

# HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

**1st Exam Date** (Winter Term 2021/22)

Friday, 21st January 2022

Please write down your **Matriculation Number, Name, and Signature** on your worksheet paper.

## Question 1: Ideas about Human Nature

- 1) In the following, four different ideas about human nature and work motivation are proposed (a-d). To which **basic idea of human nature** and which **scientific paradigm** do these statements belong? Discuss the **theoretical foundations of each statement** and critically highlight their strengths and weaknesses.
  - a) Good interpersonal relations can have positive effects on job satisfaction and thus on performance. As managers, we should therefore create teams that work well together.
  - b) Humans can organize themselves: while fixed job descriptions are redundant, clear role assignments are needed. Moreover, humans are individualists and critical thinkers, therefore we as managers have to create arenas for reflected discourse to make sure, that everyone is heard.
  - c) It is important to clearly define the task responsibility as well as the decision-making authority in a company. Since work is a burden for employees, we as managers have to create rules, standard operating procedures, and norms to control their work performance.
  - d) Creating suited appraisal and incentive systems is essential for the motivation of employees. As humans have a need for achievement, they want to master the tasks they are given.
- 2) Do you think that all of these statements are correct? **Which one corresponds best to your own experience?** Explain!

## Question 2: Leadership & Motivation

In the following, there are four statements about **leadership & motivation**, but only one of the statements is correct. Please discuss each statement, whether it is correct or not, and substantiate your answer with theoretical and empirical arguments **for each statement (a-d)**.

- a) Leaders have certain negative or positive assumptions about their employees.  
Successful leaders invest their resources with subordinates who are not very competent to stand out positively themselves, which can motivate their employees to work harder.
- b) Charismatic leaders that have certain physical, mental, or personality traits are more successful than other leaders. The behavior of the leader as well as the interaction with the employees is less important in the light of those essential traits.
- c) Leaders with high ambitions, that do whatever is required to achieve maximum success, might also do so at the expense of others in the organization. Focusing solely on own strengths such as high ambition might become a problem later on in a leader's career.
- d) The situational leadership theory proposes an adaption of leadership styles according to the maturity of employees. Good leaders can easily adapt their style, as effective leadership is independent of other conditions such as mission, value systems, and group structure.

### Question 3: Recruitment

In the following, there are four statements about **HR recruitment**, but only one of the statements is correct. Please discuss each statement, whether it is correct or not, and substantiate your answer with theoretical and empirical arguments **for each statement (a-d)**.

- a) Screening and pre-selecting suitable candidates from a large pool of applicants is a complex task where recruiters have to make decisions in a short time per applicant. AI technologies are a useful tool to make this process more effective, while also eliminating possible bias that human recruiters have towards the applicants.
- b) It is important to increase the self-selection of candidates to attract mostly qualified talents for a specified job. Moreover, asymmetric information between the candidate and the company should be reduced as much as possible.
- c) A study found that job-organization attraction is mainly influenced by organizational and job characteristics. Other factors, such as the offered salary or the behavior of the recruiter, influence the decisions of job seekers only marginally.
- d) The wording of job advertisements is not critical in terms of discrimination as long as it does not contain explicit biases towards people of a particular gender, race, or religious background.

## Question 4: HR Development

In the following, there are four statements about **HR development**, but only one of the statements is correct. Please discuss each statement, whether it is correct or not, and substantiate your answer with theoretical and empirical arguments **for each statement (a-d)**.

- a) In a career ladder system, the participation effort correlates with the salary – the higher the salary, the higher the effort. Such systems increase the motivation of employees, but can also lead to sabotage or the risk of collusion.
- b) HR development is mainly concerned with the qualification and training of employees. While different generations differ in their career aspirations and loyalty to their employers, it is not the task of HR to take such factors into account, but the task of the direct supervisors.
- c) When an employee is laid off, they might be upset with the company. Thus, personnel layoffs should be accompanied by systematic outplacement to prevent future damages to the company. The remaining employees cannot be affected by the layoff.
- d) Competencies are action-oriented and generally more applicable compared to job requirements, which describe the qualifications needed for a specific job. Nevertheless, when planning the training and development, only the necessary qualifications should be taken into account, not the competence profiles of the employees.

## Question 5: Staff Assignment & Job Design

In the following, there are four statements about **staff assignment & job design**, but only one of the statements is correct. Please discuss each statement, whether it is correct or not, and substantiate your answer with theoretical and empirical arguments **for each statement (a-d)**.

- a) It was found in an experiment that subjects in groups might adapt responses to obviously wrong answers of other group members. This phenomenon, which is called group shift, has the positive effect that fewer conflicts occur within the group.
- b) There is a great potential for automation in the future. Manual jobs with a high degree of routine are almost certainly taken over by machines because they are technically very easy to automate.
- c) Roles are a set of expected behavior patterns attributed to someone occupying a given position in a social unit. When a group is forming along the five stages (1) forming, (2) storming, (3) norming, (4) performing, and (5) adjourning, the roles of leadership are also changing.
- d) The motivational potential in a job mainly depends on whether a job provides substantial freedom, independence, and discretion to the individual. Whether the outcome is also recognized by others is not relevant for the motivation.