ensure that employees are satisfied and perform their jobs at high levels. In particular, there is a need to understand the current trends that are occurring in the field of human resource management.

LO1 Understand human resource management and define human capital.

1-1 What Is Human Resource Management?

What is now called human resource management has evolved a great deal since its beginnings in the early twentieth century. What began as a primarily clerical function in larger companies concerned with payroll and employee records began to transform in response to social legislation of the 1960s and 1970s. *Personnel departments*, as they were then called, focused on the legal implications of policies and procedures affecting employees. In the 1990s, facing globalization and competition, human resource departments became more concerned with costs, planning, and the implications of various HR strategies for both organizations and their employees. More recently, human resource professionals in some companies have been involved with mergers and acquisitions, outsourcing, and managing technological advances in the workplace. Recent high-profile corporate scandals and unethical behavior are also requiring HR professionals to get more involved in programs that increase ethics, compliance, and social responsibility.[2]

Human resource management

Designing formal systems in an organization to manage human talent for accomplishing organizational goals

Human resource management is designing formal systems in an organization to manage human talent for accomplishing organizational goals. Whether you work in a large company with 10,000 employees or a small nonprofit organization with 10 employees, employees must be recruited, selected, trained, rewarded, managed, and retained. Each of these activities requires knowledge about what works well given current employee concerns and company conditions. Research into these issues and the knowledge gained from successful approaches form the basis of effective HR management.

1-1a Why Organizations Need HR Management

Not every organization has an HR department. In a company with an owner and 10 employees, for example, the owner usually addresses HR issues. However, despite the obvious differences between large and small organizations, the same HR activities must take place in every firm. Luckily, *every* leader in an organization is an HR manager, so there are usually many people who can help address HR issues. Sales managers, head nurses, drafting supervisors, food and beverage directors, college deans, and accounting department supervisors all manage human resources, and their effectiveness depends in part on how well they understand and implement the principles of HR management.

It is unrealistic, however, to expect line managers to understand all the details of equal employment regulations, how to design a complex compensation system, or when to conduct a job analysis.

Organizations that fail to properly manage employees are at greater risk of legal problems and employee relations issues.[3] Therefore, the presence of an HR department and leaders who understand important HR issues can be helpful. For that reason, larger organizations frequently have people who specialize in these activities, and these professionals are organized into an HR function or department. While some firms have never employed HR professionals or have eliminated their HR departments, the recent trend has been to increase HR staff.[4]

There are many benefits associated with having a dedicated HR department. Firms that implement effective HR practices tend to have better outcomes such as higher profits, increased stock price, and greater productivity, than those that do not use such practices.[5] HR professionals must respond appropriately to current business challenges and opportunities to help the organization succeed. Significant issues facing contemporary organizations include building the "organization of the future," delivering a superior employee experience, and capitalizing on diversity and inclusion. HR professionals can make a difference by implementing solutions to these challenges.[6] Additional trends include a globalized workforce, greater age diversity, a focus on sustainability, and an emphasis on social media. HR leaders can address these issues by adopting an interdisciplinary business approach (e.g., working with marketing, operations, and finance staff), connecting with outside constituencies, identifying critical organizational challenges, and facilitating organizational change.[7] HR professionals might also adapt HR processes to fit workplace changes, work more closely with IT personnel to manage technology, hire more high performers who have the right skills, and be innovation leaders.[8] The following "HR Perspective: Transforming HR at Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen" feature highlights some of these emerging trends, as well as others.

Cooperation between operating managers and the HR department is also needed for HR efforts to succeed. In many cases, the HR department designs processes and systems that operating managers must help implement. The exact division of labor between the two varies from firm to firm. However, in the end, managing employees is a shared responsibility between HR staff and line managers with each group playing a key role. HR professionals contribute to line managers' effectiveness when they frame HR practices in appealing ways, involve line managers in the development of HR practices, and seek CEO support.[9]

How Human Resource Management Is Sometimes Seen in Organizations

HR departments have been viewed both positively and negatively by managers and employees. HR management is necessary, especially when dealing with the many government regulations enacted over the past several decades. However, the need to protect corporate assets against the many legal issues often makes the HR function play a different role, which may be seen as negative, restrictive, and not focused on getting work done.

The legal compliance role can cause other people to have negative views of HR staff. The negative perception that some employees, managers, and executives have is that HR departments are too bureaucratic, detail oriented, and costly, and that they are comprised of naysayers. Some managers also believe that HR departments reduce innovation and negatively impact the ability to complete work because of poorly executed programs. The trend toward outsourcing many HR activities also fuels the belief that HR support is not really needed.[10] Further, HR staff are sometimes seen as lacking in business acumen by line managers. In some organizations, HR is seen as owning employee morale and fun, which leads to difficulties when employees have serious issues to report and need to deal with a professional in whom they can confide.[11] Despite such concerns, the HR function can benefit the workplace if it is managed well.

Human Resources in Smaller Organizations

In the United States and worldwide, small businesses employ more than half of all private-sector employees and generate many new jobs each year. In surveys over several years by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA), the issues identified as significant concerns in small organizations were consistent: not having enough qualified workers, the rapidly increasing costs of employee benefits, payroll taxes, and compliance with government regulations. Notice that all these concerns have an HR focus, especially when compliance

with wage/hour, safety, equal employment, and other regulations are considered. This is why some degree of HR support and expertise is always needed in smaller organizations. Recent studies have shown that small- and medium-sized enterprises that use formal HR practices tend to perform better than competitors.[12] Therefore, HR practices can be one determinant of company success in large and small firms.

When new employees are hired in a small business, line managers usually do the recruiting, selecting, and orienting. These HR activities, however, reduce the amount of time managers have available to focus on their regular jobs. As a result, when such activities occur frequently, hiring someone to do them allows managers to spend more time on their primary duties. With about 80 to 100 employees, smaller organizations often find that they would benefit from designating someone to specialize in HR practices. Other specialist HR positions are added (e.g., in compensation, training, or recruiting) as the company grows larger. The need for HR increases as an organization grows until it evolves into a distinct function with specialists assigned to specific duties. For HR to be most useful, it must remain closely connected to the operating management of the organization. Without that connection, HR functions cannot reach their potential.

HR

PERSPECTIVE

Transforming HR at Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen

Evidence shows that HR departments have grown, with more money being dedicated to corporate HR efforts. However, changing work environments are challenging HR professionals to do more, even though their numbers and support have steadily risen. People employed in HR have much more responsibility in today's workplace, something that likely won't change as expectations have increased.

This is the case at the Atlanta-based fast-food firm Popeyes Louisiana Kitchen. While the organization's HR group grew from 7 to 10 individuals over several years, the work also increased. The group manages as many as three times the number of issues it did in the past. Some of these include creating leadership development opportunities, enhancing customer service, and building food outlets. Popeyes focuses on *servant leadership*, which requires leaders to believe that the needs of the company and employees outweigh their own concerns. Further, the HR team works to ensure that HR can address issues through a strategic lens. All of these responsibilities take time and energy.

Many HR functions at Popeye's are being altered as the workplace changes. Besides being more focused on strategy, HR staff at Popeyes work on cross-functional project teams, and the HR function is structured so that each business area has a dedicated HR professional who operates as an advisor on various personnel issues. This enables staff to be more strategic because they work directly with the business units. HR leaders also look to redesign HR processes to improve HR's efficiency so that more might be done with fewer people.[13]

Despite the growing need for HR personnel, the ability to manage the increasing number of HR responsibilities with current staff is a challenge. Expectations are higher, regardless of how many HR professionals are present. Consider the following questions:

1. Given the issues at Popeyes, how would you redesign an HR department in any organization to better tackle a company's needs?

2. How might HR processes be redesigned to become more efficient? What technologies might be used to improve HR processes and provide better service to managers and employees?

1-2 Managing Human Resources in Organizations

Human resources (or more simply, people) who work in organizations may have valuable contributions they can make to a firm's mission based on their human capital. But this will occur only if they are motivated and given a reasonable opportunity to contribute. Employees must be placed into the right job, trained, rewarded, and given feedback if they are to perform at high levels. These key HR activities are often a joint effort between the organization's managers and HR staff members. Managing people ultimately reflects the decisions these leaders make from among the wide range of possible choices on the formal policies, practices, and methods for managing employees. Examples of such systems and policies are pay system design, performance measurement, training programs, and hiring processes. People-related costs are typically the single biggest controllable cost in an organization.[14] This means that managing HR activities is a major priority for all managers.

1-2a Human Resource Management as a Core Competency

Core competency
A unique capability that creates high value for a company

Developing and implementing business strategies must be based on an organization's areas of strength. Referred to as *core competencies*, those strengths are the foundation for creating the organization's competitive advantage. A **core competency** is a unique capability that creates high value for a company.

Certainly, many organizations have identified that their HR practices differentiate them from their competitors and that HR is a key determinant of competitive advantage. Recognizing this, organizations as diverse as Walt Disney Company, Apple, and Comcast have focused on people as having special strategic value for the organization.[15]

The same can be true with small companies as well. For example, small community banks have gained numerous small- and medium-sized commercial loan customers because the banks emphasize that their customers can deal with the same employees directly every time they need help rather than having to call an automated service center in another state as is sometimes the case with larger nationwide banks. The focus here is on using people (in this example, loan officers) to help build core competencies in companies.

1-2b Employees as a Core Competency

How might employees become a core competency for an organization? Employees, especially those in customer-facing positions, are the vital link to the organization's external customers. They can be a source of innovation and service that enhances the customer's experience and lead to greater customer loyalty.[16] This is particularly true in service organizations where the customer wants a personal experience and will return if treated well.

Human Capital Organizations must manage four types of assets to be successful (see Figure 1-1):

- *Physical assets*: Buildings, land, furniture, computers, vehicles, equipment, and so on
- *Financial assets*: Cash, financial resources, stocks, bonds or debt, and so on
- *Intellectual property assets*: Specialized research capabilities, patents, information systems, designs, operating processes, copyrights, and so on
- *Human assets*: Individuals with their talents, capabilities, experience, professional expertise, relationships, and so on

All of these assets are important to varying degrees in different firms. But the human assets are the "glue" that holds all the other parts together to achieve results. Certainly, the assembly line workers, quality inspectors, and design engineers in an automotive company or the admissions clerks, nurses, and dietary staff at a hospital enable all the other assets of their organizations to be used

FIGURE 1-1 Four Types of Organizational Assets
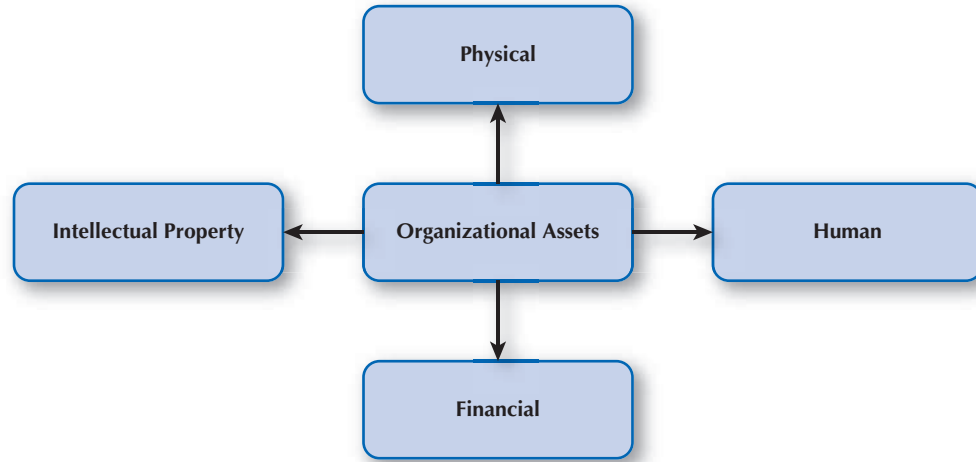
to provide products and services to customers. Effective use of the firm's human capital can often explain a big part of the differences in company success.

Human capital is not just the people in organizations—it also involves what individuals contribute to organizational achievements. Broadly defined, **human capital** is the collective value of the capabilities, knowledge, skills, life experiences, and motivation of an organization's workforce. It is important that workers have both the necessary competence plus the desire to perform effectively.

A useful framework to understand how HR practices serve as the foundation for human capital is called the *ability-motivation-opportunity (AMO) model*.[17] The AMO model involves HR practices that lead to greater skill, greater motivation, and greater opportunity for workers to contribute to the organization. Figure 1-2 provides details on skill-enhancing practices (hiring and training), motivation-enhancing practices (pay and promotions), and opportunity-enhancing practices (sharing information and working in teams) that may be used to increase the level of human capital. HR practices in high-performing organizations often focus on these elements of the employee experience to enhance the employees' sense of competence and dedication to the organizational goals.[18]

Sometimes human capital is called *intellectual capital* to reflect the thinking, knowledge, creativity, and decision making that people in organizations contribute. For example, firms with high intellectual capital may have highly educated and trained managers who develop new ways of
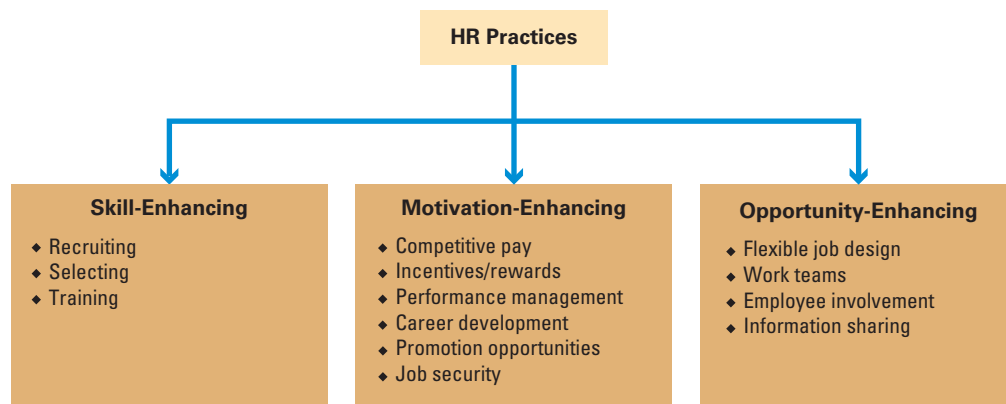
Human capital
The collective value of the capabilities, knowledge, skills, life experiences, and motivation of an organization's workforce

FIGURE 1-2 Ability-Motivation-Opportunity Model

supervising employees, new business processes that improve quality, or new software for specialized uses. All of these contributions illustrate the potential value of human capital to companies. There are many other possible areas in which employees can be core competencies for organizations. For example, productivity, customer service and quality, innovation, and organizational culture represent several of these areas.

MEASURE

Productivity
Measure of the quantity and quality of work done, considering the cost of the resources used

Unit labor cost
Computed by dividing the average cost of workers by their average levels of output

Productivity Employee productivity can be a competitive advantage because when the costs to produce goods and services are lowered through increased individual production, lower prices can be charged to consumers. The result is often incremental increases in sales. However, increased productivity does not necessarily mean greater output. Perhaps fewer people (or less money and/or time) are used to produce the same amount. In its most basic sense, **productivity** is a measure of the quantity and quality of work done, considering the cost of the resources used.

A useful way to measure the productivity of human resources is to consider **unit labor cost**, which is computed by dividing the average cost of workers by their average levels of output. Using unit labor costs, one can see that relatively high wages will not affect competitiveness if high productivity levels are achieved. Low unit labor costs can be a basis for a strategy focusing on human resource competency. Productivity and unit labor costs can be evaluated at the global, country, organizational, departmental, or individual level.

Improving Productivity Organizational-level productivity ultimately affects profitability and competitiveness in a for-profit organization and total costs in a not-for-profit organization. Perhaps of all the resources used in organizations, the ones most closely scrutinized are human resources. Despite the rapid increase in technology at work, U.S. worker productivity is not growing as it has historically.[19] The use of poor business approaches such as bureaucratic policies, poorly managed meetings, and low teamwork and collaboration can cause much of this decreased productivity (something called *coordination waste*). Focusing less on efficiency and perfection and more on making a difference for customers and finding creative solutions may lead to gains in organization productivity measures.[20]

Additional HR management efforts that can enhance productivity are detailed in Figure 1-3. Among the major ways to increase employee productivity are

- *Organizational restructuring*, which involves eliminating layers of management and changing reporting relationships as well as cutting staff through downsizing, layoffs, and early retirement buyout programs;
- *Redesigning work*, which often involves making changes to the way work gets done by focusing on the characteristics of jobs and altering how tasks are structured and coordinated;
- *Aligning HR activities*, which means ensuring that HR efforts and practices are consistent with organizational efforts to improve productivity and satisfy strategic goals; and
- *Outsourcing analyses*, which require the HR department to conduct cost–benefit assessments that indicate the overall positive or negative impact of outsourcing—HR then manages outsourcing efforts if they occur.

Customer Service and Quality In addition to productivity, both customer service and quality efforts can significantly affect organizational effectiveness, making them key areas that HR can emphasize when developing employees as core competencies. Having managers and employees focus on customers' needs contributes significantly to achieving organizational goals and maintaining a competitive advantage.

Customer satisfaction is still a challenge in the United States and other countries, and it must be managed. The availability of information that customers can obtain along with the ability to publicly report on a service experience via social media heighten the importance of managing customer service interactions. Customer-facing employees who work in organizations with ethical climates maintain higher proactive customer service performance levels.[21] This demonstrates one aspect of HR involvement that can link employee behavior with improved customer service.