

Graduate School of Business

HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGIES 660

Unit Outline last updated 2 September 2008

TRIMESTER 3 2008 FACE TO FACE				
Unit Index No	6649			
Credits	25			
Pre-Requisites	None			
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Class dates and times	Thursdays: 2:00pm – 5:00pm			
Location	GSB, 78 Murray Street Perth			
Room	212			
IMPORTANT NOTICE				
Balnave, N., Brown, J., Maconachie, G., Stone, R. (2007) <i>“Employment Relations in Australia”</i> 1 st Edition, Brisbane: John Wiley & Sons				
METHOD OF ASSESSMENT				
ASSESSMENT	OUTCOME ASSESSED	TYPE OF ASSESSMENT	MARKS	SUBMISSION DATES
Assessment 1: Understanding the Business Context?	1, 2, 3	Written paper	35%	Week 4 25 Sep
Assessment 2: Strategies for the management of what performance?	1, 2, 3	Written paper	35%	Week 9 30 Oct
Assessment 3: Case Study Analysis Exam	1, 2, 4	Case study exam format	30%	Week 13 27 Nov

This unit outline is subject to change up until 10 days prior to the commencement of the course. Any changes made to the unit within that 10 day period and after the course commences will be communicated to you directly by your Unit Controller and/or Lecturer via OASIS. This unit outline should be read in conjunction with the GSB Student Guidebook available on the GSB website.

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Introduction to the Unit

This unit seeks to provide you with an understanding of the systems, policies and processes that provide an infra-structure for an organisation's ongoing success. The word 'success' in relation to human resource management signifies an organisation's ability to attract and retain the best people to provide the products and services the organisation is contracted to undertake, in return for a quality of working life within which those people can find enjoyment and development.

The topics within this unit look at the management of people within an organisation from both the perspective of managers and employees. The content will not be covered from an HR Manager's point of view; but rather that of a manager. The reasons for this include the reality of many organisations not having dedicated HR managers, or HR officers, and managers therefore need to know how to implement and evaluate HR strategies themselves. For those organisations that do have dedicated HR personnel, such resources should not result in managers abdicating responsibility for their HR strategies.

The unit considers the criteria for sound human resource policies and practice that meets organisational requirements, and the work, social and emotional requirements of staff at every level of the organisation. The unit looks at getting people into the organisation and developing a culture that will encourage them to remain as motivated employees, undertaking work that is significant to them and the organisation.

Aims, Outcomes and Attributes

By the end of this unit students will be able to be familiar with the concepts and processes required for understanding strategic HR management issues in the context of business planning and understand the reasons for human resource management strategies and processes and the inherent responsibilities for line managers.

Learning outcomes within Human Resource Strategies 660 will contribute to the achievement of the overarching Graduate Attributes sought for graduates from the Graduate School of Business. For further details on the set of nine Graduate Attributes please refer to the GSB student guidebook available from www.gsb.curtin.edu.au. They are also listed in Appendix A of this document. HRS 660 seeks to deliver on four of the nine key attributes.

Attributes	Learning Outcomes	Assessment
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understand different strategies for implementing effective policies and practices relating to the management of people at work (e.g., recruiting, selecting, appraising staff performance). Understand the impact of HR strategies on individuals, groups and stakeholders both within and external to the organisation. 	Assessments 1, 2 & 3
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically evaluate HR strategies initiated from govt level. Consider and plan for required HR resources and skills in changing political and economic environments. 	Assessments 1, 2 and 3
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access, evaluate and synthesise diverse information for intelligent business application. Reflect upon the process of HR planning in the business context. 	Assessments 1, 2 & 3
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively communicate in a manner appropriate to their audience and their desired outcomes. Understand the impact of communication and its content on stakeholders both within and external to the organisation. 	Assessment 3

Text Books

Balnave, N., Brown, J., Maconachie, G., Stone, R. (2007) "*Employment Relations in Australia*" 1st Edition, Brisbane: John Wiley & Sons.

Chapters relating to various topics will also be available on E-Reserve.

You may also use another text if you are unable to purchase the above book. Please ensure, however, that it has been published since 2006, and that the content reflects HR in the Australasian context.

Textbooks may be purchased at the Curtin Bookshop on the Bentley campus or ordered online through their website: <http://www.bookshop.curtin.edu.au/>

The Bookshop offers a special service to GSB students whereby books ordered online can be delivered to the Murray Street Library (Level 4 of the GSB) for collection. Please remember to request this service when ordering.

Recommended Reading

- Academy of Management Executive
- Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources
- Compensation and Benefits Review
- Harvard Business Review
- Human Resource Management
- International Journal of Human Resource Management
- Journal of Applied Psychology
- Journal of Managerial Psychology
- Organizational Dynamics
- Personnel Administrator
- Personnel Journal
- Strategic Human Resource Management
- Training and Development Journal

Please note that publications such as HR Magazine, Bulletin, HRM Magazine, HR News, HR Monthly and HR Focus may provide relevant articles. However, such articles may not be refereed, nor based on research. Therefore, these publications may supplement, but not substitute, your reading of academic journals. **Marks are given for evidence of depth of reading: basic reading will attract basic marks.**

Blackboard Supplementation of this Unit

This unit is supplemented by Blackboard, a web based learning management system that is to be used in conjunction with the delivery of this unit. These materials will be covered in class so it is the student's responsibility to bring the results of these online assessments and learning activities to class.

If you are new to Blackboard, we encourage you to look at the CBS Online section of the website at <http://www.cbs.curtin.edu.au/business/current-students/unit-and-course-information/online-units-and-blackboard> . This website provides a good introduction to Blackboard. Should you require assistance of any kind, please make sure you direct your queries to the appropriate area in order to get the result you need quickly. For content-related issues, contact your e-Lecturer through Discussion Board facility. For technical

issues, please fill in the online help form at

http://sams.cbs.curtin.edu.au/cbs/bb_studentaccess.php

The access to your online unit in Blackboard will become available on Tuesday, 26 August.

Direct link to Blackboard: <http://www.elearn.cbs.curtin.edu.au/>

Login to Blackboard is as follows:

Username: your Curtin student number

Password: your OASIS password

If you have not activated your OASIS logon, please go to <http://www.oasis.curtin.edu.au> and follow the prompts.

GSB Professional Portfolio

From Trimester 2 2008, all newly commencing MLM and MBA students are required to log at least 40 hours of professional development activity in their Portfolio. Although there are plans to develop an online log of activity, currently the Portfolio is a physical document with space to record relevant activities and collate and store supporting documentation. All newly enrolled students will be sent a Professional Portfolio in the mail. If the 40-hour requirement is not met, it may delay your graduation.

The GSB Professional Portfolio is a tool for extending and developing professional development opportunities for GSB students. It is a practical way to build on skills learned through our coursework and also contributes to the GSB's strategy of encouraging life-long learning.

More information about the Professional Portfolio can be found here:

<http://www.cbs.curtin.edu.au/business/teaching-areas/graduate-school-of-business/current-students/gsb-professional-portfolio>

An information session is also scheduled for GSB Orientation (see below).

GSB Orientation

As part of the GSB's commitment to providing students with an optimal learning experience, we schedule an orientation program which typically takes place in the week prior to the official commencement of trimester. We recommend that all new students attend Orientation as information sessions on the following important topics are scheduled:

- Library Skills
- OASIS training
- Administrative processes
- GSB Professional Portfolio

Students will also have the chance to meet academic and professional staff as well as representatives from the GSB Alumni, GSB Toastmasters Club, CIPSA and the GSB Postgraduate Careers Development Program. An opportunity to network with fellow students is also an invaluable part of the evening. Details on registering for the event can be found on our website.

Hours accrued at Orientation may count toward your GSB Professional Portfolio tally.

Assessment Overview

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT				
ASSESSMENT	OUTCOME ASSESSED	TYPE OF ASSESSMENT	MARKS	SUBMISSION DATES
Assessment 1: Understanding the Business Context?	1, 2, 3	Written paper	35%	Week 4 25 Sep
Assessment 2: Strategies for the management of what performance?	1, 2, 3	Written paper	35%	Week 9 30 Oct
Assessment 3: Case Study Analysis Exam	1, 2, 4	Case study exam format	30%	Week 13 27 Nov

N.B. The due date for your assessments is the date which corresponds to the day of lecture (i.e., Thursday, 25 September, and Thursday, 30 October). Assignments are required to be handed in **at the beginning of class**. Failure to hand in assignments on the Thursday they are due, will incur a penalty.

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Understanding the Business Context (35%)

This assignment asks you to identify one or more scenarios facing your organisation over the next 3-5 years. From this, choose one scenario and explain briefly how you think the organisation should respond to that scenario (and how your department/section will contribute if you work in a large organisation).

You are then required to develop an HR Plan, identifying what staffing implications will arise from the above scenario, and the strategies needed to achieve the staff levels and mix required.

Let's consider some of the questions that need to be answered when undertaking business planning. When planning for the number of positions and people in your organisation, what questions do you ask? Try the following...

1. Develop one scenario for your organisation in a given future time period (one, two, three or five years). If you are not currently working, undertake this exercise using one of the organisations you previously worked in.

Questions which may help you answer the above include:

- who are we?
- what business are we in?
- who are our stakeholders?
- what are the special needs of our clients?
- what unique benefit do we offer our clients?
- who are our competitors?
- can our competitors match or better our unique benefit?

2. Identify variables impacting on staffing in your organisation, e.g.:

- increase/decrease in revenue;
- changes in business focus/objectives;

- changes in technology;
 - organisation changes;
 - new initiatives (e.g. competitive tendering).
3. Interpret from the scenario, the future nature of the whole organisation's work.
 4. If you work in a large organisation, from considering your responses to the above questions, what do you think will be the future nature of your department's work?
 5. Define, in broad terms, the primary activities the staff in your organisation (or department if that is what you are focusing this assignment on) will be involved in.
 6. If the activities remain the same, or change, in your organisation/department, will the volumes of work vary? That is, will the volumes differ from section to section within the organisation/department, necessitating more staff working in some areas in comparison to others?
 7. Are the required numbers of staff likely to increase, decrease or stay the same? Why?
 8. What skills and abilities will be needed to undertake the work in your department or organisation?
 - What level of experience and skill will the position-holders need?
 - What will the structure of the organisation look like? (That is, span of supervisory control – flat? Hierarchical?)
 9. Do you envisage any problems recruiting people with those skills and abilities in the future? Will your organisation be competitive as an employer?
 10. Are there any other factors that might need to be taken into account when planning your HR needs in the future business context?

For example: if less staff, or staff with different skills, are required in the future, how will you achieve this change? That is, what strategies will you use (e.g., downsizing, skill development)?

The above questions are not exhaustive. You will need to show evidence of your own thinking in this assignment...

*** When you have completed the above exercise, please answer the following questions: (please note that this is an important self-reflective section; one or two words or phrases will not suffice). This part of the assignment may be written in '1st person' format (as you are being asked to provide your own perceptions and opinions).

1. How easy did you find the "Understanding the Business Context" exercise to complete?
2. What were the easiest parts to answer? Why?
3. What were the hardest parts to answer? Why?
4. What does the exercise tell you about strategic HR planning?

Please note that you are not required to include references in this assignment. However, should you use Internet websites, company documentation or other sources, you are required to appropriately and accurately reference them within, and list them at the end of your paper. The majority of your writing (95%) should be in your own words. Cutting and

pasting large sections of text from the Internet or other sources (even with referencing) is academic malpractice, and will incur a zero grade.

PAGE LIMIT: There is no prescribed length for this paper, which is required to be typed on A4 paper, *double-spaced*. It is likely that the assignment questions will require at least 10-12 pages of writing; however, after 15 pages, *please stop!* [At this point, I will stop reading...] Please also use headings to depict the various sections within the HR Planning within the Business Context exercise; the number of headings will be left to your judgment, as contexts vary and so may the style in which the writer organises this paper.

Grading Criteria will be provided on a separate sheet in class and Blackboard. Please attach to your submitted assignment, due on Thursday, 25 September.

Assessment 2: Strategies for the management of what performance? (35%)

Word Limit: 12 pages, double-spaced (assessments 10% over this limit will be penalised 10% of the total mark).

You are asked to analyse a case study (which will be given out in class and placed on Blackboard). Read the case study carefully and answer the following questions:

1. What are the long-term and short-term performance *issues* (both for the organisation and the individual) reflected in the case study?
2. What should the manager do to resolve the short-term issues?
3. What policies and strategies should senior management put in place in order to avoid the long-term issues occurring again?

To develop your opinion towards an 'informed' opinion, you are asked to support your answers to the above questions through reference to the academic literature. To do so, you are required to provide at least ten (10) references to journal articles and books (excluding the text for this Unit or other texts) in support of your commentary.

The references will need to be from the *academic journal literature*. As stated above, please note that publications such as HR Magazine, Bulletin, HRM Magazine, HR News, HR Monthly and HR Focus may supplement, but not substitute for, your reading of academic journals.

Marks are given for evidence of *depth* of reading: basic reading will attract basic marks.

Assessment 3: Case Study Analysis Exam (30%):

Week 13 (Thursday, 27 November): In class – 1.5 hours and 15 minutes reading. Closedbook.

A case study will be provided for you to read and analyse in class on 10 April. The case study has been developed to incorporate the major issues and relevant strategies covered in this Unit. The lectures, coursework and reading undertaken in the Unit will contribute to your preparation for this case study.

Submission Guidelines for Assignments

- All assignments are to be submitted in hard copy unless prior arrangements have been made for electronic copies to be submitted. Assignments should be bound in such a way as to facilitate ease of marking – that is, no fixed spine binding.

- Please retain a copy of every assignment submitted for marking for your own records. This copy will be required in the event of an assignment being misplaced or unaccounted for. The onus is on the student to make available another copy of the assignment for marking.
- As stated previously, assignments are to be submitted in hard copy at the lecture **on the due date** (that is, on the relevant Thursday). Please note: in the interest of equity for all students, assignments may be handed in earlier, but **not after the due date** (that, is, after the class you normally attend - to do so will attract a penalty).
- If assignments are submitted before or on the due date, they must be date-stamped by Administration (at Reception Desk). Therefore, assignments will need to be handed in during office hours. **Assignments collected after the due date, without a date-stamp, will be treated as late in submission and will attract a penalty.**
- Please use the following specifications for your assignment layout (unless otherwise specified):
 - Font: Times Roman 12
 - Margins: at least 2.5 cm top/bottom/left/right
 - Please include a cover-sheet setting out:
 - your name
 - student number
 - unit title, and
 - the title of the assignment.
- Papers will not be marked beyond the page limit/word count.
- For assignments that you would like returned, please include a self-addressed A4 envelope.
- Your assignment should be thoroughly checked for typing, spelling and grammatical errors. You may consider having a colleague proof read your assignment before you submit it.
- Make sure you acknowledge all sources used to write your assignment – eg. journals, books, articles etc...
- Provide a list of references at the end of your assignment in the Chicago Style.
- Use a range of scholarly material...eg. Peer-reviewed articles from the scholarly databases, textbooks and material from the Internet. Material from the Internet often, however, does not have the same peer review mechanisms in place so you must be wary what you use as literature to support your reviews.

PLEASE NOTE:

In the preparation of individual written assignments students are encouraged to discuss and exchange information. However, the various papers will be treated as an individual exercise and plagiarism is to be avoided. Where there is evidence of plagiarism the student will be awarded a fail grade for the unit.

Acknowledge not only direct quotes but also the source of ideas, examples and materials which are not a direct quote, but which have been paraphrased from another source. All tables and charts must be sourced. For the University's policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Graduate School of Business Student Guidebook. The GSB is committed to undertaking plagiarism audits on assessments submitted for its units.

Chicago Author-Date Referencing Style

It is a requirement of the Curtin Graduate School of Business that all assignments submitted for assessment must be referenced using the Chicago Author-Date Referencing Style. Details of Chicago referencing style can be found online at

http://library.curtin.edu.au/research_and_information_skills/referencing/index.html

Assignments submitted without Chicago Referencing **will not be marked**. It is strongly suggested that students learn and use EndNote software to ensure compliance with the Chicago System. Copies of EndNote are free to all GSB students from here:

<http://startup.curtin.edu.au/software/endnote.cfm> and some Curtin EndNote style

downloads and training are available here:

http://library.curtin.edu.au/research_and_information_skills/endnote/index.html

Submission & Return of Assignments

Please ensure you use the unit outline specifics to check that you have addressed all of the criteria before handing in your assignment.

Students may expect the marks (and feedback, where appropriate by the end of fifteen (15) working days after submission (unless otherwise negotiated between the lecturer and students). **Assignments are not available** for collection from Administration staff.

For an explanation of your grade, please see **Appendix B: Grading System** which explains the marking system used at the GSB.

Late Submission of Assignments

Assignments are expected to be submitted before or on due dates. Only in *critical* circumstances (acute sickness of self or close family – verified by medical certificate), may students negotiate for an extension of time. Please note that heavy employment-related workloads or deadlines will not warrant the granting of an extension. Only one extension will normally be given within this Unit. Reason/s for request for extension must be submitted in writing (postal or email) A MINIMUM OF FOUR (4) DAYS BEFORE THE DUE DATE OF THE ASSIGNMENT. Please note that an extension will not be given for reason of pressure of workload.

In the case of assignments being submitted after the due date, without permission for extension by the lecturer, the assignments will be graded:

- 20% lower if submitted 1 - 7 days late;
- 40% lower if submitted 8 - 14 days late;
- after 14 days, the assignment will **not** be accepted for marking.

GSB Student Guidebook 2008

Please refer to this publication online for essential information regarding the following:

- GSB Graduate Attributes and Learning Outcomes
- Assessment and Results which includes information on the GSB Grading System, Assessment Guidelines and the Appeals Process.
- The Student Feedback system and Student Representatives (see below).
- Referencing and Malpractice
- Plagiarism
- Ethics
- Emergency Procedures.

Please make sure you obtain a copy of this publication which is found on the **GSB Student Guidebook** available from the **GSB homepage** under **Quick Links**.

Student Representative

A student representative must be elected by the class by the end of the second week of the unit (or second day in the case of an intensive). The student representative is responsible for collecting feedback from the other students and forwarding this to the lecturer and/or unit controller. The student representative also represents the class at the Student - Staff Committee meetings. Once a student representative is elected, the name and contact details should be directed to the Student Academic Advisor. For full details on the student representative role refer to the **GSB Student Guidebook** available from the **GSB homepage** under **Quick Links**.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of every student to be aware of all relevant legislation and policies and procedures relating to their rights and responsibilities as a student. These include:

- the Student Charter
- the University's Guiding Ethical Principles
- the University's policy and statements on plagiarism and academic integrity
- copyright principles and responsibilities
- the University's policies on appropriate use of software and computer facilities

Information on all these things is available through the University's "Student Rights and Responsibilities" web page at: <http://students.curtin.edu.au/rights/>

GSB Student Feedback via e-Valuate

Curtin University has introduced a confidential unit specific student feedback system called e-Valuate. This system provides the unit coordinator, lecturer and Head of School with important information about student's learning experiences and the achievement of learning outcomes during their enrolment in this unit. You are strongly encouraged to log onto e-Valuate at the end of this unit and provide your valuable feedback. Further information on how and when to do this will be posted during the trimester.

The Curtin Business School values student feedback as one of the many ways to continuously inform improvement to this unit. Recent improvements have included:

1. Restructure of assessment load.
2. Clarification of learning outcomes and graduate attributes

Recent student feedback on this Unit is available at <https://evaluate.curtin.edu.au/login.cfm> Once you have logged in click the reports tab at the top and search for the unit summary report (USR) for your unit.

Appendix A: Graduate Attributes

The GSB offers a range of Award Programs in which the students will:

1. Have a thorough foundation of contemporary business theories, concepts and principles and be able to apply these in a group or organisational environment.
2. Create and critically evaluate innovative ideas and strategies within ambiguous and uncertain business environments.
3. Access, evaluate and synthesis diverse information for intelligent business application.
4. Effectively communicate in a manner appropriate to their audience and their desired outcomes.
5. Select and use appropriate technologies and recognise their advantages and limitations.
6. Utilise life-long learning strategies.
7. Recognise and apply international perspectives within the business environment.
8. Appropriately manage and value diversity within a business setting.
9. Apply professional skills – team work, leadership and ethical behaviour.

Appendix B: Grading System

The grading in this unit will be consistent with the grading scheme below.

% Grade	Criteria
90+	Shows a passion for the topic. Student has built on a solid base of deep knowledge and delivered original thought or provided original application of a presented model. Has displayed sound and defensible judgement.
80-89	Student has integrated/synthesised a complex body of knowledge. Is able to bring ideas together succinctly. Has displayed sound grounded opinion.
75-79	Critical evaluation or deeper understanding displayed identifies key issues on top of B below; adds value to data or basic research.
70-74	Intelligent organisation and expansion of concepts, ideas; illustrates through application; sought other reading if appropriate.
65-69	Covers key issues, on top of C below, in a superior way.
60-64	Descriptive, can summarise, organise ideas and present a basic conclusion, internally logical. Presents basic concepts can take a concept and break it into its parts. Provides a basic answer to the question.
50-59	Undertaken acceptable amount of work, sticks to the question but disjointed, ideas not linked or not well linked to the foundation of knowledge. Some errors, but not enough to flaw the answer/ argument.
<50	Superficial work, insufficient research. Some limited research but has not pulled it together. Doesn't answer the question, errors which flaw the answer, argument; displays significant gaps in foundation knowledge.

Moderation is the process by which fair assessment is assured when there are: multiple markers; one marker assesses a large number of papers; the unit is taught at different campuses; or the assessment is largely subjective. Unit controllers are responsible for ensuring that comparability of assessment is achieved. For further information and/or explanation refer to the Teaching & Learning at Curtin 2008 teaching handbook, Section 5.4, page 41 (<http://lsn.curtin.edu.au/publications/tlbook08.pdf>)

Unit Planner and Study Guide

Week	Class Date	Text Reference & Questions	Readings	Assessment Due Dates
1	Wed 27 August	Orientation at the GSB from 4:00pm Recommended for new students	Read through Unit Outline	See Unit Outline or GSB website for Orientation details
2	04 Sep	Introduction and overview: Management of Risk. Implications for SHRM and Employer-Employee relationships.	Ch 1	
3	11 Sep	Relationship between strategic and operational HR: Implications for workforce planning and managing workforce capacity.	Chs 1, 2 & 6	
4	18 Sep	Are you having a career – or just careering? Job analysis and design: implications for motivation	Chs 6 & 8	
5	25 Sep	Recruitment: implications for EEO, Diversity and the Law	Ch 6	Assessment 1 due
6	02 Oct	Selection: both sides of the story...	Ch 6	
7	09 Oct	Performance management: rationale and strategies	Ch 7	
8	16 Oct	Dealing with non-performance	Ch 11	
9	23 Oct	Training and development: maximising the strengths of internal talent	Ch 9	
10	30 Oct	Occupational Health and Safety	Ch 10	Assessment 2 due
11	06 Nov	Prospects for the Employer-Employee relationship: Forward with fairness?	Ch 5 & 12	
12	13 Nov	Time for change? Downsizing, rightsizing, capsizing..?	Ch 2	
13	20 Nov	Ethics at work: Socially responsible management	Chs 3 & 4	
14	27 Nov	Case study analysis and review Unit evaluation survey and review of unit		Case study in class e-Valuate opens on 24 Nov and closes on 7 Dec