

The
Management
University
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UNDERGRADUATE UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

DEGREE OF BACHELOR OF MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

HRM 201/HRM 406/HRM 312: STRATEGIC HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

DATE: 7TH APRIL 2026

DURATION: 2 HOURS

MAXIMUM MARKS: 70

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Write your registration number on the answer booklet.
2. **DO NOT** write on this question paper.
3. This paper contains **SIX (6)** questions.
4. Question **ONE** is compulsory.
5. Answer any other **THREE** questions.
6. Question **ONE** carries **25 MARKS** and the rest carry **15 MARKS** each.
7. **Write all your answers in the Examination answer booklet provided.**

QUESTION ONE

Read the case study below carefully and answer the question that follows:

ENHANCING ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Zenith Institute, a fictional Kenyan organization operating in the manufacturing sector, strives to develop and maintain a high-performance culture to meet its fundamental business needs. The company's commitment to fostering a high-performance culture is evident in various characteristics embedded in its organizational practices.

At Zenith Institute, a clear line of sight is meticulously maintained between the strategic aims of the organization and those of its departments and staff at all levels. Management takes a proactive approach by defining performance improvements, setting success goals, and monitoring performance to ensure the achievement of these goals. Leadership from the top is emphasized, fostering a shared belief in the importance of continuous improvement, while positive attitudes and motivation are promoted to cultivate a committed workforce. Performance management processes at Zenith Institute are intricately aligned with the organization's objectives, ensuring that individuals are engaged in achieving agreed-upon goals and standards. The company emphasizes the development of capacities through learning at all levels, providing opportunities for employees to make full use of their skills and abilities. A key focus lies in valuing and rewarding individuals according to their contributions, with the development of career ladders and a strong emphasis on trainability and commitment as highly valued characteristics.

Additionally, Zenith Institute embraces a high level of functional flexibility, abandoning potentially rigid job descriptions and reducing hierarchies to promote a collaborative environment. The organization heavily relies on team structures for disseminating information, emphasizing team briefing as a means of fostering effective communication and collaboration. In the realm of Human Resource Management (HRM), Zenith Institute recognizes the significance of strategic integration. Various HRM functions are intricately linked to strategic integration within the organization.

Talent acquisition/recruitment is a critical HR function at Zenith Institute, especially in a challenging manufacturing industry where attracting skilled workers is essential.

Compensation management is carefully executed to balance competitive salaries, bonuses, benefits, and perks within a tight budget. Benefits administration is managed diligently to address rising healthcare costs while aligning employee needs with cost-effective solutions. Training and development are central to Zenith Institute's HR strategy, recognizing that engaged employees contribute to improved productivity and profitability. Performance appraisal and management are integral to promoting employee engagement and enhancing overall organizational performance. In the realm of employee and labor relations, HR at Zenith Institute plays a crucial role, particularly in unionized settings where positive relations impact the company's financials.

Furthermore, compliance management is a priority for HR managers at Zenith Institute, ensuring strict adherence to labor laws and regulations to prevent disputes and liabilities. In pursuit of corporate social responsibility (CSR), Zenith Institute understands the multifaceted benefits it brings to the organization. Better brand recognition, a positive business reputation, increased sales and customer loyalty, operational cost savings, improved financial performance, and a greater ability to attract and retain talent are some of the advantages that Zenith Institute reaps from its commitment to CSR.

Zenith Institute exemplifies a commitment to organizational effectiveness by fostering a high-performance culture and strategically integrating HRM functions. This showcases how the organizations can align its practices with the characteristics of high-performance cultures and strategically integrates HR functions to achieve overall success. Additionally, the emphasis on corporate social responsibility underscores the holistic approach Zenith Institute adopts to ensure its impact extends beyond its internal operations, contributing positively to the broader community and stakeholders.

Required:

- a) Briefly outline five characteristics of the high-performance culture Zenith Institute aims to develop and maintain to meet its fundamental business needs. **(5 Marks)**
- b) Drawing from the case study on Zenith Institute, discuss five Human Resource Management (HRM) functions that are linked to strategic integration within the organization. **(10 Marks)**

- c) Referencing the case study of Zenith Institute, discuss five benefits that the organization gains from its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). **(10 Marks)**

QUESTION TWO

- a) Evaluate five challenges that managers could encounter while implementing Human Resource Management Strategies. **(5 Marks)**
- b) Discuss five strategic role of Human Resource Management (HRM) in facilitating an organization's accomplishment of its strategic objectives. **(10 Marks)**

QUESTION THREE

- a) Elucidate five strategies that an organization can employ to establish a competitive advantage. **(5 Marks)**
- b) Discuss five key steps that modern firms could implement, which are crucial for the successful delivery of an HR strategy. **(10 Marks)**

QUESTION FOUR

- a) Evaluate the performance management process, which gauges outputs in the form of achieved performance in comparison to set objectives. **(10 Marks)**
- b) Explore the five primary objectives of an employee relations strategy. **(5 Marks)**

QUESTION FIVE

- a) Elaborate the significance of human resource planning as an integral component of business planning and its importance to an organization. **(9 Marks)**
- b) Examine the steps involved in achieving a successful Human Resource Strategy implementation. **(6 Marks)**

QUESTION SIX

- a) Discuss the various roles played by managers when implementing the Human Resource Management Strategies. **(8 Marks)**
- b) Describe the strategies to address the common problem in Human Resource Management Strategy, where a gap often exists between stated goals and actual outcomes. **(7 Marks)**