



HRM219e
Learning and Development
Group-based Assignment

(January 2016 Presentation)

GROUP-BASED ASSIGNMENT

This group-based assignment is worth 30% of the final mark for HRM219e Learning and Development.

The cut-off date for this assignment is **18 April 2016 (Monday), 2359hrs.**

You should form a group of **maximum** 4 members from your seminar group. Each group is required to upload a single report to MyUniSIM via your respective seminar group. Each group should nominate one leader, who will submit the group based case study on behalf of the group through Turnitin. The group leader is advised to keep the acknowledgement receipt of submission as evidence that the assignment has been submitted.

In this group-based assignment, you will be assessed on your knowledge of seminars one to six. Please note that as undergraduates you **must prove** that you are able to apply the appropriate theories to the facts that you are given and answer the questions accordingly. This means that you **must refer** to the appropriate theories in the body of your answers. Therefore, you **must also** include **an in-text reference** (Author, Date, and Page) to acknowledge each outside source used and to provide a complete citation in your Reference List. Only one Reference List covering all questions is required.

In addition to theoretical knowledge, there is also a strong emphasis on application of the theory. To successfully complete this group-based assignment, you need to demonstrate your ability to analyze and interpret complex issues as well as describe and apply appropriate theories to the facts given.

It is important for each group member to contribute substantially to the final submitted work. All group members are equally responsible for the entire submitted assignment. If you feel that the work distribution is inequitable to either yourself or your group mates, please highlight this to your instructor as soon as possible. Your instructor will then investigate and decide on any action that needs to be taken. It is not necessary for all group members to be awarded the same mark.

Each question has been allocated marks with a minimum and maximum word limit. You are to adhere to the word limitation to avoid a penalty where your mark will be deducted by 10%.

The following format is to be adhered to:

- Font type – Times New Roman or Arial
 - Font Size - 12 point
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ASSIGNMENT

You have been engaged by XYZ Company as a Consultant to provide ideas to the company on how to increase the competencies of its employees in the fast changing business environment of the 21st Century. The Chief Executive shares with you the following trends, which worries him.

The need to be aware of changing demographic

Demographic trends do have an impact on strategic planning. Developed and advanced countries are experiencing challenging demands in finding the right people to meet their companies' strategic requirements to accomplish their organizational goals. For example, workers in Singapore are getting older and there are not enough people to replace the old. The generation boom in the fifties and sixties did not procreate enough babies to replace them in today's fast expanding economy. Many employers have regarded the ageing workforce their biggest demographic threat.

The children of the so-called "ageing workforce" who are now in the workforce belong to Generation Y (those born roughly from 1977 to 1990s). Their beliefs and values are totally different from their parents. They bring great challenges and strengths to the organization. They are revenue generating assets that require systematic and strategic planning to enhance their contributions to the growths of companies that engage them. They are working assets that are worth their values in gold if their knowledge, skills and abilities can be developed and deployed in the right job in the organization.

There are also 4 generations of workers in Singapore: the traditionalists, baby boomers, gen-X and gen-Y. Each generation has their differences which may make it hard for them to work together at times. Below are the differences between the generations.

	Traditionalists	Baby Boomers	Gen-X	Gen-Y
	Born before 1946	Born 1946 – 1964	Born 1965 – 1980	Born after 1980
Observation	Slow in learning and understanding new concepts and ideas.	Not willing to learn and not open to new ideas.	At times, arrogant. They thought they know everything. They are insensitive and think older employees are outdated.	Cannot click with elderly. Not open to feedback and advice. Lack commitment and like to job-hop.
Rewards	Satisfaction of a job well done.	Money, title, recognition.	Freedom.	Meaningful work.
Job Changing	Fear to change.	Don't want to change.	Necessary.	Expected.
Training	Learn through hard way.	Will leave if too much training.	More learning, more tenancy to stay.	Learning is a way of life.

Source: Bawany, 2013 & The Straits Times, 2013

Generation Y workers are also known as Millennial. Millennial need quick feedbacks and recognitions. Their information technology skills make them the highest performing workers of our time. Generation Y workers tend to be more family-centric or dual-centric (balancing family and work life). Technology besides being useful tools for organizations to tap on is also useful in facilitating alternative work arrangements. Websites like linkedin.com enables professionals to promote their services. With information technology, more people can work from remote locations.

The need to leverage on Technology and intangible asset

In the modern workplace, how people work is strongly influenced by technology. Technology has a great impact on the training and development of competencies for today's workforce. Keeping up to

date with technological advances is unavoidable. For example, a skilled machinist who completed college education, after undergoing a 18-week training course was assigned to work as a team leader in a factory that uses automated machines. In older factories, machinists would manually cut chunks of metals into engine parts. Today, this skilled machinist and his team spend much of their time keying commands into computerized machines that create precision parts for products. According to *U.S. government's Occupational Outlook Quarterly*, the use of "knowledge-intensive high-tech manufacturing in such industries as aerospace, computers, telecommunications" is replacing factory jobs in steel, auto, rubber and textiles.

Technology is not the only trend in driving the change from "brawn to brains". In the US today, over two-thirds of the workforce is producing and delivering services and not products. The trend happening in the US is no different from the trend that is happening to Singapore. It is obvious that continuous learning to upgrade our skills and knowledge that is relevant to the industry is of paramount importance.

The need to upgrade skills and embrace learning

Our Government is actively promoting the lifelong learning to encourage us to learn new skills and acquire new knowledge to meet the constantly changing business and economic environment. They introduce the PIC scheme (Productivity and Innovation Credit) as a broad-based tax incentive to encourage businesses to tap on the tax benefits that they can derive from R & D, investments in automation equipment and to send their staff for training to equip them with the right skills to manage the high-technology equipment, thereby increasing their productivity and generating more revenue with greater efficiency and effectiveness. More recently is the SkillsFuture programme whereby employees are encouraged to continue their lifelong learning to develop skills and knowledge relevant to their job requirements.

SMEs also need to be fully aware that in order to be competitive in this constantly changing business environment, they need to invest in their employees by sending them for training to upgrade their skills.

The need to manage diversity

The Chief Executive also notices that the next workforce trend needs to manage a diverse workforce. Singapore is a tiny island with no natural resources. The only resource that we have aplenty is human assets. These human assets come in a diverse form comprising of people from various racial, ethnic, gender, cultural, national origin, handicap, age and religious background. A diverse workforce means that employees with different backgrounds join the organization with different talents and skills which have great potential to the organizations that employ them. The organization can achieve a competitive advantage and maximize the potential of diverse innovative approaches to meet their organizational goals and profitability.

The Ministry of Manpower (MOM) knowing that diversity has its potential threats initiated the "Fair Consideration Framework" guidelines for employers' reference. Employers are expected to consider Singaporeans fairly for jobs, based on merit. A Press Release on 23 September 2013 stated that "MOM expects all firms to consider Singaporean fairly for jobs, based on merit. All firms are strongly encouraged to advertise their jobs vacancies and must ensure that jobs advertised are open to Singaporeans". According to Wattson Wyatt, "Hiring the right people, supporting their creative thinking and productivity and leveraging it all with the right technology seem to build superior business performance and shareholder value".

The need to measure results

Another challenge faced by managers is the need to measure organizational performance. As the organization embarked into public-listing, it also went through globalization expansion. Managers had to implement policies and practices that would groom talents through systematic training.

However, with the increased manpower cost and competitive markets, having merely improvement performance plan is insufficient. Employers are expecting to see result on organization efficiency and effectiveness of the HRD program, especially when there is a shift in reliance on unskilled foreign workforce and increased manpower costs. HRD managers have to measure the

performance and provide evidences such as using evidence based metrics. For example, the collection of the quantitative data to provide evidence will require managers to understand and execute the correct technique based on different scenarios and to collect fair and unbiased data efficiently. The quantitative data collected has to be benchmarked and compared against current standards of performance and working conditions in the organization.

QUESTION 1

Given the concern raised by the Chief Executive, advise him on the following:

- (a) Discuss the external and internal factors that will have an impact on the effective running of XYZ from organizational and individual perspectives.

(Maximum Word Limit: 1,300 – 1,500 words)

(30 marks)

- (b) Explain the **four (4)** intangible assets that the Chief Executive needs to be aware of to remain competitive. Provide examples.

(Maximum Word Limit: 800 – 1,000 words)

(20 marks)

QUESTION 2

- (a) Beside the workforce trend that the Chief Executive is worried about, analyze the organizational factors that affect the operations of the organization.

(Maximum Word Limit: 1,000 – 1,200 words)

(25 marks)

- (b) With the above analysis, examine ways on how the XYZ can become a learning organization.

(Maximum Word Limit: 1,000 – 1,200 words)

(25 marks)