

Manpower Planning: Strategic Imperative to Organizational Success

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Abstract: Manpower planning as a process includes forecasting, developing and controlling manpower by which top management ensures that it has right kind of people, in right number, at the right places, at the right time doing work most economically. Manpower planning is of long term in nature and strategic planning of human resources which is more concerned with the development of skill, quality and cultural changes of the workforce employed rather than statistical numerical forecasting or succession planning. Manpower planning is a strategic process of analyzing manpower requirements. It is the means for meeting human resource requirements in order to carry out the strategically integrated plans of the organization. Looking at these dimensions of manpower planning, it becomes imperative to plan for manpower efficiently and effectively. Proper manpower planning ensures organizational survival and growth.

Keywords: Manpower planning, organizational planning, strategic planning, strategic HR.

1. INTRODUCTION

“Manpower planning is the process of analyzing work force requirements of the organization. It is a continuous practice to analyze the current manpower position and what is actually required by the organization, even in the future. Manpower planning ensures that the organization has the right number and right kind of people at the right places [1].

“Manpower planning is not confined to hiring and retaining talent as general notion persists, but it is also anticipating future manpower needs of an organization [2].

Many a times it happens in an organization that a person may not necessarily be doing the right kind of work.

There need to be a standard procedure to compare individuals, if the organization plans to hire scientifically. This standard should define the minimum acceptable qualities necessary for more than average performance of the job duties and responsibilities and to conclude human abilities required for execution of the job. It will be found that the line supervisor has much to contribute.

Characteristics of Manpower Planning

Some general characteristics of manpower planning are:

- Manpower plan must be in line with the long-term organizational objectives, keeping in mind the workforce requirements.
- Manpower plan need to be aligned with clear.
- Manpower planning should point in the direction for an effectual motivational process, leading to increased efficiency.
- Organizational manpower plan need to be sufficiently flexible in order to cater to the changing needs of the organization.

Objectives of Manpower Planning

“The first objective of manpower planning is to integrate planning and control of manpower with organizational planning to ensure best possible utilization of all resources [3].

The primary objectives of manpower planning in any organization are:

- Recruitment of required number of individuals as per the need of the firm.
- Recruitment of people having right quality and aptitude for carrying on the allotted job.
- Employee retention.
- Talent management.
- Check the employee turnover.
- Focus on reducing the employee turnover.
- Match the human resource requirement in case of diversification, expansion etc..
- Check obsolescence of employees.
- Arrange retraining of employee to control attrition etc.
- Improve quality of engaged manpower.
- Assessment of excess or short manpower and rectify.

Need for Manpower Planning

No organization can work without manpower though there can be difference in the quantity of manpower employed. Planning related manpower becomes important in the light of the fact that planning increases efficiency and effectiveness.

“Human resource planning is deemed necessary for all organizations for one or the other reasons [4].

“Human resource planning is a strategy for the acquisition, utilization, improvement and preservation of an enterprise's human resources [5].

- The justification for manpower planning emerges from the realization that organizational success depends greatly on the success of human resource management.
- Organization should conduct manpower audit to evaluate capabilities, skills, performance and potential of each employee. This would facilitate the planning process.
- Information required for manpower planning need to be gathered in time. The information related to factors like current and expected skills and vacancies about to be created in future, help in effective manpower planning.
- Any investment done in relation to the development of human resources never goes waste. Proper manpower planning paves the path for quality of work and quality of life.

Advantages of Manpower Planning

Manpower planning includes analysis of present number and type of employees. It also works out a defined action plan all HR related activities. The major advantages of manpower planning are:

- It defines the long-term manpower requirement plan of the organization.
- It eradicates the uncertainty, which otherwise might hamper the growth or even proper functioning of the organization, due to lack of effective manpower planning.
- It focuses further advancement and development of present employees through training, development etc. and fulfillment of future manpower requirements.
- It assists in understanding the cost of owning human resources.
- It not only helps in budgeting human capital but also the financial requirements, to a great extent.
- It recognizes and alarms about the need for redundancy and also plans to face it.
- It helps top management in understanding manpower requirements of the organization in long-term and thus, plan accordingly.

Guidelines for Effective Manpower Planning

Any activity carried on without the objective of efficiency and effectiveness becomes redundant in long run. In order to make the manpower process effective, certain guidelines need to be followed.

“Human resource planning is a highly important and useful activity [6].

Some of the steps that may be taken to improve the

effectiveness of manpower planning are given below:

- **Objectives:** The manpower plan must be within the broad boundaries of the organization. Important aspects such as working conditions, human relationships etc., must be kept in mind while developing the plan. The HR plan should be balanced with the corporate plan of the enterprise.
- **Top Management Support:** The plan must meet the changing needs of the organization and should enjoy consistent support from top management. For effective manpower planning, top management must show their interest. It is also imperative that the manpower planning exercise is with the financial budget of the organization.
- **Appropriate Time Horizon:** The period of manpower should be frazzled in a balanced approach. As per the requirement of time, the emphasis should not be merely on recruiting people but also on retaining people, in order to save various indirect cost and avoid losses.
- **Manpower Information System:** To manage employees' skills inventories, organization should maintain computerized manpower information systems containing data related to all individuals and their evaluation as per the organizational requirements.
- **Adequate Organization Support:** Manpower planning function need to be appropriately organized. If possible, a separate manpower planning section must be created in order to cater to the needs of manpower planning and coordinate manpower planning exercise at various levels. This is more required in larger organizations.

Recent Trends in Manpower Planning

With the passage of time there are changes in the organization and so is with the systems followed in the organization. Conventional manpower planning included merely counting of vacancies but contemporary manpower planning has also been developed and certain trends like outsourcing and planning for contingencies are being exhibited by the organizations.

- **Outsourcing:** Most of the organizations these days have started to plan for outsourcing activities related to human resources, rather than to go for manpower planning, considering the following points:
 - Reduction in total cost related to human resources
 - Reduction in efforts in managing human capital
 - Avoiding the situation of overstaffing [7].
- **Eventuality clause in Manpower Planning:** Software companies have practiced implementation of time bound projects. In the same fashion, full capacity utilization and thus, time and fast delivery is being an imperative strategy of many manufacturing companies, these days. Such organizations plan for contingency human resources, to make sure that none of such project is delayed due to inadequate human capital.

2. CONCLUSION

Manpower is inevitable and important resource of any organization, vital to the success of the organization. It is not possible to utilize other organizational resources like financial and physical, in the absence of adequate manpower. Only human resources make other resources work and exploit them to their full potential. As we properly plan for various other resources, in the same manner, it is significant to plan for the manpower requirements of the organization. Manpower planning helps in efficient utilization of all resources as well. Manpower planning cannot be done in one go, rather it is an ongoing activity. For efficient functioning of the organization, it is necessary to effectively plan for the manpower requirements. It is imperative that in the absence of effective manpower planning, there will be vacancies and thus, various organizational processes will be adversely affected. Manpower planning ensures achievement of organizational objectives on long-term basis.



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