

In This Issue

The Risks in Human Resources

Risk management is for decision makers.

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The Risks in Human Resources

Regardless of the size of your organization you need people who can help you imagine your scope, develop products and deliver them. Nothing happens without people. These very people who are absolutely necessary to carry out the organizations mission are the same ones who present you with risk every minute of every day.

People generate risk in two ways. One way they do this is through potential for negatively affecting work flow: i.e. through absenteeism, poor quality work, working 'to rule', by resigning or retiring, and so on. In the second instance, they act positively by identifying problems and taking steps to resolve them, by seeing opportunities and taking advantage of them, by recognizing methods to improve productivity or even persuading a capable colleague to apply for an opening with your business.

Human resource risk management uses the same types of process as other risks. Using the risk management process allows for addressing risks through specific, measurable steps. This lets you take advantage of the process to minimize the likelihood that you will be caught unprepared and reduce costs that could harm your operations.

A few circumstances' that managers need to identify and stay aware include:

- Realization that most of your technical experts will qualify for retirement in the next few years. You have made no plans to mentor younger employees, to identify skills needed in new recruits or to tempt them to remain working for an extended period;
- A cohort of key workers' decides to leave at the same time, leaving you with a serious talent gap;
- Recruitment and hiring include risks of potential discriminatory practices, hiring unsuitable candidates

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- and "wrongful" hiring;
- Supervision practices can cause claims of abuse, improper release of personal information and damage to corporate image; and
- Finally, relying extensively on a long-time employee's expertise creates serious production problems if they are unable to work or leave to retire or to go another employer.

All of these scenarios are very real challenges that arise on a regular basis.

At one time, succession planning was reserved for only the very senior levels of management, Today, with the boomers leaving and the need to attract and keep the best, most knowledgeable, workers it should be a central component of municipal human resource strategies. Succession planning helps municipalities identify, and aim, high-performing employees at future roles

Open, transparent communication is crucial when evaluating employees and in targeting individuals for succession; this approach helps to retain employees with the ability to successfully transition to more senior positions. Clear communication of internal success plans also can encourage acceptance and support of newly promoted employees during their critical learning period.

To summarize, some HR risks are unavoidable, but sound preparation, development and implementation of succession plans will mitigate the down-side of these risks.

Event Risk Management

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