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Human resource management at organisational level

There are many aspects of human resource management. Some organisations may feel overwhelmed and unsure about where to start making improvements. This is particularly the case for organisations that do not have a team or department specifically responsible for human resource management.

Where there is no specific team, it is worth considering giving someone responsibility for aspects of human resource management as part or all of their role. There are many benefits of having a member of staff with ownership of human resource management. For example:

- The organisation can be kept up-to-date on legal issues.
- A coordinated approach can be taken with regard to strategy, policy and practice. This helps to ensure that the organisation has a fair and consistent way of treating its staff.
- Staff have access to good advice on issues relating to staff.
- Salaries are fair and consistent.
- Good policy and practice can be put in place.
- Job descriptions can be kept up-to-date. Staff and line managers then know what to expect and performance can be measured successfully.
- Recruitment procedures can be thorough and enable the best people to be recruited.
- Staff briefing and induction is planned and well organised.
- As the organisation shows it thinks human resource management is important, staff feel valued and encouraged to stay with the organisation.

Some organisations may be large enough to establish their own team that is responsible for human resource management. In this case, it is important to gain permission from the leadership of the organisation first, including the Chief Executive Officer and the board. It may be necessary to inform them of the benefits of human resource management in order for them to understand its importance. It is worth noting that some donors will provide funding for activities related to human resource management.



Where to start

This book outlines the main areas of human resource management. Some areas will need to be addressed first as they have a direct impact on others. For example, it is important to establish a good grading structure in order to set fair salary levels. The table below shows the different areas of human resource management and what they are dependent on. Most areas depend on a good grading and salary system, so this is usually a good place to start.

It is best to address human resource management one bit at a time. There may be some areas that do not take long to address, but which can have a big impact. For example, ensuring that line managers hold regular catch-up meetings with their staff and developing an appraisal form for them to use, can have a huge impact on staff performance.

Main areas of human resource management	Dependent on:
Grading	Good staff planning, organisational structure, job descriptions and job evaluation
Salary	Grading, funding, organisation's values, payroll, tax, social security, pay slips
Benefits	Common practice, funding, organisation's values, types of benefits such as medical, leave, allowances
Recruitment	Organisation's priorities and needs, staff planning, good recruitment practice, grading, salary, benefits, employment contract
Briefing / induction	Recruitment, performance management
Performance management	Recruitment, briefing, timely catch-ups and appraisals
Employment contracts / staff handbook	Grading, salary, benefits, discipline and grievance policies, recruitment, national law
Staff development	Organisation's priorities, needs and values, recruitment, performance management

Preparing to improve human resource management

There are two important things to identify before considering human resource management:

- The organisation's vision, purpose, mission and values.
- The organisation's structure.

1 Vision, purpose, mission and values

Good human resource management depends on the organisation having a clear vision, purpose, mission and values. The vision is needed to motivate staff. The purpose is needed to ensure that staff are all working towards the same goal. Without a mission, it is impossible for the organisation to know what work needs to be done, and job descriptions cannot be identified. Values show how the organisation will do its work and what kind of staff are needed to do it. The box below gives examples of vision, purpose, mission and values. It is important that an organisation has identified these before reviewing and improving its human resource management.

VISION is about how we would like the world to change for the better. For example: *A world without hunger.*

PURPOSE is about what the organisation exists to do, in order to contribute to the vision. For example: *To help people to increase food production.*

MISSION is what the organisation commits itself to do and identifies the people the organisation serves, where they are and how they are served. For example: *To reduce hunger in our country through training, enabling and supporting farmers.*

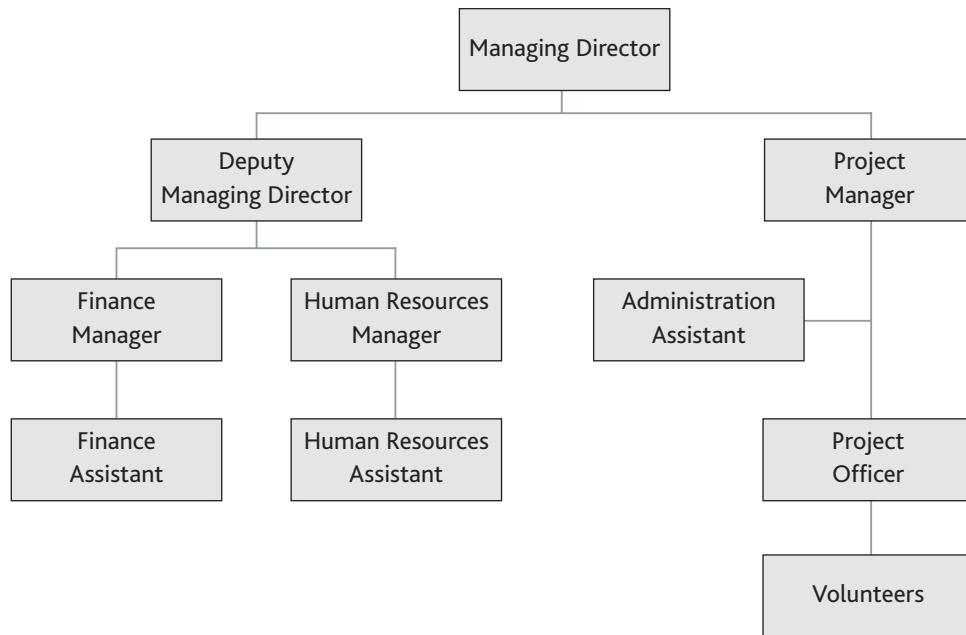
VALUES relate to what the organisation stands for. They influence the way the organisation acts and give the organisation its identity. Values often make an organisation different from other organisations that address the same issue. Examples include: *commitment to God; humility; stewardship; commitment to learning; commitment to relationships; commitment to excellence.*

2 Organisational structure

It is helpful to consider the structure of the organisation's staff. The best way to do this is to draw an organisational chart which shows where staff positions fit into the organisation and how they are line managed. This chart:

- makes grading systems easier to develop and enables smooth recruitment processes
- helps in understanding how many people are being managed by one manager. It is advisable that no more than eight people report to a single manager
- helps to keep job titles consistent. For example, the title 'manager' may only be given to senior staff in the organisation
- shows where there may be gaps or overlap in positions within the organisation.

EXAMPLE of organisational structure



REFLECTION

- How important are our staff to the success of our organisation? Do we view some staff as more important than others?
- How does our organisation show staff they are valued?
- How do our staff fit within our organisation's vision, purpose, mission and values? Are we using and investing in staff in the right way? If not, how can we improve?
- What does our organisational structure look like? What can we learn from this?