

BEST PRACTICE

HR empowers people, fosters culture, ensures compliance, and boosts organisational productivity

TOPIC:

Human Resources

COP:

Leadership and Organisational Change

WOP:

Each Water Operator Partnership (WOP) is to engage with HRM

MORE INFORMATION:

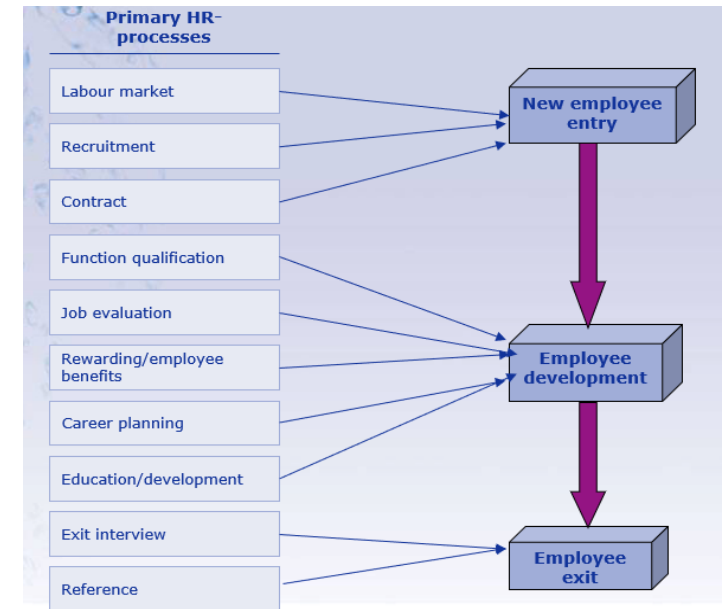


CHALLENGE

Weak HR management often hampers a utility's ability to attract, retain, and nurture skilled employees, resulting in negative impacts on performance, efficiency, and long-term success. Deficient recruitment and retention strategies lead to frequent employee turnover, increasing recruitment costs and loss of institutional knowledge. Additionally, ineffective communication, inadequate employee development, and unclear expectations contribute to staff disengagement and reduced motivation. Mismanaged HR processes cause delays, errors, and inefficiencies, and foster toxic work environments and unresolved conflicts that may damage the organizational culture. These concerns are often overlooked as management focuses on core operations.

APPROACH

The starter is a competent HR managers with passion and vision on how to get the best from its employees. An employee satisfaction survey will picture the organisation and while discussing the results, forward action planning can be practised. A capacity needs assessment based on the current employee record (and anticipated future demand) including level of education, competencies, and experiences required may detail job descriptions, career paths, and corresponding salary structures. IT also lays the foundation for a training program jointly realised by the utility and the WOP partner. An HR department equipped with tools and staff is starter for a systematic HR management based on job descriptions, regular employee appraisal, and career path trajectories in order to retain valuable employees.



RESULTS

In different WOPs, establishing a successful link with the HR department has contributed to increased employee satisfaction rates. However, it remains premature to definitively assert whether this will translate into improved morale and enhanced operational efficiency. Nevertheless, the collaboration with HR management has fortified connections with WOP partners, emphasizing a shared responsibility to empower employees and ensure their proper integration into the organizational framework. This approach aims to retain valuable employees by providing developmental opportunities and corresponding rewards based on their contributions.

SUCCESS FACTORS

Success factors for constructive HR cooperation are a competent and passionate HR manager and the early involvement of HR in the planning of capacity development plans at WOP project level. Training of HR staff to professionally conduct basic HR functions and so create an inspiring work environment for employees to perform may help. Experiences are collected from the WOPs in amongst others Indonesia and Malawi and will soon be shared in the corresponding CoP and displayed on Workplace.

DOCUMENTATION

The Community of Practitioners has been established bringing together practitioners from water utilities all over the world. The Community works on UN GWOPA Workplace and currently has over 1000 active members. With expert support from the WaterWorX WOP program the 9 established expert CoPs accumulate valuable experiences and documents within its online library.

For further contact:

Marlou.Spoormakers@VEI.nl

Thomas.deJong@VEI.nl

OTHER

The Global Water Operators' Partnerships Alliance (GWOPA) helps water operators help one another to provide quality services to all. GWOPA is an international network alliance supporting water operators to engage in WOPs. WOPs are peer support exchanges between two or more water operators, carried out on a not-for-profit basis with the objective of strengthening operators' capacity and performance to provide better services to more people (www.gwopa.org). WaterworX is a major Dutch WOP program engaging over 50 water operators in their joint effort to capacitate peers, strengthen their work processes, and ultimately improve operational and managerial performance (www.waterworxprogramme.org).