Manpower Planning, Recruitment and Development: New Techniques

A. C. Uzorh

Crucial to survival of any organization after establishment is a result-oriented workforce and efficient management of material resources. To achieve this objective, detailed programme of manpower planning, recruitment and development must be in place and aggressively pursued. This paper examines both short and long-term manpower development programmes, techniques for realizing them and their corresponding rewards. Results from surveys carried out in most organizations reveal that on-the-job experiences supplemented by coaching, rotational assignments and in-house training are by far most popular and rewarding particularly at the management level.

INTRODUCTION

Effective manpower planning, recruitment and development is the basis for optimal and successful operation of all organizations. This entails efficient coordination of all components of planning, recruitment and development of personnel and costs in such a way as to achieve operational goals of the organization economically.

To formulate a workable policy of this nature, there is need to understand and apply in good measure following important elements:

Manpower Planning

Manpower planning involves overall determination of a broadline of manpower requirements and estimated cost for achieving a set plan of an organization over a definite period. To be worthwhile, manpower planning must be internally and externally integrated.

Internally integrated means plans for recruitment, selection, placement, training and appraisal should be developed in such a way as to reflect coordination. For example, hiring 50 employees means they must be trained and their wages budgeted for. Externally, it should be integrated with the organization’s overall plans: For example, opening new plants, building a new hospital wing or reducing operation due to impending recession all have staff implications.

Forecasting Manpower Needs

Forecasting manpower needs of an organization involves determination by the human resources department of the short-and long-term manpower requirements.

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as stipulated in the job description and job specifications. Most managers consider several factors when forecasting manpower requirements. From a practical point of view, the demand for organization's products or services is paramount. Thus, in a manufacturing firm, sales are projected first. Then the volume of production required to meet these sales requirements is determined. Finally, the staff needed to maintain this volume of output is estimated.

Formulation of Objectives
For simplicity and clarity of purpose, formulated objectives must meet the following needs:

* Ensure optimum use of human resources currently employed in the organization.
* Provide for future manpower needs of the organization in terms of skill, number and ages. This means that the organization must at all times search for and recruit the right personnel for the right job, who can perform the organization's activities. To achieve this purpose, the organization must engage in "Manpower Inventory". Inventory in this context could be skilled and unskilled, senior and junior staff. If the number of unskilled labour becomes high, it will be imperative to organize short term courses with specialist instruction and then carry out regular "Manpower Auditing". Manpower auditing makes it possible to ascertain the exact number of staff available and the number required.

Efficient Planning for Manpower Succession
The reality of manpower succession in organization is a fact that every manager must live with. Rather than shy away from it, managers, supervisors and all those in skilled areas should start early to plan for their succession through job movement and development of staff under them.

Staffing
Staffing is a complex network of events that results in the continuous assignment of human resources to the various jobs throughout the organization. In a sense, it is a flow of people into, and out of the various jobs in the organization. The process typically includes the following activities: human resources planning, authorization for staffing, development sources of applicants, applicant evaluation, employment decisions, transfers, promotions, demotions and separations (pension). Some of the devices commonly used in the systems designed to facilitate this broad process are staffing charts, application blanks, interviews, tests, reference, check and performance appraisal device.

MANPOWER RECRUITMENT
Recruitment is the first operative function of Human Resources Management after the planning stage. It is concerned with obtaining the right kind and number of
manpower necessary to accomplish organizational goals. It deals specifically with such subjects as determination of the human resources requirement and their recruitment and placement.

Job Analysis

For any particular job, data or information must be collected, studied and related to operations and responsibilities of the specific job. This process of collecting and studying information relating to operations and responsibilities of a job is known as job analysis. In job analysis, data are collected for the purpose of analyzing a job to help in describing and specifying the job. The various approaches which are used include questionnaires, written narratives, observation and interviews.

Questionnaires are questions designed and asked to collect responses from respondents for evaluation. They help to provide background instrument. Narrative description, preferably a written narrative can be requested from both the job incumbent and the supervisor. Under this method employees keep daily records of major duties performed and this helps in indicating the time each job is started and when it is finished.

The observation and interview methods hold greatest promise of accuracy, better utilization of time and completeness. Observation may be the only technique required when a job is repetitive.

Job Description

Job description or job position is an organized factual statement of duties and responsibilities of a job. Job description is an immediate product of job analysis and entails:

* Job identification, the title,
* Duties to be performed by the employee,
* The distinctive characteristics of the job, such as the working conditions and the number of hours for the job,
* Machines, tools and equipment,
* Materials and supplies used,
* The physical and mental skill required,
* Job relation to other jobs,
* Supervision to be given and to be received, and
* Comments which add to and clarify the description above.

In describing the title of the job, the manager supplies information about the job title and alternative titles, department, plant and code number for the job.
Job Specification

Job specification is a statement of the minimum acceptable human qualities necessary to perform a job properly. Job specifications state specific qualifications and characteristics that an applicant will possess or will meet before he will be selected for a specific job. Some of these include physical requirements, educational qualifications and previous work experience, etc.

MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT

After recruitment and placement, the process of employee development starts. The aim is to provide employees with necessary skill and proficiency required to perform their jobs successfully. It is an attempt to improve current or future employee performance by imparting knowledge, changing attitude to work or increasing skills. It thus, includes in-house training programmes like courses, on-the-job coaching and rotational assignments, professional programmes, seminars and other forms including purely academic programmes.

Development Needs

At any level of management, different development needs appropriate to that level arise. At the executive level, development needs stress general business skills like financial management, budgeting and labour relations. At this level also, need for team-building skills is emphasised. Needs at the supervisory and middle level management levels stress technical skills like evaluating and appraising employees, setting out objectives, communicating and disciplining. Broadly speaking, the purpose of most if not all employee and management development and training is to increase organization’s present and future capability in attaining its goals.

Development Techniques

Different methods for employee development abound. Surveys carried out in most organizations reveal that on-the-job experiences supplemented by coaching, rotational assignments and in-house training are by far most popular and rewarding particularly at the management level. This is illustrated by the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means of Development</th>
<th>Percentage Reported</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On-the-Job-Experience</td>
<td>68.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching by Superiors</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-House Classroom</td>
<td>4.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rotational Assignment</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University/Other Related Programme</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
On-the-job training includes job rotation, coaching, junior boards and action learning. Alternative techniques of development are: basic off-the-job training, organizational development (OD) and intergroup team-building approach.

Basic off-the-job training includes case studies, behaviour modelling and in-house development centres. Organizational development is an approach to instituting change in which employees themselves play major roles in change process by providing data, obtaining feed-back on problems and by team planning solutions.

Alternative Method of Development

Apart from development opportunities offered by the organization, ambitious career conscious employee may wish to look elsewhere for his development. The presence in large town of facilities such as libraries, professional / vocational centres, universities, colleges etc. may afford developmental opportunity to the interested employees. In most cases, these institutions streamline their their programmes to suit the needs of the working population. Hence, they hold classes in evenings or at weekends. An example of this facility is the long-distance degree programmes obtainable in most Nigeria Universities in various social and management science disciplines which last for a year or two more than those run on full time basis (regular programmes).

PLANNED RECRUITMENT AND DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

It has been observed in most organizations that planned recruitment and development policies may be short-term, long-term or a combination of both. The adoption of any particular type depends mainly on the size, nature and type of product and services offered.

Notably in large organizations, policies are usually formulated on long-term basis. The implication is that emphasis is laid on recruitment of fresh hands. After selection, these cadres of staff are subjected to long-term stage-by-stage training and development at enormous costs. Needed capital is not far-fetched. These policies are common-place in organizations such as Shell Petroleum Development Company Ltd, UAC of Nigeria, etc.

However, in small organizations, short term policies are most favourable. The reason is that the number of staff required is small while operating capital may not be able to support extensive costly development programmes. Rather than invest enormously on training and development of staff, such organizations prefer engaging experienced personnel from elsewhere.

CONCLUSION

Manpower planning and development whether short-term or long-term is generally capital intensive. Hence those who embark on it, can only be motivated by foresight. Although instances abound where manpower development is short-term