Role of Human Resource Management in Project Management

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Abstract: **This paper is all about to provide an insight on how Human Resource Management (HRM) impacts and influences project management in an organizational environment. Human Resources in Project Management focus on Project Team recruitment, organization, development and management until the end of a given project. Its role begins from defining core competencies, skill and knowledge levels which are necessary, to team building and motivation. The link between Human Resource Management and Project Management is strategic. Human Resources are the key of every work done within a company as they represent people. Project Management is measured by the success of projects that can represent benefit, innovation or any improvement. It appears that project success require success in handling people and maintaining smooth environment, which is the role of Human resource management.**

Keywords: **Human Resources, HRM, Project Management, PMBOK.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Human resource management is the management of an organization's workforce or human resources. Around mid-80's the term "Human Resource management" arrived from the USA. This term is an interesting one. It seemed to suggest that employees were an asset or resource -like machines. It is responsible for defining the skill set requirements, attraction, selection, training, assessment and rewarding of employees. Now a days, HRM makes part of a company's strategy and values people as resource than cost. The amount of money spent on them to train and develop is treated as an investment as like creating an asset. In this study, it appears that HRM concentrates on people working for a specific project by developing and managing them. The potential benefit created is linked to the project success and achievement. Hence, we are going to review how the HRM can influence the Project Management.

II. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Human resource management (HRM) is the most happening function as of now. This is so because people offer competitive advantage to a firm and managing people is the domain of HRM. An organization enjoys competitive advantage when it is the only one which can offer a product at a price and at quality while its competitors cannot do so.

How do people lend competitive advantage? There are several ways. First people offer skills, capabilities, systems, practices, speed, language, bonding and behaviours, which help execute firm's strategies successfully. Strategy implementation cannot be done by physical resources such as technology, buildings, machines and materials. It is the people who can craft strategies and execute them effectively.

III. ALL ABOUT THE PROJECT

A project is a temporary endeavour undertaken to create a unique product, service or result. A unique product that can be either a component of another item, an enhancement or correction to an item, or a new end item in itself. A unique service or a capability to perform a service. A unique result, such as an outcome or document. A unique combination of one or more products, services or results.

Projects are undertaken at all organizational level. A project can involve a single individual or a group. A project can involve a single organizational unit or multiple organizational units from multiple organizations.

Examples of projects include but are not limited to:

- Developing a new car or a new electronic item

- Merging two organizations

- Building a house / building

- Conducting research to develop a new manufacturing process

- Design a new software

Projects drive change: Projects drive change in organizations. From a business perspective, a project is aimed at moving an organization from one state to another state in order to achieve a specific objective.

Project initiation context: Organizational leaders initiate projects in response to factors acting upon their organizations. There are four fundamental categories for these factors, (a) meet regulatory, legal or social requirements, (b) satisfy stakeholder requests or needs, (c) Implement or change business or technological strategies and (d) Create, improve, or fix products, processes or services.

Projects provide the means for organizations to successfully make the changes necessary to deal with these factors. These factors ultimately linked to the strategic objectives of the organization and the business value that each project brings to the table.

IV.   ROLE OF PROJECTS IN STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT PROCESS

An organization's Strategy is implemented primarily through projects. Projects are often utilized as a means of directly or indirectly achieving objectives with in an organization's strategic plan. Successful implementation of projects means reaching the goals of the organization and thus meeting the needs of its customers. Projects that do not contribute to the strategic plan waste critical organization resources.

Projects are linked to the strategic plan because projects represent how a strategy is to be implemented. Since some projects are more important than others, the best way to maximize the organization's scarce resources is through a priority scheme which allocates resources to a portfolio of projects which balance risk and contribute the most to the strategic plan.

V.   PROJECT MANAGEMENT

As per Project Management Body of Knowledge-5th Edition by PMI**,** Project management is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements. The project management approach will enhance the success rate of projects which in turn support achievement of organizational strategic objectives or goals.

VI.   IMPORTANCE OF HRM IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Human Resource Management (HRM) is of key and strategic importance to the project-oriented organization. Every time a new project or program is started, the human resource (HR) configuration of the organization changes. Within this dynamic environment, different and additional practices are required from the traditionally managed organization.

Projects require people to execute. When there is an involvement of people, there is need for human resource management. It is as simple as that. The Project Management Institute(PMI) is a US based one of the world's largest not-for-profit membership associations for the project management profession. Its motto is "Making project management indispensable for business results". Its professional resources and research empower more than 700,000 members, credential holders and volunteers in nearly every country in the world to enhance their careers, improve their organizations' success and further mature the profession. PMI publishes its standard called Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) and continue to keep updating and revising it periodically to align to the latest trends.

This PMBOK guide clearly specifies 10 knowledge areas for the effective management of projects in an organizational environment. Out of 10 knowledge areas, one of the knowledge area is Project Human Resource Management.

Human Resource management is required to identify, acquire and manage the resources needed for the successful completion of the project These processes help ensure that the right resources will be available to the project manager and project team at the right time and place.

Project by its characteristic, it is unique, and every project is different in view of its objectives, goals and environment in which it operates. Projects involve various level of stake holders with different level of interest on the project. Success of the project purely depends on the effectiveness of meeting all stake holder's expectations. Stake holders being human resources, it is necessary to adopt human resource practices, principles and techniques to maintain an environment which supports team work.

Where there are more than one-person involvement, there are always chances that difference of opinion, motivational concerns, morale issues, performance management issues, competency issues, team cohesiveness issues, cultural concerns, adoptability concerns arises which demands at most attention to resolve and prevent from recurrences. This is where the importance of HRM's presence in project management environment is very much demanded.

If not handled properly, this can lead to significant impact on the project performance and its effective completion which can jeopardise the organization's stability.

Competencies of the Project Manager: For any project, the project manager is the leader who is responsible for over viewing the project as a whole and ensures its implementation successfully. PMBOK states that in addition to the domain knowledge that a project manager possesses, it is mandatory to impart personal skills which is predominantly deals with how he/ she behaves when performing the project or related activity. Personal effectiveness encompasses attitudes, core personality characteristics, and leadership, which provides the ability to guide the project team while achieving project objectives and balancing the project constraints. Recommended interpersonal skills for a project manager by PMBOK is

Leadership, Team building, Motivation, communication, influencing, decision making, Political and cultural awareness, Negotiation, Trust building, conflict management and coaching.

VII. PROJECT HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PROCESSES

The following are the project Human resource management processes that organize, manage and lead the project team. The project team is comprised of the people with assigned roles and responsibilities for completing the project. Project team members may have varied skill sets, may be assigned full time or part time, may be added or removed from the team as the project progresses. Below are the suggested steps that every project must follow while it is executed for its effective implementation and to avoid human resource related concerns.

- Plan Human resource management

- Acquire Human resources

- Develop Human resources

- Manage Human resources

- Control Human resources

Plan Human resource management:

It is the process of identifying and documenting project roles and responsibilities, required skills, reporting relationships and creating a staffing management plan. Also defining how to estimate, acquire, manage and use team. This step need to be performed at the stage of project plan development after project is kick started and clear scope of the project is developed.

Acquire Human resources:

It is the process of obtaining the right team members required to complete the project. The key benefit of this process is that it outlines and guides the selection of resources and assign them to their respective activities. Internal resources can be acquired from functional or resource managers. External resources are acquired through the hiring process.

Develop Human resources:

It is the process of improving competencies, team member interaction and the overall team environment to enhance project performance. The key benefit of this process is that it results in improved team work, enhanced interpersonal skills and competencies, motivated employees, reduced attrition and improved overall project performance. This process is an ongoing process throughout the project.

During the project progress, each member performance and behaviours are monitored and based on that development plans to be derived and actions to be initiated to impart those skills.

Project managers also requires skills to identify, build, maintain, motivate, lead and inspire project teams to achieve high team performance and to meet the project objectives. Team work is one of the critical factor for project success and developing effective project teams is one of the primary responsibilities of the project manager. Project managers should create an environment that facilitates team work and continue to motivate the team by providing challenging opportunities, providing timely feedback and support needed.

Manage Human resources:

It is the process of tracking team member performance, providing feedback, resolving issues and managing changes to optimize project performance. The key benefit of this process is that it influences team behaviour, manages conflict, and resolving issues. This process also need to be performed throughout the project.

Managing the project team requires variety of management and leadership skills for fostering teamwork and integrating the efforts of team members to create high performance teams. Team management involves various skills such as communication, conflict management, negotiation and leadership.

Control Human resources:

It is the process of ensuring that the physical resources assigned and allocated to the project are available as planned, as well as monitoring the planned vs actual utilization of resources and taking corrective action as necessary. The key benefit of the process is ensuring that assigned resources are available to the project at the right time and at right place and are released when no longer needed. This process need to be performed throughout the project.

There are various tools and techniques available to carry out each of the above processes to ensure its effectiveness.

VIII.   CONCLUSION

As a result, this paper concludes us to define Human resource management role in project management. Predominantly HRM role supports in identifying the required skillset / competency that is required by the project, acquiring the appropriate people matching to that skill set, develop them on an ongoing basis and managing them throughout the project life cycle for it success by adopting various HR skills such as interpersonal, team building, conflict management, negotiation, motivation etc. Also, it is evident that HRM is a core process in the project-oriented organization that needs to be more invasive, with greater involvement of the manager at the work interface than in the classically managed organization. In the coming years, its focus is going to increase more to support project management and it is evident that various researches are being taken up.

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