LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

Human Resource Management: Functions, Applications, and Skill Development

by Robert N. Lussier and John R. Hendon

The whole HR job in plain words - hiring, training, pay, safety - plus the skills to do each one well.

BEST POINTS FROM THE BOOK

01 **Define the job before you try to fill it.**

Job analysis (Ch. 4) produces the job description and specification that recruiting, interview questions, and appraisal standards all come from. Skip it and every later step is guesswork.

02 **Hiring is a process with steps, not a hunch.**

Ch. 6 runs selection in order - application, screening, interview and testing, background checks, decision, offer - and demands each tool be valid and reliable, not just familiar.

03 **Ask every candidate the same questions.**

Structured interviews (Ch. 6) put all candidates through the same preplanned questions; unstructured chats invite bias. The book also judges fit on three levels: personality, ability, and organization.

04 **Run every people decision through the OUCH test.**

The book's signature fairness check (Ch. 3): is the action Objective, Uniform in application, Consistent in effect across groups, and Has job relatedness? The four-fifths rule helps spot a lopsided effect.

05 **Sell the job honestly, then treat onboarding as training.**

A realistic job preview (Ch. 6) shows the work's bad side before hiring, and onboarding is the first training need the book names (Ch. 7) - not a paperwork errand.

06 **Training is a five-step process, not an event.**

Ch. 7: assess the gap between current and required performance, design, deliver, then assess whether performance actually moved. Training without a needs assessment covers the wrong material.

07 **Appraise behavior and results - never spring a surprise.**

Traits are the least defensible thing to rate (Ch. 8). Name the rating traps - halo, recency, leniency - and never raise a weakness in a review that coaching has not already raised during the year.

08 **Coach first, and discipline in steps.**

Performance = ability x motivation x resources (Ch. 9), so diagnose which one failed. Progressive discipline escalates only as needed: coaching talk, oral warning, written warning, suspension, dismissal.

09 **Pay is built, not guessed.**

Compensation (Chs. 11-13) starts with job evaluation and a deliberate pay system, weighs fairness and legal issues, then layers incentives and benefits - statutory ones you owe and voluntary ones you choose.

10 **Safety, health, and security are HR work too.**

Ch. 14 covers OSHA duties, employee health and stress, and workplace security. In a small business this is not someone else's department - it is the owner's legal exposure.

11 **HR is a skill you practice, not just a subject you study.**

The book's whole design - functions, applications, skill development - plus its Ch. 1 point that line managers share HR duties: hiring, appraising, and disciplining happen at the front line, not in a back office.

THE BOOK, IN SHORT

This is a college textbook and it does not hide it - but it is written in plain language and built around practice, which makes it useful far beyond the classroom. Lussier and Hendon organize the whole HR job in the five-part Practitioner's Model their first chapter introduces, and that order is the book's real lesson: people systems have a sequence.

It opens with foundations - strategy-driven HR, and the legal environment. This is where the book's signature tool appears: the OUCH test (Objective, Uniform in application, Consistent in effect, Has job relatedness), a four-question fairness check to run before any hiring, promotion, pay, or discipline decision, backed by the major equal-opportunity laws and the EEOC.

Staffing comes next: job analysis and design, recruiting, then a selection process built on valid tools - applications, testing under the Uniform Guidelines, structured interviews, and background checks that exist partly to prevent negligent hires. Developing and managing people follows: the five-step training process, performance appraisal (judge behaviors and results, dodge the halo and recency traps, coach continuously), employee rights, coaching and progressive discipline, and labor relations.

The last parts cover compensating and protecting: job evaluation and pay systems, incentive pay, benefits split into statutory and voluntary, workplace safety and health under OSHA, ethics and sustainability, and a closing chapter on global HR. Throughout, the content is aligned to the SHRM curriculum used to certify HR professionals.

The second half of the title is the point - skill development. Every chapter pairs concepts with applications, cases, and self-assessments, because the authors argue HR is a performance skill. For a founder or manager with no HR department, this is the missing manual: the checklist of people-systems a growing business needs, in the order it needs them.

DO THIS WEEK

Before your next hire, do the book's first steps on one page: write a short job description and specification from a quick job analysis, list the same structured questions you will ask every candidate, and before making the offer, run the choice through the OUCH test - objective, uniform, consistent in effect, job-related.

Human Resource Management: Functions, Applications, and Skill Development by Robert N. Lussier and John R. Hendon, first published 2016 by SAGE (later editions keep the same five-part structure). A textbook written for students and new HR staff - and the most complete single map of the HR job in this library. For managers suddenly in charge of people.