SKILLS DEVELOPMENT GUIDE

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Contents

GENERAL STUDY SKILLS

Preparing an oral presentation

Most of us feel great stress when faced with the prospect of making a speech. Nevertheless, at some point, organizational leaders and managers will almost undoubtedly need to address an audience and sell an idea – whether this be a pitch to an external organization or a motivational speech to internal employees. In your future management career, for example, you may need to:

- Persuade senior management to support your proposed marketing strategy
- Make a sales pitch to customers
- Speak to a professional gathering about market conditions or how your business has overcome challenges
- Address and motivate other employees
- Speak to members of a community

Without the ability to communicate to an audience, management theory and practice is worth little. Persuasive communication (rhetoric) changes the audience's behaviour by encouraging them to accept the information they are being given and act upon it. Being able to make effective presentations will highlight your leadership, organizational, and speaking skills, and these often play an important role in building a successful career.

Oral presentations are an integral part of managing organizations – and, consequently, are likely to form part of your management course. So how do you face up to the uncomfortable reality of knowing everyone's eyes are fixed firmly on you? For any presentation you can reduce your fears and lay the foundation for a professional performance by focusing on the three Ps: plan, prepare and practise.

Planning
Ask yourself the following questions before you embark on writing your presentation:

- Time – what is the duration of the presentation?
- Place – how big is the room? What lighting and technology is available? Is there a lectern?
- Audience – how many will there be? Who will they be? What will they be interested in/expecting? (Take into account not just their occupation but also their age, gender, experience, attitudes etc)
- Purpose – what exactly are you trying to achieve? For example, are you informing, explaining, persuading, motivating, building a rapport …

Your presentation should be both practical (taking into account factors such as available resource and time) and appropriate (fitting your aims and the expectations of your audience). And don't forget to make sure you build in some emotional appeal.

Preparation
The golden rule of preparation is KISS – Keep It Short and Simple. This section offers a few tips on how to achieve this.

Attention
Gain audience attention at the beginning of your presentation by using some of the following:

- Anecdote
- Humour
- Statistics
- Quotation
- Analogies
- A rhetorical question

Think about what do you have (or do not have) in common with your audience. Where possible, discuss common experiences to engage their interest. Remember that more you involve the audience in the case/problem analysis, the more stimulating the presentation will be.

Repetition
- Tell them what you are going to say.
- Say it.
- Tell them what you have just said.
- (But try to vary your phrasing a little so they don't get bored!)

Visual aids

These include PowerPoint, video clips and transparencies. However make sure you:

- Avoid the colour red for text
- Minimize gimmicks (sounds, overuse of animation)
- Follow the 4 + 7 rule (4 bullet points, no more than 7 words in a line) per slide
- Ensure text and graphics fill up the whole space
- Seek guidance from your lecturer on the kinds of visual aids (e.g., PowerPoint, transparencies, posters, artefacts) that you may use.

If appropriate, you may wish to prepare handouts showing graphics, statistics an/or a summary of your presentation. These should be distributed at the end of your presentation.

Appropriateness
At the planning stage you analysed the audience and established the aim of your presentation. Based on this information, you should ensure that what you say is appropriate and tailored to the needs and interests of the audience as well as your own.

For example, you may have to tailor your language and style depending on the knowledge base, age and cultural background of your audience. Consider whether or not humour is appropriate in the context, and any other factors affecting your relationship with the audience (such as disagreements you may have had in the past – should they be acknowledged/addressed?).

Summaries
You should begin and end with a summary. To avoid obvious repetition and to engage their interest, you can use phrases like…

"My talk presents three reasons for…."

"Let me review with you the three major problems I've just discussed."

General hints
Make sure you establish your personal character and credibility and offer logical proof of your arguments

- Use verbal signposts, such as "So far we have talked about… now let's move to…."
- Use examples – statistics and factual information to improve your credibility.
- Prepare 2 to 4 main points for a 20-minute presentation.

Practice

Effective communication does not always come naturally, despite the impression of effortlessness given by outstanding presenters. After you have written your main idea or statement, you should practise how you will convey your main idea or purpose to the audience.

Here are a few hints to help you make sure you communicate with your audience as effectively as possible:

- Maintain eye contact – never talk to the slides or read from a slide.
- Move naturally during your presentation – do not remain in one spot.
- Use hand gestures to emphasise key points.
- Use palm-size note cards with key words or phrases to keep you on track and aid your memory (though bear in mind that they are not a substitution for rehearsing – see below).
- Time yourself and make sure you are comfortable with the speed you need to read at.

- Practise in front of a full-length mirror, checking for and eradicating mannerisms (such as scratching head, hands in pockets, fidgeting, bad posture).
- Record your presentation. Critique yourself for verbal padding ("um, err, you know, like…") and remove it.
- Practise in front of a friend and ask for their comments.
- Practise pronouncing 'difficult' words.
- Practise with the technology, in the presentation room if possible.
- Use breathing techniques to promote calmness before you begin
- Rehearse, rehearse, and rehearse!

Sources
Chiaramonte, P. and Adria, M. (1994). *Face-to-Face: Interpersonal Communication in the Workplace*. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall.
Guffey, M.E., Almonte, R. (2007). *Essentials of business communication*. (Fifth Edition). Ontario: Thomson- Nelson.

Writing a critical essay

In an essay at university level you are never just 'writing all you know' about a subject, or simply 'describing' something. You are being set a specific problem to think about in the light of the course learning objectives. Your task is to argue a case in relation to the question posed in the title. An essay has an argument– a point of view or thesis that it is designed to prove. Everything you say in the essay should be relevant to the argument or thesis.

As Andrew Northedge (1990) writes, 'arguing' in an essay is not at all the same thing as 'having an argument' in everyday terms. When you hear two people 'arguing' in normal life, there is often a hint of anger, emotion, irrationality and generalization. Your argument in an essay should aim at the opposite of these: you must be objective, precise and logical.

Analysis in an essay involves identifying and critically evaluating assumptions. You must also support your case with evidence. In order to make sure you do this in the most effective and efficient way, clarify the following points with your lecturer before you launch into essay preparation:

- The number of sources to be used
- The citation or documentation procedures required
- The length and format of the completed paper.

The writing process itself can be divided into three stages:
- Pre-writing – ie preparing to write
- Writing – ie composing a working draft
- Post-writing – ie revising, editing and proofreading

Pre-writing
Prepare to reserve up to one-third of the time allotted for pre-writing activities.

Pre-writing involves:

- Narrowing the focus
- Developing a research question
- Researching
- Note-taking
- Documenting sources
- Organizing an outline

Narrowing the focus
If your lecturer has not provided you with a specific issue or aspect to investigate, your first task is to narrow the topic and isolate an important problem or a major controversy on which to focus your attention.

Here's how:
- Do some preliminary reading to list some potential issues for consideration
- Brainstorm issues and exchange ideas with fellow students
- Use diagrammatic techniques to reveal connections between ideas
- Discuss your choice of focus with your professor.

This is a crucial stage of the process because the issue, aspect or feature that you select will provide the focus for your investigation. The research question that emerges from your preliminary reading and brainstorming is the beginning of your thesis, argument or point of view. The answer to the question will form your thesis, argument or point of view.

Developing a research question
Try to formulate a single, challenging question that demands analysis and argument – a question that can be stated precisely and succinctly in just one sentence. If possible, discuss the question with your professor. Knowing the research question or purpose of your essay enables the next stage of your research to be more focused and directed.

Researching and documenting sources
Use a variety of source materials, books, current journals and credible internet sites. Analyse the material to reveal a wide range of interpretations and information. Evaluate all your sources carefully for authenticity and reliability.

The evidence that you unearth in your research will fall into two broad categories:
1. Factual information or data
2. Ideas, judgements, inferences, theories and opinions

Part of your task as a researcher is to determine whether a piece of evidence is an established fact or a personal opinion.

Here are a few tips to help you do this:
Read critically: do not accept ideas and opinions blindly.
Be sceptical: read between the lines and beyond the print.
Question continuously as you read and examine carefully the arguments and hypotheses of the authors. Raise your own challenging questions.
Be objective: a controversial topic has two sides to the argument. Always consider both perspectives and approaches before presenting your own opinion.

Ask your lecturer whether you are expected to use professional or only peer-reviewed journals.

Note taking
There are four main types of notes:
1. Direct quotations (directly quoting someone else's words)
2. Paraphrasing information and ideas (putting the author's ideas into your own words)
3. Summarizing information and ideas
4. Personal insights, comments, and questions.

The information presented in the first three bullet points above must be documented and acknowledged in your essay.

Documenting sources
Although many methods of documenting reports are currently in practice (Guffey & Nagle, 2007) we will discuss only one: the APA (American Psychological Association) method.

The APA recommends that in-text citations (ie quotations or references to others' ideas) of fewer than 40 words should be made in the following style:

According to some OB theorists, "Invaluable as the deskilling/enskilling debates is for our understanding, it cannot help but gloss over the actual behavioural processes that surround technological change and organizational development" (Bratton, Callinan, Forshaw, & Sawchuk, 2007, p.439).

In this example, the authors' names are provided inside the parentheses at the end of the sentence. Note that the period (or full stop) comes after the parentheses. When you quote work by three to five authors, subsequent references can use the first named author, followed by 'et al.' The reference above would therefore be abbreviated to read '(Bratton et al., 2007, p.439)' in subsequent appearances.

An alternative approach is to include the author's name in a 'signal' phrase in your sentence.

This is particularly useful if you wish to indicate the authority of the source.
"Gender," noted sociologist Judy Wajcman argues, "is woven into the very fabric of bureaucratic hierarchy and authority relations" (1998, p. 47).

At the end of your essay you should include a page entitled 'References' giving full details of all the works you have referred to in this manner. The conventions for referring to different types of resources are as follows:

Resource type	
Book – individual author(s)	Bratton, J. & Gold, J. (2022). Human resource management: A Critical Approach (7th ed.). London: Bloomsbury Publishing
Book – corporate author(s)	Wood Gundy Ltd. (1974). The Canadian Money Market, Revised. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
Article in an academic journal	Charlwood, A. (2002). Why do non-union employees want to unionize? British Journal of Industrial Relations 40 (3), 463-491.
Article in a newspaper	Lewis, D. (2003). Women mentors on the rise. The Globe and Mail. 12 February 12, C8.
Internet	Tillman, H. N. (1998). Evaluating quality on the net. [Online]. Available: http://www. hopetillman.com/findqual.html.

HR-RELATED SKILLS

Appraisal interviews

Performance appraisal is not a precise science but a subjective judgement. There are some guidelines that may, however, increase an employee's acceptance of the appraisal process and intention to improve performance in the future.

Appraisal Interview Short Exercise
Using the information in this guide, and the following websites which contain sample performance assessment tools and guidelines: (www.businessballs.com/performanceappraisals.htm , www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/perfmangmt/perfapprsl/ , www.performancereview.com , www.zigonperf.com/freeresources.asp), pair up with another student and review and appraise each other's work. Identify realistic measurements and dates of completion.

Appraisal Interview Learning Activity

Objectives

This learning activity will show you how to conduct an appraisal interview more effectively and equitably.

Procedure note

This exercise will involve you pairing up with another student and appraising each other's work, using the sample Appraisal Interview Guide (Exhibit 1) provided or it may involve role-playing the characters in the case study, 'City Bank appraisal interview of customer service representative'.

For the case study, divide the class into groups.

Each group has (1) a City Bank manager (conducting the appraisal interview), (2) a City Bank customer service representative, the employee and (3) two observers of the interview.

Case Study: City Bank appraisal interview of customer service representative
Manager's brief
You are Jennie Anderson, manager at City Bank, and you are planning to conduct the annual performance appraisal of one of your team members Andrew/Amy Enns. He/she has been with the bank for five years and has performed above expectations in all areas of his/her work. However, this year you have had reports of several incidents when he/she expressed minimum amounts of

sensitivity towards customers. Also, a customer complained that Andrew/Amy showed little empathy towards their investment concerns following the events of 11 September, 2001, and showed little understanding of the customer's personal needs. Of further concern was his/her lack of interest in attending a weekend professional development workshop on the use of new software for investment strategies in the 21st century, developed by the Bank's corporate HR department. Discussions with other team leaders have confirmed Andrew/Amy's behaviour over the last twelve months.

Using the appraisal interview guide (Exhibit 1), prepare to interview Andrew/Amy Enns.

Employee's brief

You are Andrew/Amy Enns, and you have worked at City Bank for five years and you have always done well in your annual reviews. However, this year things haven't gone so well for you at work. Your mother has been ill and you have broken up with your girlfriend/boyfriend. You have received a phone call from your manager requesting that you meet for the annual performance appraisal. Prepare for this interview with your manager.

Analysis and feedback following appraisal interview:

1. Observers give feedback using Observer's guide, Exhibit 2.

2. Tutor then opens feedback discussion.

After completing the appraisal interview, ask:

1. Is the appraisal process effective and fair?
2. Did the activity illustrate the problems of appraisal?
3. How might you suggest improving the appraisal process?

APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

EXHIBIT 1: APPRAISAL INTERVIEW GUIDE

CASE STUDY: Customer Service Representative

Applicant's name: ____

Interviewer's name:____

Interviewer's title:____

Interview location:____

Interviewed for:____

Interview date:____

Introductory Interview

Would you please start by giving me a brief summary of your work history/past background.

____

____

Tell me about your present work responsibilities/activities.

____

____

What are some of the things you have done particularly well?

____

____

What are some of the things you have found difficult to do?

____

____

How did you get your job(s)/acquire these experiences?

____

____

13

What were the reason(s) for leaving your job(s)/making changes?

____

____

Behaviour-focusing questions

Customer service

Service orientation behaviours

AN EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING CONSISTENT SUPERIOR SERVICE AT ALL TIMES TO HIS/HER CUSTOMERS.

GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE OF WHEN YOU SPENT TIME AND EFFORT TO PROVIDE A SUPERIOR SERVICE TO A CUSTOMER/PERSON.

PROBING QUESTIONS	INTERPRETIVE GUIDE
* What was the *service* that the customer/ person *asked for* and how did you respond?	* Determine whether the candidate *responded quickly* and *effectively*
* What did you do to make the *customer/ person* feel that you *cared*?	* Did the candidate *demonstrate* a *genuine desire* to help?
* What kind of *commitments* did you make to the customer/person and how did you follow through (if needed)?	* What *follow-up* did he/she pursue to ensure customer/person satisfaction?
* How much *effort* was *required* to ensure customer/person satisfaction?	* Evaluate the *degree of effort* that was *put* into service delivery.
* How did you know that the *service* you were providing *exceeded* the customer's/ person's *expectations*?	* Did the example provide *sufficient evidence* of superior service?

Sales and product proficiency

Knowledge application and sales promotion behaviours

CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES ARE EXPECTED TO PROMOTE BACK PRODUCTS WHILE MAINTAINING EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIPS.

DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU HELPED/PERSUADED A CUSTOMER/PERSON TO PURCHASE/USE A PRODUCT OR SERVICE BY EXPLAINING ITS POTENTIAL BENEFITS.

PROBING QUESTIONS	**INTERPRETIVE GUIDE**
- *What* was the *product*?	
- How did you *acquire* your *knowledge* of the product?	- Evaluate the extent of *effort* that was *applied.*
- How did you *determine* the customer's/person's *needs*?	- Discover if he/she *pro-actively identified* the customer's *needs*.
- *Why* did you decide to *sell*/persuade the customer/person to use *this product*?	- Determine whether he/she *understood* needs from the *customer's*/person's *perspective*.
- *How* did you *persuade* the customer/ person to *purchase*/use *this product*?	- How *effective* was he/she in *explaining* the potential *benefits* relative to the customer's/person's needs.
- *How often* in the past six months have you *had* this kind of *opportunity*?	- Determine the extent to which he/ she is *interested* and is *able* to identify needs and *sell/persuade* others.
- What aspects of the situations *demonstrate* your *strengths* and *weaknesses* in selling/ persuading others?	

Thoroughness and motivation

Thoroughness and motivational behaviours

EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVES TAKE STEPS TO ENSURE THAT TASKS ARE DONE CORRECTLY AND COMPLETELY, ESPECIALLY DURING BUSY PERIODS.

TELL ME ABOUT ONE OF YOUR CHALLENGING ASSIGNMENTS, WHERE QUALITY WAS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE.

PROBING QUESTIONS	**INTERPRETIVE GUIDE**
- What was the *assignment* and its biggest *challenges*?	- Did it *require* well-developed *knowledge*, thoroughness and *accuracy*?
- What did you do to *complete* the task on *time*?	- Determine whether the candidate *sustained* a high level of *effort* and commitment.
- Did you *accomplish* your *objectives*?	- Determine whether the candidate *met* the *challenges*.
- What were the *results*?	- What *evidence* was provided as to the *effectiveness* of the results?
- How did you *feel after completion* of the assignment?	- Did the candidate feel proud and have a *sense of accomplishment* or *feel* simply that it was a *necessity*?

Interpersonal relationships

Relationship-building behaviours

HAVING GOOD WORKING RELATIONSHIPS WITH EACH OTHER IS IMPORTANT FOR ALL OF US WORKING AT THE BANK.

DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU MADE A SPECIAL EFFORT TO BUILD A RAPPORT WITH SOMEONE (AT WORK), WHEN THE SITUATION WAS A DIFFICULT ONE.

PROBING QUESTIONS	INTERPRETIVE GUIDE
- How did you go about *developing* this *relationship*?	- Observe whether the candidate is *capable* of *building* a trusting and *harmonious relationship*.
- How did you *demonstrate understanding* or sympathy in helping build the relationship.	- Determine whether the candidate is *able to be* genuinely *sympathetic*.
- How did you *check* for *feedback* and understanding?	- Did the candidate *substantiate* his/her perceptions *by feedback*?
- What kind of *people* do you *find easiest* and most *difficult* to develop working relationships with?	- Identify the kinds of people he/she *relates* to *most* and *least successfully*.
- What are the special *aspects* of the *situation* that best *demonstrate your strengths and weaknesses* in building relationships?	- *Determine whether* the candidate develops and *sustains* long-term productive working *relationships*.

Technology and learning

Learning acquisitions and application behaviours

THE EVOLVING BANK INDUSTRY REQUIRES EMPLOYEES TO ACTIVELY PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESS OF LEARNING THROUGHOUT THEIR CAREERS, UPGRADING THEIR SKILLS AND ADAPTING TO CHANGE.

DESCRIBE YOUR EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND AND HOW YOU HAVE APPLIED YOUR ACADEMIC KNOWLEDGE IN THE WORK ENVIRONMENT.

PROBING QUESTIONS	**INTERPRETIVE GUIDE**
- What kind of *courses* or sorts of *curriculum* did you *focus on* during your education in high school/college/university?	- Determine whether the candidate had clear *educational goals*.
- What were the subjects you *did best* in and those you *did least well* in?	- Determine whether he/she *earned* any academic *honours* or *encountered* any scholastic *problems*.
- Have you taken *computer*-related courses? What kind? When?	- Determine whether he/she takes the *initiative* to *increase his/her skill level* to deal with informal technology.
- What *additional courses* have you taken recently (or since graduation)?	- How strong is his/her *commitment* to *continuing education*?
- How do you *apply* your *education* to the *work environment*?	- Determine whether he/she is *capable* of *applying* successfully his/her academic *knowledge* to the work environment.

Organizational efficiency

Organizational behaviours

EFFECTIVE CUSTOMER REPRESENTATIVES DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN SYSTEMS TO ASSIST THEM TO ORGANIZE AND PRIORITIZE TASKS.

DESCRIBE A SITUATION WHEN YOU EXPERIENCED SOME DIFFICULTIES HELPING A CUSTOMER/PERSON (OR COMPLETING A TASK) BECAUSE YOU COULD NOT REMEMBER SOME IMPORTANT INFORMATION OR DID NOT HAVE THE INFORMATION HANDY.

PROBING QUESTIONS	**INTERPRETIVE GUIDE**
- What was the *information* that you did not have?	
- What were the *reasons* for *not having* this information?	- Determine whether the candidate *failed* to *remember* important *information* and/*or develop* a reference *system.*
- What *difficulties* did not having the information cause you?	- Did it *result* in the delivery of poor and *slow service* and a *frustrated customer*/person?
- Where did you *find* the missing *information* and how long did it take?	- Did he/she ask *another person for assistance*? How quickly?
- *How could* you *have prevented* this problem?	- *Why* did he/she *fail* to *develop* a reference system?
- What did you *learn* from the *experience*? Have you had an opportunity to put this knowledge into practice?	- Has he/she had the same or similar problem(s)? Has the candidate *built* a *system* to assist him/her to *organize* and *prioritize tasks*?

Forward-thinking and creative problem-solving

Forward-thinking and creative problem-solving behaviours

THE CUSTOMER SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE ROLE CAN BE MADE EASIER BY FINDING NEW AND BETTER SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMS.

DESCRIBE A TIME WHEN YOU USED GOOD JUDGEMENT AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS TO RESOLVE A CHALLENGING PROBLEM.

PROBING QUESTIONS	INTERPRETIVE GUIDE
- *What* was the *problem*?	
- *How* did you *approach* solving the problem?	- Did the candidate *think ahead* and *anticipate the impact* of his/her action?
- *What* was your *solution* to the problem?	- Determine whether the candidate *demonstrated good judgement.*
- *How* was this *solution better* of different?	- Did the candidate use *new ways* of *thinking* for finding better solutions?
- *What* were the *results*?	- What *evidence* was there as to the *effectiveness* of the solutions?
- *How* did you *confirm the effectiveness* of the solution?	-Did he/she *confirm* the effectiveness *with others*?

Closing questions

HOW WOULD YOU ASSESS YOUR PERFORMANCE OVER THIS PAST YEAR?

____

____

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN A JOB? WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU AND WHAT DO YOU WISH TO AVOID?

____

____

WHAT TYPE OF POSITION WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE HOLDING SEVERAL YEARS FORM NOW? WHY WOULD THAT TYPE OF POSITION APPEAL TO YOU?

____

____

IF CURRENTLY EMPLOYED, WHAT IS YOUR PRESENT SALARY? BENEFITS?

____

____

WHAT ARE YOUR SALARY EXPECTATIONS?

____

WHICH PART OF THE CITY/AREAS ARE YOU ABLE AND WILLING TO WORK IN? ARE YOU WILLING TO WORK IN MORE THAN ONE BRANCH DURING YOUR WEEKLY SCHEDULE?

____

____

ARE THERE ANY CONDITIONS THAT COULD AFFECT YOUR ABILITY TO DO THE JOB?

____

____

COULD YOU GIVE ME THE NAMES OF TWO PEOPLE TO CONTACT TO CONFIRM THE INFORMATION YOU HAVE PROVIDED TODAY?

____

____

Evaluation and recommendation

Summary of interview comments

BEHAVIOURS	COMMENTS
Service orientation behaviours	
Communication behaviours (evidence from competencies)	
Knowledge application and sales promotion behaviours	
Thoroughness and motivational behaviours	
Relationship-building behaviours	
Learning acquisition and application behaviours	
Organizational behaviours	
Forward-thinking and creative problem-solving behaviours	

Summary of candidate's scores

BEHAVIOURS

1. Service orientation behaviours

Ratings **Score weight total**

I______ 1	I______ 2	I______ 3	I______ 4	I ____ 5	x3	___
Very strong evidence behaviours are not present	Strong evidence behaviours are not present	Some evidence behaviours are present	Strong evidence behaviours are present	Very strong evidence behaviours are present		

2. Communications behaviours (evidence from all competencies)

Ratings **Score weight total**

I______ 1	I______ 2	I______ 3	I______ 4	I ____ 5	x2	___
Very strong evidence behaviours are not present	Strong evidence behaviours are not present	Some evidence behaviours are present	Strong evidence behaviours are present	Very strong evidence behaviours are present		

3. Knowledge application and sales promotion behaviours

Ratings **Score weight total**

I______ 1	I______ 2	I______ 3	I______ 4	I ____ 5	x2	___
Very strong evidence behaviours are not present	Strong evidence behaviours are not present	Some evidence behaviours are present	Strong evidence behaviours are present	Very strong evidence behaviours are present		

4. Thoroughness and motivational behaviours

Ratings **Score weight total**

I______	I______	I______	I______	I____ x2 ___
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Very strong evidence behaviours are not present	Strong evidence behaviours are not present	Some evidence behaviours are present	Strong evidence behaviours are present	Very strong evidence behaviours are present

5. Relationship-building behaviours

Ratings **Score weight total**

I______	I______	I______	I______	I____ x2 ___
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Very strong evidence behaviours are not present	Strong evidence behaviours are not present	Some evidence behaviours are present	Strong evidence behaviours are present	Very strong evidence behaviours are present

6. Learning acquisition and application behaviours

Ratings **Score weight total**

I______	I______	I______	I______	I____ x1 ___
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Very strong evidence behaviours are not present	Strong evidence behaviours are not present	Some evidence behaviours are present	Strong evidence behaviours are present	Very strong evidence behaviours are present

7. Organizational behaviours

Ratings **Score weight total**

I______	I______	I______	I______	I______	x1	___
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
Very strong evidence behaviours are not present	Strong evidence behaviours are not present	Some evidence behaviours are present	Strong evidence behaviours are present	Very strong evidence behaviours are present		

8. Forward-thinking and creative problem-solving behaviours

Ratings **Score weight total**

I______	I______	I______	I______	I______	x1	___
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**		
Very strong evidence behaviours are not present	Strong evidence behaviours are not present	Some evidence behaviours are present	Strong evidence behaviours are present	Very strong evidence behaviours are present		

Employment Recommendation

NOT RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION BY CITY BANK FOR THE REASON(S) INDICATED BELOW:

___ Evidence of effective customer service-related behaviours (first four competencies) is low

___ Overall evidence of effective competency profile-related behaviours is low

___ Career goals and expectations cannot be satisfied

___ Salary expectations cannot be satisfied

___ Other (please describe)

____

____

NOT RECOMMENDED FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION FOR MY DIVISION/COMMUNITY. HOWEVER, CANDIDATE SHOULD BE REFERRED TO THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

1. ____

   ____

2. ____

   ____

___ RECOMMENDED FOR SECOND INTERVIEW

___ RECOMMENDED FOR HIRE; OFFER FOR THE POSITION REFERRED TO BELOW:

TITLE/GRADE: ____

SALARY/ COMPA RATIO: ____

COMMUNITY NAME: ____

BRANCH TRANSIT/NAME: ____

__________________________ Date: ___/ ___/ _____

Interviewer's signature

APPRAISAL INTERVIEW

Case Study: City Bank appraisal interview of customer service representative

EXHIBIT 2: OBSERVER'S GUIDE

Using the following guide, evaluate the interview skills of the *appraiser*. Note: Excellence is (1) and (5) needs significant improvement.

	1	2	3	4	5
1. Did the appraiser *open* the interview satisfactory by greeting the employee and explaining the purpose and structure of the appraisal interview?					
2. Did the appraiser create a relaxed and positive atmosphere?					
3. Did the appraiser probe with: what, who, how, why and ask for examples? Listen carefully during the employee's self-appraisal?					
4 Did the appraiser sum up the employee's overall assessment accurately?					
5 When presenting areas of *agreement*, did the appraiser explain how judgements were made?					
6 When presenting areas of *disagreement*, did the appraiser give specific examples for clarity and to support judgement?					
7 Did the appraiser respond to arguments and explain why she/he disagreed?					
8 Did the appraiser involve the employee in generating final performance objectives?					
9 Did the appraiser explain what she/he could do to help the employee develop and meet objectives?					
10 Did the appraiser *close* the interview satisfactorily by summarizing the action plan, and thank the employee for her/his cooperation?					

Career management

It is becoming increasingly evident that many of us will need to learn the skills of career management:

- What does the term 'career' mean to you, and who is responsible for the development of your career?
- What skills will you need to manage your career?
- What issues does the model of career competencies raise for managing your career?

Case study analysis

Case study analysis is an important skill for potential and practising managers to develop: it provides learners with experience of applying strategic management concepts to an organization they have been asked to study or to their own company or organization. Case study analysis provides learners with an experience of HRM problems that they have probably not had the opportunity to experience in their own workplace. Furthermore, case study analysis will provide you with the opportunity to practise your research skills and your oral presentation skills when presenting your report in class.

Detailed analysis of a case study should include six key areas:

1. History, development and growth of the organization
2. Identification of the organization's strengths and weaknesses
3. Identification of the organization's external opportunities and threats
4. Kind of business strategy pursued by the organization
5. Nature of the organization's structure (hierarchical or 'flat' structure – see Chapter 4), control and human resources (HR) systems and how they align with its strategy
6. Recommendation(s).

The following is a guide to the steps you can take to analyse the case material.

Executive summary
The major problems, causes and recommendations are clearly stated in a single paragraph on the first page of the report, permitting the reader a quick insight into the logic of the analysis: 'The major problems are …', 'The causes of these problems are …' and 'Consequently we recommend that …'. This format quickly and understandably conveys the authors' conclusions.

Background/summary of the facts
Present briefly (in no more than two pages) the key facts and major assumptions. Explore the significant factors in the organization's internal and external environments. Include any important assumptions made.

Diagnosis of the problem(s)
Include a concise statement of the major problem(s) identified, prioritizing these into major and minor. Identify the relationships between problems. This should be a relatively brief section, more like a list than a detailed

analysis, which will take place in the next section. Include any opportunities facing the organization, as well as any problems.

Cause(s) of the problem(s)
This is the heart of the case analysis. It is very important to distinguish between symptoms (outward manifestations) of a problem (for example a fever) and the underlying causes (for example a bacterial infection). Be sure the causes are related to the problem(s). A causal diagram (with arrows) will usually be of assistance. Clearly apply the course material to defend your stated opinions on the causes of the problems.

Alternative solutions
Indicate a number of possible realistic solutions, including maintaining the status quo. Identify the strengths and weaknesses of each one in terms of the firm's objectives, the characteristics of its internal and external environments and the presenting problem(s). Also include the expected outcomes of each.

Implementation of the solution and evaluation
The solution will be some combination of the above alternatives. Specifically state what will be done, by whom, when, how, where and, most importantly, why. Justify the decision with sound theoretical logic. Why will this approach work? Apply the course concepts to the solution. Additional research may be necessary and is encouraged (that is, consult other textbooks, leading management journals and so on). Ensure that the solutions do indeed address the identified problems and causes. Outline how one would go about assessing the effectiveness of the developed plan.

Remember that you must be sensitive to the needs of the organization and tailor your analysis to suit the specific issue discussed in your case.

1. This guide to analysing a case study draws upon the work of Charles Hill and Gareth Jones (1998). *Strategic Management Theory: An Integrated Approach*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.

Disciplinary interview

The formal disciplinary process is concerned with regulating employee behaviour to produce controlled and effective behaviour. The disciplinary interview is a central part of the disciplinary process, but most managers use the formal disciplinary interview as the last resort. Many managers also lack the basic knowledge and skills to conduct such a legally bound activity. To help you develop this important management skill and to give you experience of the disciplinary process, we have devised a disciplinary case with supporting information. You can participate, at either an individual or a group level, in the simulation and develop an important HR skill by going to www.palgrave.com/business/brattonandgold4 and clicking on 'Disciplinary interview exercise'.

Disciplinary Interviewing Exercise

Objectives

This learning activity will show you how to conduct a disciplinary interview more effectively, thus improving the employment relationship and helping to avoid costly grievance arbitration procedures.

Role-playing procedure

Case studies and role-playing can be an invaluable learning experience for students. This exercise should convey something of the real flavour of disciplinary procedures at work.

The class is divided into small groups.
Each group has:

(1) a manager (conducting the disciplinary interview)
(2) an employee
(3) the security officer (as a witness)
(4) two observers of the interview.

The last role is important for the analysis and feedback aspects of the role-playing session. The case takes place in a unionized establishment.

The manager has a copy of Articles 25 and 26 from the company's collective agreement (see Exhibits 1 and 2 below).

Analysis and feedback following disciplinary interview:
Observers complete the 'Interview Observation Sheet', Exhibit 3, and, with the tutor, give feedback.

DISCIPLINARY INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
Manager's Brief

Robert McKenna1 was given the team leader's job - on three months probation - six weeks ago. You recommended him, despite his age, and had every faith in his abilities. He is 24 and his partner had given birth to twins just before his promotion. Although you have been keeping your eye on him and have had regular long chats with him every week, he has given you no grounds for concern until last night.

When you arrived for work this morning the following note was on your desk in a sealed envelope marked 'Confidential':

> Dear Ms/Mr Friedman,
> I was doing my rounds last night as usual when I noticed a light in your office above the machine shop. It was 3:40 am and the machine shop night shift was working normally. I entered by the stores' side door and went first to the team leader's office at the end of the machine shop.
>
> The office was unattended and the light was on. I asked the operator who was working on the machine nearest to the office (Jeff Miles) where the team leader was. He said he thought he was trying to find the duty electrician, as there was some trouble with the wiring on that machine. I went upstairs to your office and through the window in the door I saw your new team leader asleep, sitting at your desk with his head resting on his arms. I knocked on the door but he failed to wake up. I aroused him and he apologized and left almost immediately. I remained behind to write this report for you. The reason for letting you know about this is because I found him asleep earlier this week, in his own office on that occasion. As he is a new employee, I didn't want to report him that time, but I think he has deserved it on this occasion.
>
> Signed: Lorne Barnsley,
> Security Officer

You knew Lorne Barnsley was a fair man and he had been with the company for over ten years. You decided to have a talk with him about his report and you came back to work this evening for that purpose. He confirmed everything he said in that written note and said that he had also recorded the information in the incident book, which he was obliged to complete at the end of every shift. You thanked him and came back to your office.
You have phoned Robert McKenna and asked him to come up and see you. Prepare and conduct a disciplinary interview with Robert McKenna on this incident.

[1] All names in the case are fictitious

DISCIPLINARY INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
Team leader's brief

You are Robert McKenna and have recently been appointed to team leader. You are still on probation as regards this position, but expect that in six weeks time your appointment will be confirmed permanently. This appointment has come at the right time for you, what with your partner recently giving birth to twins and buying a house, you need all the money you can earn.

To date, you have found the team leader's job both interesting and a challenge and believe that you are fulfilling your duties competently. However, it does involve shift work and you find it difficult to adjust to this. In particular, the night shift is a problem since you find it difficult to sleep during the day, your new family keeps you awake in the afternoons and your house is adjacent to a busy road.

Unfortunately this week you have been found asleep on duty on two occasions and as a result face a disciplinary interview with your manager. Being a team leader you are well aware that such an offence can be classed as 'gross misconduct'. Prepare yourself for the interview.

DISCIPLINARY INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
Observers' brief

Observers' role
The observers need to listen for specific instances that have a positive or negative effect on the interview - including the appropriate/inappropriate use of questions/statements, for example open/closed/probing questions. Check for appropriateness of style adopted and its effect upon rapport. Observe the degree of flexibility in the manager's approach to the interview - Does he/she set out with rigid objectives; does he/she seek to listen and collect information? Finally, be alert to managers who hear what they want or expect to hear rather than what is actually said.

Analysis and feedback following disciplinary interview:
Observers complete interview observation sheet, Exhibit 3, and give feedback.

DISCIPLINARY INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
EXHIBIT 1: ARTICLE 25 – COMPANY'S DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

25.1 Introduction
The following procedure is designed to give fair treatment to an employee who has either committed an offence or misconduct himself/herself on a specific occasion or has continually failed to meet the company's required standards of attendance, timekeeping, conduct or performance. This procedure does not affect the right of the company to summarily dismiss an employee in the case of gross misconduct.

25.2 Disciplinary procedure
(a) First warning
An employee who fails to meet required standards will, in the first instance, receive a warning from his/her supervisor.

(b) Second warning
If an employee for the second time fails to meet required standards s/he will receive a written warning from his/her supervisor in the presence of the shop steward.

(c) Third warning

If the employee continues to give cause for dissatisfaction, a second written warning will be given by the production manager in the presence of the supervisor and the shop steward and will be considered as a final warning.

25.3 Disciplinary action
If the employee's performance or behaviour continues to be unsatisfactory, s/he may be suspended for up to three days or dismissed. Such action will be notified to the employee in the presence of his/her shop steward. In cases of dismissal the length of notice will be in accordance with the Employment Act.

25.4 Appeal
An appeal against either suspension or dismissal may be made to the chief executive officer, whose decision shall be final.

DISCIPLINARY INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
EXHIBIT 2: ARTICLE 26 – CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

(a) Neglect of duty
It is recognized by both management and the union that a mutual problem exists on the question of neglect of duty and the union undertakes to do everything possible to see that its members live up to the spirit and intent of the agreement.

(b) Definition of gambling and work premises
(1) Definition of gambling will be in accordance with local factory rules.
(2) Work premises are defined as the actual factory area and are not to include the town site.

(c) Fighting at work premises

(d) Notification of union standing committee by employer
Wherever practical, management will notify the union committee of its intention to discipline or discharge an employee. Under certain well-recognized circumstances where no premeditation is involved, it is permissible for the company to discharge an employee immediately without recourse to the standing committee. The employee still has the right to present his/her case to the standing committee for consideration and, if deemed proper, the standing committee may follow the usual grievance procedure.

DISCIPLINARY INTERVIEWING EXERCISE

EXHIBIT 3: INTERVIEW OBSERVATION SHEET

Make notes on this sheet of the *strong points* and the *weak points* you observed with regard to the way the manager handled the interview with the team leader. These notes will help you give constructive feedback and suggest how the disciplinary interview might have been improved.

	STRONG POINTS	WEAK POINTS
PREPARATION Prepared and cognizant of rules of natural justice		
PROCEDURE OF THE INTERVIEW Getting the facts Questioning skills Listening skills Summarizing and recording		
PERSONAL MANNER		
ASSESSING THE FACTS		
RESEARCHING A CONCLUSION AND PROPOSING ACTION		
OTHER POINTS		

Employment interviews

Short Interview exercise:

Choose an organization in your city. Using the information here as a guide, interview a manager responsible for recruitment (ask, for example, about their current recruitment methods and selection tests). Using the information obtained from your interview, develop a comprehensive recruitment strategy for the organization based on the position of the person who you interviewed. Prepare an advertisement, including the cost of advertising in appropriate media outlets. Identify appropriate employments instruments to be used and include the rationale behind your choice. Present your findings in the form of a business report or as an oral presentation to your class.

Interview Guide:

Introduction

The employment interview has been referred to as a conversation with a purpose. However, the conversation has to be planned, directed and controlled. The purpose of the interview is fourfold:

(1) to probe an applicant's experience/qualifications in order to make an accurate prediction of his or her future performance in the job
(2) to exchange information about the job and the organization
(3) to sample an applicant's behaviour
(4) to find a good match (that is to match an individual's abilities to the job; to match a candidate's needs to the organization's culture).

When it comes to planning the employment interview, there are at least three options:
(1) structured: that is, compile a list of questions in advance
(2) semi-structured: only major questions are prepared
(3) unstructured: topics are prepared but no set questions.

Recent research suggests that reliability and validity can be improved if the interview is structured. This means planning and framing the major questions and some possible follow-up questions to probe deeper if necessary.

Objectives

This learning activity will demonstrate to you the purposes of the employment interview, and help you appreciate the selection errors associated with traditional approaches to employment interviewing.

Procedure

The class is divided into groups. Each group (1) writes a job description and specification for one of the positions listed in the assignment; (2) using the job description and job specification, each group designs a job advertisement (For guidance on this see Checklist 'Evaluating Job Advertisements', Exhibit 1); (3) members of the other groups apply for the position and submit their résumés; (4) develop a screening device in order to reduce the application pool to three candidates; and (5) interview one candidate for the position. Two members of the class observe each group conducting the employment interview. The latter role is important for the analysis and feedback aspects of the role-playing session.

Analysis and feedback following employment interview:

1. Observers give feedback using Observer's Checklist, Exhibit 2.
2. Tutor gives feedback.

EXHIBIT 1 RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING

Criterion*	Advertisement 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Distinctive headlines									
Effective graphics									
Clever and creative									
Avoids sounding too glamorous									
Specifies nature of job and qualifications									
Sells the employee									
Avoids stereotyping									
Helps candidate identify self									
Uses apace economically									
Effective typeface									
Proper recruitment media									
TOTALS:									

Ranking (most effective to least effective)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6

7

8

9

*Rank each ad for each criterion using the following scale:
5 = Excellent; 4 = Very good; 3 = Satisfactory; 2 = Below average; 1 = Very poor

EXHIBIT 2 THE EMPLOYMENT INTERVIEW: OBSERVER'S CHECKLIST

OPENING – Did the interviewer	Yes	No	Comment
1. Prepare for the interview?			
2. Introduce her/himself and others?			
3. Outline structure of the interview?			
4. Put the interviewee at ease?			

MIDDLE – Did the interviewer	Yes	No	Comment
1. Start with 'open' questions?			
2. Follow with probing questions to obtain more detailed information?			
3. Link questions to open up new subjects for discussion?			

CLOSE - Did the interviewer	Yes	No	Comment
1. Allow time for interviewee's own questions?			
2. Outline next step of the process?			
3. Thank interviewee for attending?			

Long Interview exercise

This assignment is completed over several weeks, and involves four major activities.

Part 1: Write a job description and specification

The staffing process involves developing job descriptions and job specifications. A job description is a broad statement of the purpose, scope, duties and responsibilities of a particular position or job. A job specification is a detailed statement of the physical and mental activities involved in the position or job and, when relevant, of social and physical environmental matters. Working as a group, write a job description and specification for one of the following positions or another position that is appropriate for a student graduating from the programme.

A. Assistant manager human resources, Servo Engineering
B. Front desk manager, Alpha Hotel
C. Office manager, health centre

Part 2: Write a classified job advertisement

Using the job description and job specification developed in Part I, design a job advertisement for the position. Look at job advertisements in newspapers. As part of the exercise state on a separate page: where the advertisement will be placed and why; how long it will run; and what it will cost.

Part 3: Screen applications and prepare an interview

Translate the information in the job description and job specification into a screening instrument.

(1) Develop a scoring guide to screen the applicants to decide who shall be interviewed.
(2) Develop the interview questions and explain the rationale for each question (for example how will it help predict the candidate's performance).
(3) Describe any performance tests you will have the candidate perform as part of the selection process.

Other members of your class 'apply' for the position and submit their own résumé.

Part 4: Interview the candidate

After deciding the three most suitable candidates to be interviewed (based upon Part 3), the group interviews one of the candidates for the position. The interview will be videotaped to permit analysis and feedback.
Assignment documentation
The following documentation should be collated and submitted by …… (date)
(1) Job description and specification
(2) Job advertisement
(3) Scoring guide used in the screening process
(4) Interview questions (with rationale)
(5) Interview scoring guide

External environment analysis

Most organizations face external contexts that are complex, dynamic and increasingly global. This makes the context increasingly difficult to interpret. To cope with often incomplete and ambiguous contextual data, and to increase their understanding of the general external context, organizations engage in a process called ‘external environmental analysis’. All managers, including HR managers, need to be aware of the importance of scanning the external context in a systematic way.

A number of models exist that can help managers in analysing the external environment. Such models provide a framework to identify external opportunities and threats. Opportunities arise when an organization can take advantage of conditions in its external environment to formulate and implement strategies that enable it to improve performance. Threats arise when conditions in the external environment endanger the integrity of the organization's activities.

As shown in Exhibit 1 (below) an organization's external environment has two major parts:

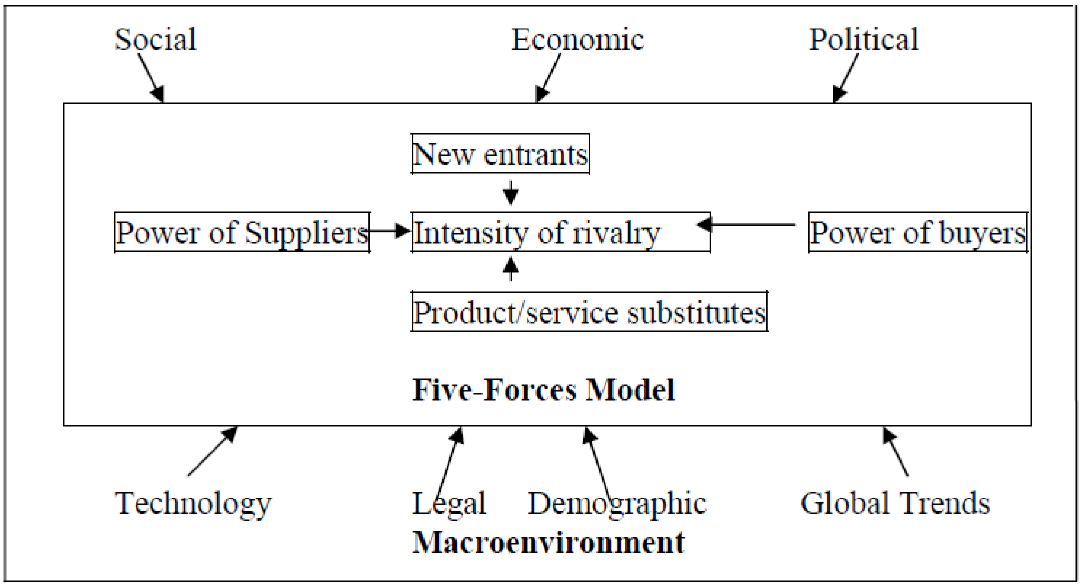
• macroenvironment

• industry

The macro environment is composed of social, economic, political and technological elements in the broader society that can influence an industry and the organizations within it. The industry environment is the set of factors that directly influences an organization and its actions and responses. Managers have to analyse competitive forces in an industry's environment in order to identify the opportunities and threats confronting an organization. A popular framework for doing this is Michael Porter's 'five-forces' model. This model identifies five competitive forces that shape industry's profit potential (as measured by the long-term return on investment): (1) the bargaining power of suppliers, (2) the threat of new entrants, (3) the threat of product substitutes, (4) the bargaining power of buyers and (5) the intensity of rivalry among established organizations within an industry.

Within most industries, there are groups of organizations in which each member follows the same basic strategy as others in the groups but follows a different strategy from that of firms in other groups. These groups of organizations are referred to as strategic groups. (see C. Hill and G. Jones, (1998) *Strategic Management Theory*. New York: Houghton Mifflin).

Exhibit 1 The external environment



Analyzing the macroenvironment

To increase their understanding of the macroenvironment and to help develop a 'strategic plan', human resource managers can engage in a process called 'external environment analysis'.

This process typically includes four activities:

- Scanning-identifying early signals of macroenvironment changes and trends
- Monitoring-detecting meaning through ongoing observations of macro- environmental changes and trends
- Forecasting-developing projections of anticipated outcomes based on monitored changes and trends
- Assessing-determining the importance of macroenvironmental changes and trends for the organization's strategic plans.

Step 1: Identify potential opportunities

Scan the macroenvironment around your own organization or an organization you are studying. Consider economic, technological, legal, political, social, demographic and global trends. Write down 3 - 6 potential opportunities for growth and profitability over the next 3 to 5 years.

Potential opportunities for the organization:
1. ____
2. ____
3. ____
4. ____
5. ____
6. ____

Step 2: Identify potential threats

Scanning the macroenvironment, write down 3 - 6 potential threats that can endanger the integrity and profitability of the organization's operation.

Potential threats to the organization:
1. ____
2. ____
3. ____
4. ____
5. ____
6. ____

Step 3: Conduct an analysis of industry environment

The five-forces model allows an organization to systematically analyse its relationships with other strategic competitors. In general, an attractive industry (in terms of long-term ROI) has high entry barriers, suppliers and buyers with low bargaining power, few threats from product/service substitutes and relatively moderate rivalry. Conversely, a less attractive industry has low entry barriers, suppliers and buyers with strong bargaining positions, strong competitive threats from product/service substitutes, and intense rivalry among competitive firms. Use the following checklist to identify potential threats to your organization or one you are studying.

- Increase in bargaining power of suppliers?
- Increase in bargaining power of buyers?
- Increase in new domestic competition?

- Increase in new or substitute products or services?
- Increase in rivalry among established firms?

Step 4: Evaluate the importance of the changes for the organization's strategies.

This step focuses on determining the timing and importance of external environmental changes for the organization's strategies. Managers must include both macro and industry changes in their analyses. Common questions to pose include: How will macroenvironmental forces impact on the organization? What will our competitors do in the future? Where do we hold an advantage over our competitors? How will this change our business strategy?

Complete the following steps and actions to deal with the effects of environmental changes and trends on the strategic management of the organization.

What are the 3 - 6 most important changes/trends facing the organization?	What actions should management take to cope with these environmental chanes/ trends
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

The list should be discussed with your key stakeholders to ensure consensus.

The five-forces model has been criticized for giving insufficient attention to the importance of internal organization differences (for example the quality of a firm's human resources, and technological, physical and financial resources). An organization will not be successful just because it is based in an attractive industry. As strategic management and leadership theorists remind us, to be successful, an organization requires distinctive competencies, resources, capabilities and leadership.

Handling grievances

The grievance process is an integral part of administering the collective agreement, a grievance being a formal dispute between an employee (or the union) and management involving the interpretation, application or alleged violation of the collective agreement.

The union files most grievances, and once they have been filed, management should seek to resolve them fairly and quickly.

Handling a grievance is a key skill for managers in a unionized (and non-unionized, if there is a grievance process in place) workplace, but many lack the basic knowledge and skills to conduct a formal grievance investigation and interview.

To help you to develop formal grievance investigation and interviewing skills and to give you experience of the grievance process, we have devised a grievance case with supporting information.

Handling Grievances Exercise

Objectives
This learning activity will show you how to conduct a grievance interview more effectively and so help to avoid costly grievance arbitration procedures.

Procedure Note
The class is divided into groups.
Each group has

(1) a manager (conducting the grievance interview)
(2) two shop stewards
(3) team leader (the complainant)
(4) two observers of the interview.

The last role is important for the analysis and feedback aspects of the role-playing session.

There are three steps to the exercise:
Step 1: shop steward interviews complainant, the team leader, to gather all the evidence.
Step 2: conduct grievance interview.
Step 3: analyse and give feedback on 'manager's' grievance interviewing skills.

Both the manager and the shop stewards have copies of Articles 25 [Exhibit 1, below]; 26 [Exhibit 2, below]; and 27 [Exhibit 4, below] from the company's collective agreement. The two observers have a copy of an evaluation sheet [Exhibit 3, below].

Analysis and feedback following disciplinary interview:

1. Observers complete interview observation sheet, Exhibit 3, and give feedback.
2. Tutor then opens discussion either:

    (a) with a question to manager 'How far do you think you achieved your objectives?'
    or
    (b) with one or two (no more) points the observers believed to be important.

If (a) adopted, then follow with (b) and finally allow the union representative to make his/her comments.

GRIEVANCE INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
MANAGER'S BRIEF

Last week you held a disciplinary meeting with one of your team leaders, Robert McKenna,[2] which resulted in a written warning for sleeping on the job. The security officer's letter that led to the disciplinary interview is attached.

When you arrived for work this morning the shop steward representing Robert McKenna's department had requested an urgent meeting with you, pursuant to Article 27: Procedure for settling disputes. Meet the Shop steward and decide what action to take.

> Dear Ms/Mr Friedman,
> I was doing my rounds last night as usual when I noticed a light in your office above the machine shop. It was 3:40 am and the machine shop night shift was working normally. I entered by the stores side door and went first to the team leader's office at the end of the machine shop.
> The office was unattended and the light was on. I asked the operator who was working on the machine nearest to the office (Jeff Miles) where the team leader was. He said he thought he was trying to find the duty electrician, as there was some trouble with the wiring on that machine. I went upstairs to your office and through the window in the door I saw your new team leader asleep sitting at your desk with his head resting on his arms. I knocked on the door but he failed to wake up. I aroused him and he apologized and left almost immediately.
> I remained behind to write this report for you. The reason for letting you know about this is because I found him asleep earlier this week, in his own office on that occasion. As he is a new employee, I didn't want to report him that time, but I think he has deserved it on this occasion.
>
> Signed: Lorne Barnsley,
> Security Officer

Note: Lorne Barnsley is a fair man and has been with the company for over ten years. When you spoke to him last week he confirmed everything he said in the written note and said that he had also recorded the information in the incident book, which he was obliged to complete at the end of every shift.

[2] All names in the case are fictitious

GRIEVANCE INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
TEAM LEADER'S BRIEF

You are Robert McKenna and have recently been appointed to team leader. You are still on probation as regards this position, but expect that in six weeks' time your appointment will be confirmed permanently. This appointment has come at the right time for you, what with your partner recently giving birth to twins and buying a house, you need all the money you can earn.

To date, you have found the team leader's job both interesting and a challenge and believe that you are fulfilling your duties competently. However, it does involve shift work and you find it difficult to adjust to this. In particular, the night shift is a problem since you find it difficult to sleep during the day, your new family keeps you awake in the afternoons and your house is adjacent to a busy road.

Last week you were found asleep on duty on two occasions and as a result were given a written warning from your manager, Ms/Mr Friedman. Given your personal circumstances and your previous good behaviour, you believe that a written warning is too harsh. You are extremely annoyed with the manager and you complain to your shop steward.

GRIEVANCE INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
SHOP STEWARD'S BRIEF

You are the shop steward in the machine shop. Interview one of your members, Robert McKenna, who has a complaint against the manager. After consulting the grievance and disciplinary procedures, prepare a grievance case to present to the manager. Your objective is to ensure that your member's rights are safeguarded.

GRIEVANCE INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
OBSERVER'S BRIEF

Observer's Role
The observers need to listen for specific instances that have a positive or negative effect on the interview - including the appropriate/inappropriate use of questions/statements, for example open, closed, probing questions. You are helping to evaluate the HR-related skills of the student role-playing the 'manager'. Check for appropriateness of style adopted and his/her effect upon rapport. Observe the degree of *flexibility* in his/her approach to the interview - does he/she set out with rigid objectives, does he/she seek to listen and collect information? Finally, be alert to participants who hear what they want or expect to hear rather that what is actually said.

Analysis and feedback following disciplinary interview:
Observers complete interview observation sheet, **Exhibit 3**, and give feedback.

GRIEVANCE INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
EXHIBIT 1: ARTICLE 25 – COMPANY'S DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

25.1 **Introduction**

The following procedure is designed to give fair treatment to an employee who has either committed an offence or misconduct himself/herself on a specific occasion or has continually failed to meet the company's required standards of attendance, timekeeping, conduct or performance. This procedure does not affect the right of the company to summarily dismiss an employee in the case of gross misconduct.

25.2 **Disciplinary procedure**

(a) First warning
An employee who fails to meet required standards will, in the first instance, receive a warning from his/her supervisor.

(b) Second warning
If an employee for the second time fails to meet required standards s/he will receive a written warning from his/her supervisor in the presence of the shop steward.

(c) Third warning
If the employee continues to give cause for dissatisfaction, a second written warning will be given by the production manager in the presence of the supervisor and the shop steward and will be considered as a final warning.

25.3 **Disciplinary action**

If the employee's performance or behaviour continues to be unsatisfactory, s/he may be suspended for up to three days or dismissed. Such action will be notified to the employee in the presence of his/her shop steward. In cases of dismissal the length of notice will be in accordance with the Employment Act.

25.4 **Appeal**

An appeal against either suspension or dismissal may be made to the chief executive officer, whose
decision shall be final.

GRIEVANCE INTERVIEWING EXERCISE
EXHIBIT 2: ARTICLE 26 – CAUSES FOR DISCIPLINARY ACTION

(a) **Neglect of duty**

It is recognized by both management and the union that a mutual problem exists on the question of neglect of duty and the union undertakes to do everything possible to see that its members live up to the spirit and intent of the agreement.

(b) **Definition of gambling and work premises**

(1) Definition of gambling will be in accordance with local factory rules.
(2) Work premises are defined as the actual factory area and are not to include the town site.

(c) **Fighting at work premises**

(d) **Notification of union standing committee by employer**
Wherever practical, management will notify the union committee of its intention to discipline or discharge an employee. Under certain well-recognized circumstances where no premeditation is involved, it is permissible for the company to discharge an employee immediately without recourse to the standing committee. The employee still has the right to present his/her case to the standing committee for consideration and, if deemed proper, the standing committee may follow the usual grievance procedure.

GRIEVANCE INTERVIEWING EXERCISE

EXHIBIT 3: INTERVIEW OBSERVATION SHEET

Make notes on this sheet of the *strong points* and the *weak points* you observed with regard to the way the manager handled the interview with the team leader. These notes will help you give constructive feedback and suggestions on how the disciplinary interview might have been improved.

	STRONG POINTS	WEAK POINTS
PREPARATION Prepared and cognizant of case and grievance procedure		
INTERVIEW SKILLS Questioning skills Listening skills Summarizing and recording		
PERSONAL MANNER Put the parties at ease Allow emotion to vent itself Avoid passing judgement		
ASSESSING THE FACTS Obtain all relevant information Check accuracy of information Consult relevant documents Consult relevant others		
PLAN OF ACTION Establish cause(s) of problem Identify short- and long-term objectives Cognizant of costs/benefits of options Identify common ground Introduce and pursue key commitments Decide 'best solution' Explain best solution		

GRIEVANCE INTERVIEWING EXERCISE

EXHIBIT 4: ARTICLE 27 – PROCEDURE FOR SETTLING DISPUTES

27.01 The parties agree that it is desirable that any complaints or grievances should be adjusted as quickly as possible. Employees are therefore urged to try to settle their complaints with their supervisor as soon after they originate as possible.

27.02 The company is willing to meet any of its employees, or their representatives, for the purpose of discussing grievances or complaints with the object of reaching a satisfactory solution.

27.03 Should a dispute arise between the Company and any employee regarding the application, operation, interpretation or alleged violation of this Agreement, an earnest effort shall be made to settle the dispute in the following manner:

Step One

27.04 Within ten (10) days after the alleged grievance has arisen, or within ten (10) days from the time the employee should reasonably have known of the occurrence of the event, the employee and his/her steward may present the grievance in writing to his/her manager. Failing settlement to the employee's satisfaction within three (3) days, the employee may process the grievance to Step 2.

Step Two

27.05 Within five (5) days from the time settlement could have been made in the previous step, the employee, accompanied by his/her steward, and a member of the grievance committee, may present the grievance in writing to his/her department manager. The department manager shall reply in writing within five (5) days of the presentation of this grievance under Step 2. Failing a satisfactory settlement or reply at this stage, the employee may process the grievance to Step 3.

Job evaluation

The formal job evaluation process is concerned with assessing the relative worth of different jobs in an organization rather than the performance of the individual employee occupying the position. As we have emphasized in this chapter, the process is systematic rather than scientific, depending on the judgement of people. To give you experience of the job evaluation process using the point method, we have devised a fairly realistic simulation of what would go on in a job evaluation committee.

Exercise: Job evaluation at Sun Mountain Hotel

Objective
The purpose of this activity is for you to experience the activities of job evaluation, and to be able to consider the issues involved in job evaluation.

Procedure
Working as members of a job evaluation committee of Western Pacific Hotels, your task is to evaluate six jobs at the newly opened Sun Mountain Hotel, based at Sun Peaks Ski Resort, using the point system matrix and supporting material. The six jobs are maintenance technician, dishwasher, snowboard instructor, chef, room cleaner, and front-desk manager.

1. Working individually, each participant determines the points to assign to the six jobs; do this one job at a time.
2. Share your decisions with your group. As a group, arrive at a consensus. Make sure the group spokesperson records the reasons for the differences that cannot be reconciled.
3. Locate each job in the exercise on the graph, showing points scored (horizontal line), and current basic rates of pay (vertical line).
4. On completion of the job evaluation exercise, as a group discuss the following questions:
    (a) Identify the reasons for the initial differences in the points assigned to the job.
    (b) How were the differences reconciled?
    (c) What further information would you seek?
    (d) Does the process contain hidden biases?

EXERCISE: JOB EVALUATION AT SUN MOUNTAIN HOTEL
PROFILE FORM

JOB NAME: ____

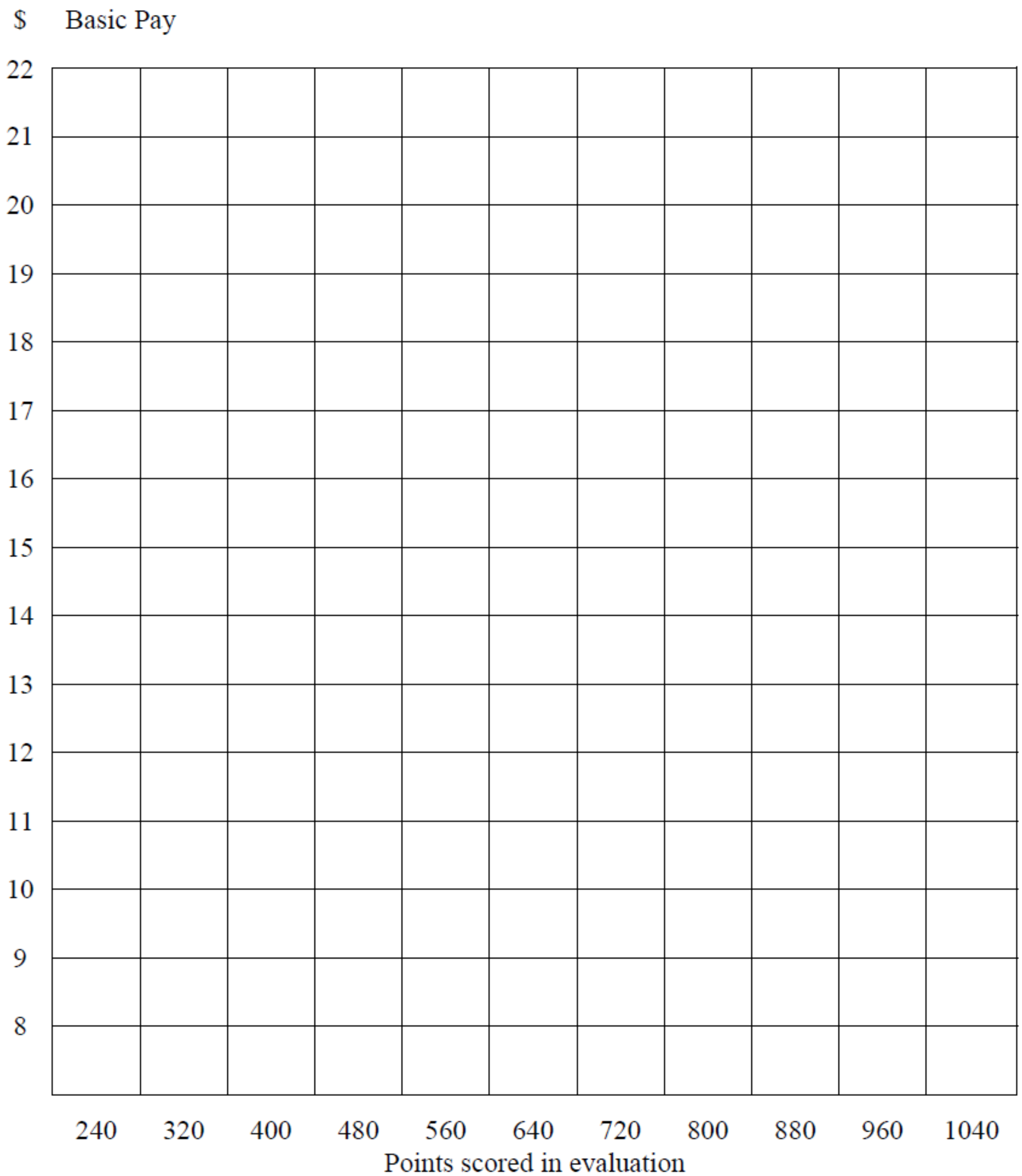
		LEVELS			
	CRITICAL FACTORS	**MINIMUM I**	**LOW II**	**MODERATE III**	**HIGH IV**
1.	RESPONSIBILITY				
	a. Use of company resources	20	40	60	80
	b. Assisting trainees	5	20	35	50
	c. Service quality	20	40	60	80
	d. Safety employees/guests	25	50	75	100
2.	SKILL				
	a. Education/training	25	50	75	100
	b. Experience	45	90	135	180
3.	EFFORT				
	a. Mental (e.g. judgement)	35	70	105	150
	b. Physical (e.g. dexterity)	25	50	75	100
4.	WORK ENVIRONMENT				
	a. Unpleasant conditions	20	40	60	80
	b. Hazards	20	40	60	80
		Total points			1000

Profiled by:____________________ Date: ____________________

Agreed: ____________________ Date: ____________________

PLOTTING JOB EVALUATION RESULTS

Plotting each job on the graph is one method of presenting the information in a form which enables some experimentation with grade and pay structures. In this example the lowest scoring jobs at 240 points have a current basic rate of $300 per week ($7.50 @ 40 hours). While the highest scoring job at 980 points has a current basic rate of $880 per week ($22 @ 40 hours).



Learning intervention programme

HRD is an important HRM function in terms of both implementing organizational strategy and facilitating organizational effectiveness. After learning needs have been determined and learning objectives set, formal learning programmes must be designed. Designing a formal learning session or workshop involves a number of critical activities and decisions, including those related to content, learning methods, materials and equipment, and site. A work-based learning intervention programme presents an overview of the training activity the manager or HR specialist is proposing to do. It should tell the reader why the training intervention is necessary, what costs are involved, and how it will benefit the organization. In essence, the proposal underscores the whole notion of accountability in HRM. Many managers lack the basic knowledge and skills to craft such a proposal.

The following guide and case study 'Petrotechnology Incorporated' is designed to help you develop proposal-writing skills and demonstrate your understanding of the concept ROI.

Learning Intervention Programme proposals

What is a proposal?
A proposal is a document used to present an idea or project to potential investors.
The purpose of a proposal is to convince an organization, government agency, or other institution, that an investment of money should be made in your project.

There are different types of proposals:

- Research grant - Investigation of a theory or an idea that might be of practical use or add to existing body of knowledge.

- Feasibility study – An evaluation of how one or more alternative approaches can solve a problem.

- Internal Organization proposal – Employee proposal that may deal with suggested improvements in management or processes.

- Learning services proposal – Investigation of learning needs and learning intervention proposal that will be of benefit to people.

What makes an effective learning intervention proposal?

- A clear statement of learning needs and a discussion of the background to the events that generate learning needs.
- An explanation of why learning needs analysis and intervention will add value to the investor.
- A clear description of the learning processes.
- A schedule, the estimated cost of the project and justification for the cost, a plan, and resources required.
- Presenting the facts you wish to communicate in professional format and persuasively.
- Convincing an expert reviewer that you know what you are talking about.

What are the steps to writing a proposal?
We can identify seven steps to writing a proposal:

- Search for sources
- Develop a strategy for analyzing learning needs
- Gather the information
- Analyze the information
- Write draft proposal
- Revise, proofread, and edit

- Write final copy

What goes into a proposal?
A major project typically includes the following key elements:

Letter of transmittal
Short letter of transmittal written by you to your client to introduce yourself, establish your credentials for the project, and highlight special features you wish to emphasize. Also, if appropriate, offer to meet to discuss the proposal.

Title page
This usually contains the following information: Title, Submitted by (name, position, organization), Submitted to (name, position, organization) and Date

Table of contents
Typically one page, avoiding too many sub-headings, and ensuring headings and any diagrams correspond to page numbers.

Summary or abstract
This is the last section to be written and is the section most frequently read. It is approximately one page in length and includes the following: statement of learning project; learning objectives; anticipated outcomes and benefits; and your qualifications to achieve the objectives. A successful summary will arouse the reader's interest and make him/her want to know more about the project.

Introduction
Provide background information on the project and yourself. It contains a statement on purpose, key stakeholders, and scope of the learning intervention and of your accomplishments in HRD. It also includes a brief history about your organization. It prepares the reader for the sections of the proposal dealing with the specific project.

Statement of events that generate learning needs
Describe your understanding of the events that have generated learning needs (planned or unplanned events). It should include a statement of how learning intervention is aligned with the strategic goals of the organization, and a statement of how learning intervention meets external and internal consistency. If applicable, the statements should be supported with statistical data, support documentation by organizational members, obtained through your analysis of learning needs. Cite experts to corroborate your assertions.

Learning objectives
List primary learning objectives, secondary learning objectives and any assumptions.

Statement of the benefits of learning
Statement of net benefits of learning intervention. Avoid exaggerating net benefit or value added.

Quantify net benefit:
1. What unit(s) of measure (for example, accidents, customer complaints, and market share) will be used to describe the performance as a result of learning?
2. What is the dollar value that will be assigned to each unit of measure?
3. Calculate Net Performance Value

Methodology
A description of exactly how you will achieve the primary and secondary learning objectives within the stipulated time frame for the project. Include learning processes, the rationale for the approaches taken, and quantitative (if applicable) projections of learning outcomes to be achieved. Identify resource requirements: for example,

computer notebook, projector, VCR, cameras etc. Description of provisions for program evaluation with a rationale for choice: reaction, learning, behaviour or results? A statement of any assumptions and any ethical considerations.

Project time schedule

Show when each learning session will start and end. Show start and finish of major learning activities for example, negotiating simulation. The schedule is used to monitor learning process and to assure the completion of learning objectives. Use a chart or 'milestones' table for better organization of the information.

Project team

Identities, education, experience, and qualifications of the personnel involved in carrying out the learning intervention. This section may involve submitting each facilitator's resume.

Project budget

Are there any building, equipment, and administration costs? Are there any learning needs analysis costs? Are there any program development costs? What are the program delivery & evaluation costs? Calculate the total direct costs of the learning service?

Do the learners have to be replaced while attending training program? Will the learners have to work overtime to compensate lost production? Will program initially increase spoilage costs as employees learn new skills? Calculate the total indirect costs? Are total costs in alignment with time and quality expectations?

Alternative funding (if applicable)

Used if a project's budget will be supplied from several sources. Shows firm commitment for funding from other sources such as: Matching funds from other departments in the organization or government agencies. Obtain solid agreements from other sources for their share of the funding.

Appendices

Contains trainers/facilitator's resume. Data results from learning needs analysis. Evaluation instrument. Summaries of successful projects previously completed and letters of support and recommendations.

References

Care should be taken with this section because it demonstrates the thoroughness of your research and your grasp of the management background needed for the learning program. It also shows the special preparations and expertise you or your organization brings to the project, and identifies noteworthy sources behind your statement of the challenges, learning objectives, and planned learning intervention.

Student assignment: Developing a Learning Intervention proposal

Learning objectives
The purpose of this activity is to give you the opportunity to apply strategic management and cost/benefit concepts to developing a HR intervention proposal, and to improve your proposal writing skills.

The assignment
Based on information in the text, the case, and the above guide,3 write a learning services proposal for Petroltechnology Inc. The proposal should include: learning objectives, benefits and costs of the learning intervention, and other items you feel necessary.

Background to case: Petrotechnology Inc.
Petrotechnology Inc. is engaged in the design, manufacture, and marketing of specialized components used at the well-head in drilling for the production of natural gas and oil, both onshore and offshore. The company employs 308 people.

In the production department, 195 machinists manufacture 3120 precision components each week. The data in the Manufacturing Information System (MIS) show a 5 percent scrap rate. The production manager checked the calibrations of the machine tools. Satisfied that nothing is wrong with the machines, she considered improving performance by reorganizing the machine shop in work teams.

A meeting of her three shift supervisors set out the following performance criteria:

- Machining (programming the machine, machining and drilling) with no more than 2 percent scrap rate per week.
- Heat treatment of machined component with 0 percent error rate acceptable.
- Secure packaging of components (no marks on polished metal) with 0 percent rate acceptable.

The production manager and the three supervisors (the task team) calculated that each rejected component cost:
$60.00 wasted high-grade steel
$70.00 labour to machine and heat-treat component
$100.00 to send replacement order by courier
$5.00 phone/fax charge
$20.00 to pack replacement
$10.00 restocking in inventory
$265.00 total cost of each rejected component.

The production manager wanted to add in the large amount for lost goodwill, but the CEO vetoed the idea, telling her to stick with the hard facts.

The production manager contacted an engineering consulting company specializing in work team systems. The senior consultant estimated that a five-day specialized training program and two weekend sessions would be needed to complete the transition to a team-based system successfully. Prior to the training program, an analysis of learning needs would be conducted; estimated time five days.

The consultant provided the following additional information related to this proposal:

- The average consulting rate in this industry is $180.00 per contact hour for the training.
- Additional cost would include $100 per trainee for printed materials.
- Employees in this industry expect their employers to pay for their technology-related training.

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[3] See also Exhibit 1 (below) for further advice on designing Learning Intervention Programmes

- The industry is very competitive. It is not uncommon for companies to recruit away key employees from other companies.
- The average mark-up on production costs is 40 percent.
- The average annual employment costs per machinist are $65 000.
- Working weekend employees in this industry are paid time-and-a-half (that is, 1.5 times their regular wage).
- Productivity of the production department on average is expected to increase by 10 percent as a result of team-based working.
- It is expected that training would take place off site, in ten cohorts, over one five day week and two consecutive weekends. A local hotel has suitable seminar rooms at $50.00 per day, plus $15.00 per trainee for morning and afternoon drinks and lunch per day.

Task

How would you determine the learning needs of the machinists?

Assuming that the objective of no more than 2 percent scrap rate is reached, provide a quantification of the return on investment for this proposed programme of learning. (You may make any assumption you wish providing they are realistic).

Prepare a written learning services proposal.

Exhibit 1 'Guide for planning training programmes'
This guide is based upon the work of Rosemary Caffarella, *Planning Programs for Adult Learners*, (Second Edition), (2002) San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, p. 23

- Discern the organizational context
  Be knowledgeable and sensitive about the organization, the people and wider internal contextual factors. Know about the business strategy, the HR strategy and the power dynamics in the organization and departments. Build a coalition of support from key stakeholders for the training programme.

- Identify learning needs
  Decide what sources to use in identifying learning needs for training programme.

- Develop learning outcomes
  Write programme learning outcomes that reflect what participants will learn and the resulting outcomes from that learning. Ensure that both measurable and non-measurable programme outcomes are included.

- Designing facilitating plans
    - Develop unambiguous learning outcomes for each teaching session and ensure they are aligned with the proposed learning outcomes for the programme.
    - Select teaching techniques that match the focus of the proposed learning outcomes that the trainer/manager is capable of using, and that take into account the experiences of the participants and the learning context. Be knowledgeable about the factors that influence transfer of learning.

- Formulate evaluation plan
  Develop systematic programme evaluation procedure and instruments (for example participants' questionnaire). Determine how evaluation data is to be collected.

- Select venue, staff needs and schedule
  Choose the most appropriate venue. Identify trainer/facilitator requirements. Devise a programme schedule. Determine whether own HR facilitators and/or whether external consultants are required. If latter, discuss programme learning outcomes with external consultant and/or involvement in the development of the programme. Determine equipment required for example video, computers and so on.

- Prepare proposal
  Estimate the direct and indirect costs of the programme.

- Prepare learning material
  Select and prepare learning materials for the programme.

- Coordinate facilities and in-class events
  Oversee on-site programme arrangement, including facilities to meet disability requirements and refreshments. Be sure to create a positive climate for learning from the moment the participants arrive.

- Gather evaluation data
  Gather data for learning intervention programme. Thank facilitators/consultants and participants for their contribution to the event.

Smoking cessation

In recent years, many organizations have implemented stop smoking programmes. Research has documented that smokers are absent approximately 40 per cent more than non-smokers, providing employers with an economic incentive to introduce smoking cessation policies. In Canada, research on exposure to passive or second-hand smoking at work has encouraged challenges under occupational health and safety law to prohibit smoking in the workplace.

Student exercise 1
Choose an organization in your city. Using the information below, interview a manager responsible for health and safety (asking, for example, whether the company has a policy on smoking). Using the information obtained from your interview, material from this chapter and Internet sources, write a report outlining the benefits and costs you would expect to see after implementing a smoking cessation programme.

Smoking cessation policies 4
Smoking cession policies vary considerably in their scope and content but essentially are designed to place restrictions on smoking at paid work. The policies, according to Jackson, "are not concerned with whether or not people smoke, but when and where they smoke. They are designed to minimize the risks of passive smoking" (1999, p. 1).

Reasons for change
Smoking cessation policies have been introduced in the UK and North America because of at least four reasons:

(1) health, that is, to protect the health of non-smokers
(2) hygiene, for example, food production and sales
(3) safety, for example, petrol stations
(4) legal action by employees suffering from cancer caused by exposure to second-hand smoke at work.

The legal position for employers with regard to smoking in the workplace is a complex one.

The UK, Health and Safety at Work Act (HASAW) 1974 places a general duty on employers to take reasonable care of employees.

In particular, Section 2 (2)(e) stipulates:

> the provision and maintenance of a working environment for his employees that is, so far as is reasonably practicable, safe, without risks to health, and adequate as regards facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work.

More specific provision is contained in the EU directives relating to health and safety. The Workplace (Health, Safety and Welfare) Regulations (1992) and the approved code of practice requires employers to ensure that suitable rest facilities are provided and that non-smokers using them are free from discomfort caused by tobacco

[4] This guide to skill development draws from Trisha Jackson's (1999) book, *Smoke Policies,* London: IPD

smoke. Employers also have a number of common law duties to fulfil, including a duty to take responsible care to protect the health of their employees. The law of negligence may allow victims of passive smoking to sue for damages, that is to claim compensation for a deterioration in their health. (Jackson, 1999, p.15). However, employees who find the imposition of a non smoking policy unacceptable and resign, may subsequently claim constructive dismissal.

Developing a Smoking Cessation Policy

Jackson (1999) identifies the following key issues when developing a smoking cessation policy: health, legislation, workforce views, rights of non-smokers, education, monitoring and enforcement.

An effective smoking cessation policy should contain the following:

- Aims of the policy
- Scope of the policy
- Support of the policy from the top management and, if present, trade unions
- General principles
- Restrictions on smoking
- Responsibilities
- Training and education
- Breaches of the policy
- Complaints procedure
- Employee assistance-‘quit smoking clinic’

Student Exercise 2

A policy is a plan of action adopted and pursued by an organization. Using information from the text and the guidelines here, write a Smoking Cessation Policy for your organization or one that you have studied.

Suggested Further Reading

Trisha Jackson (1999) *Smoke Policies*, London: IPD

Writing a formal report

No skill is as important to managers as report-writing. Managers and HR specialists have to write progress reports, proposals, accident reports and evaluation reports to name but a few. You should use a formal report format if your subject matter is important to your organization, if your findings are extensive or if your readership is large or important. Many of the assignments in the end-of-chapter case studies in this book ask you to write a formal report. Remember that a formal report, especially if it is to be sent outside the organization, is meant to reflect and maintain the organization's professional image.

In this HR-related skill module we shall be concerned only with suggestions for the writers of formal management reports. We shall not try to present a comprehensive treatment of informal reports, including information reports, recommendation reports, justification reports, and proposals. See Suggested Further Reading.

Formal reports

You would be likely to use a formal report format if:

1. Your subject matter is important to your organization
2. Your findings are extensive
3. The analysis is complex
4. The report is to be used over a long period of time.

The guidelines given in this document are general. In all 'formal report' assignments it is important that you apply HRM knowledge to the question or case/problem in hand in order to produce critically informed analysis, and that you seek guidance from your lecturer on each of the following criteria:

- Length of report
- Use of headings
- Documentation format

What exactly is a formal report?

The main differences between formal and informal reports are in tone, structure and length. The planning of every report begins with a statement of purpose explaining the goal, significance and limitations of the project. Reports include primary information from your own observation and experience and secondary information gained through library research. Formal reports require careful citation of information taken from secondary sources in the form of footnotes, endnotes, and a list of references in a bibliography.

The overall presentation of the report may be deductive or inductive and its individual parts may be arranged chronologically, geographically, spatially or topically. In their discussion of strategies or plans for the organization of formal reports, Guffey and Nagle (2003) define the deductive plan as one that 'presents big ideas first'. This means beginning with findings, proposals or recommendations. For example, if you were studying four possible pay and benefits programmes, you would begin by recommending to the organization's HR strategy the programme you judge to be most appropriate and follow with discussion of the other programmes. It is suggested that the deductive strategy is used when the reader is knowledgeable and supportive.

In contrast, the inductive strategy or plan presents data and discussion first, followed by conclusion and recommendations. Guffey and Nagle (2003) believe that this sequence is often most effective because 'formal reports generally seek to educate the reader' (p. 279). Following the inductive plan, a study of alternative pay and benefits programmes would begin with information regarding all proposed programmes followed by analysis of the information, conclusions and recommendation drawn from that analysis.

General guidelines for a formal report

Final presentation of the formal report includes three major sections:

1) Prefatory parts such as the letter of transmittal, the title page, table of contents and an executive summary

2) The body, which includes an introduction, discussion of findings, and summary, conclusions and recommendations

3) Supplementary parts such as the works cited, a bibliography and the appendix.

Prefatory parts

- Letter of transmittal: First impression is important; as such the letter or memo authorizing the report should be given serious consideration. The letter should:

  (a) Deliver the report ('Here is the report requested by')
  (b) Present an overview of the report
  (c) Offer to meet to discuss the contents

- Title page: The first page of a report contains the title of the report, name of addressee or recipient, author's name and company, date and sometimes a report number.

- Executive summary: An abridged version of the whole report, written in non-technical terms; very short and informative; normally describes salient features of report, draws a main conclusion, and makes a recommendation; always written last, after remainder of report has been written.

- Table of contents: Shows contents and arrangement of report; always includes a list of appendices and, sometimes, a list of illustrations.

The Body

- Introduction: Prepares reader for discussion to come; indicates purpose and scope of report, and provides background information so that reader can read discussion intelligently. The introduction should motivate the reader. The reader should understand why the problem was researched and why the study represents a contribution to existing knowledge. Guffey and Nagle (2003) suggest the introduction contains seven items:

  1. Explanation of how the report originated and why it was authorized.

  2. Description of the problem that prompted the report and the specific research questions to be answered.

  3. Purpose of the report.

  4. Scope (boundaries) and limitations or restrictions of the research.

5. Sources and methods of collecting information.

6. Summary of findings, if the report is written deductively.

7. Preview of the major sections of the report to follow, thus providing coherence and transition for the reader.

- Background: The introductory paragraph is usually followed by a review of the literature, often given the heading 'Background'. The literature review serves at least the following purposes in the presentation of the report:

  (a) Placing the research in a historical context to show familiarity with relevant developments.

  (b) Distinguishing what has been done from what needs to be done.

  (c) Showing how your research builds on prior knowledge by presenting and evaluating what is already known about your research topic.

  (d) Offering a point of reference for interpreting your own findings. Your report will show how your study expands, revises, or improves knowledge in an area.

The goal of the literature review is to demonstrate 'the logical continuity between previous and present work' (APA, 1994, p. 11).

- Discussion of findings: A narrative that provides all the details, evidence and data needed by the reader to understand what the author was trying to do, what he or she actually did and found out and what he or she thinks should be done next.

  Formal reports often use visual aids to emphasize, summarize or clarify information.
  Some general guidelines apply to the use of visuals. They must:
  - Have meaningful titles and headings
  - Be identified and discussed in the text
  - Be located close to their reference in the text
  - Be vertical on the page
  - Include a credit to the source if appropriate
  - Using graphics software packages can create professional-looking visuals.

- Conclusions: A summary of the major conclusions or milestones reached in the discussion; conclusions are only opinions so can never advocate action.

- Recommendations: If the discussion and conclusions suggest that specific action needs to be taken, the recommendations state categorically what must be done.

Supplementary Parts

- References: A list of reference documents which were used to conduct the project and which the author considers will be useful to the reader; contains sufficient information for the reader to correctly identify and order the documents.

  Although many methods of documenting reports are currently in practice (Guffey & Nagle, 2003) we will discuss only one: the APA method. The American Psychological Association (APA) recommends in-text citations that refer readers to a list of all references cited in the report.

  For example: As Bratton and Gold (2003) explain, "there are five main HRM models that seek to demonstrate analytically the differences between traditional personnel management and HRM" (p. 18).

  At the end of the report, all references are included on a page entitled 'References', as illustrated.

Books:

Bratton, J. & Gold, J. (2003). Human resource management: Theory and Practice (3rded.). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Corporate Author:

Wood Gundy Ltd. (1974). The Canadian money market, revised. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

American Psychological Association. (1994). Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (5th ed.). Washington, DC: Author.

Periodicals:

Article in an academic journal:

Charlwood, A. (2002). Why do non-union employees want to unionize? British Journal of Industrial Relations 40 (3), 463 - 491.

Article in a newspaper:

Lewis, D. (2003).Women mentors on the rise. The Globe and Mail.

February 12, C8.

Other Sources:

Internet:

Tillman, H.N. (1998). Evaluating quality on the net. [Online]. Available:

http:// www. hopetillman.com/findqual.html.

For a more comprehensive review of APA documentation go to: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_apa.html

- Bibliography: It is recommended that a bibliography that lists all sources consulted in the research, whether actually cited or not, be included in a formal report.

- Appendices: A section at the back of the report that contains supporting data (such as charts, tables, photographs, specifications and test results) that rightly belong in the discussion but, if included with it, would disrupt and clutter the major narrative. If you find it necessary to include an Appendix you should make clear reference to it within the relevant section of the main discussion so readers know when it would be appropriate and enlightening for them to refer to it.

Suggested Further Reading

Guffey, M. E. and Nagle, B. (2003). Essentials of Business Communications (4th Edition). Scarborough, ON: Nelson.

Hart, C. (1998). Doing a Literature Review. London: Sage.

Marsen S (2003) Professional Wriging: The Complete Guide for Business, Industry and IT. Palgrave Macmillan © John

Writing a collective agreement

1. Use plain language so that employees and managers can understand the provisions in the agreement.
2. Avoid ambiguous language that may create difficulties of interpretation later.
3. Use terms consistently throughout the agreement.
4. Use gender-neutral language.
5. Pay attention to the relationship between different articles, especially when renegotiating part of an agreement that may have implications for other provisions.
6. Remember that the agreement must respect legislation regarding employment standards and human rights. Collectively negotiated articles that do not conform to such legislation are unenforceable.
7. When an agreement is reached after the previous agreement has expired, be careful to specify which provisions of the new agreement are retroactive.
8. Structure the agreement in a logical way by putting all related articles together, and use headings, subheadings, a table of contents, and an index to allow workers and front-line managers to find their way around the document.
9. Put lengthy details in appendices, but remember to refer to them in the body of the agreement as being considered part of the agreement.

Source: sack, J. and E. Poskanzer (1996) *Contract Clauses: Collective Agreement Language in Canada*, (3rd. Ed.) Toronto: Lancaster House.