



EMPLOYEE AND LABOR RELATIONS
INSTRUCTOR'S MANUAL

SHRM[®]

SOCIETY FOR HUMAN
RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The Evolution of
Human Resource Management

By Sandy Reed, SPHR, and Myrna L. Gusdorf, MBA, SPHR

PROJECT TEAM

Authors: Sandy Reed, SPHR
Myrna L. Gusdorf, MBA, SPHR

SHRM project contributors: Bill Schaefer, SPHR, CEBS
Nancy A. Woolever, SPHR

External contributor: Sharon H. Leonard

Copy editing: Courtney J. Cornelius, copy editor

Design: Jihee K. Lombardi, graphic designer

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Note to HR faculty and instructors: SHRM cases and modules are intended for use in HR classrooms at universities. Teaching notes are included with each. *While our current intent is to make the materials available without charge, we reserve the right to impose charges should we deem it necessary to support the program.* However, currently, these resources are available free of charge to all. Please duplicate only the number of copies needed, one for each student in the class.

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SHRM Academic Initiatives

1800 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, USA

Phone: (800) 283-7476 Fax: (703) 535-6432

Web: www.shrm.org/education/hreducation

Instructor Notes

ABOUT THIS LEARNING MODULE

This learning module is divided into three classes and covers a brief history of American labor and the evolving function of human resource management. The first class is an overview of American labor history from the colonial period to the early 1900s. There was little actual HR management during this time, but it is important history that sets the stage for understanding the development of human resource management in the 20th century. The second class covers early labor unrest at the beginning of the 20th century; the Depression; World War II; and the post-war years of the 1950s. In this time period, we see the rise of the industrial relations professional and the personnel administrator, forerunners of contemporary HR managers. The last session starts with the civil rights movement of the 1960s and ends with contemporary issues that continue to shape today's HR management in its current strategic role.

Throughout the material you will see commentary on major historical events that, while seemingly unrelated to HR practice, will enable students to place the evolution of HR into the context of the times. The material covers the social, political and economic issues that shaped the current practice of HR. The module is not intended to be a complete picture of labor history, nor is it intended to be a comprehensive catalog of issues that have affected HR; to do so would be an exhaustive study that could not be covered in three class sessions. The intent is to introduce students to the major historical events that influenced contemporary HR. Instructors may want to add other influences as time allows. It would also be instructive to ask students to consider their own ideas about the future of HR evolution, particularly in light of technology and globalization.

AUDIENCE

This learning module is appropriate for undergraduate students in a human resource management or business management program.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this module, students will:

- Recognize the interrelationship of social, political and economic issues in the history of American labor.
- Link the evolution of contemporary human resource practices to events in labor history.

- Assess the effect of current conditions on the practice of human resource management.
- Formulate hypotheses regarding future human resource practices.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Each class session ends with discussion questions. These could be addressed as a whole class, or in small groups with group reports back to the class as a whole.

Instructions for a final written analysis paper are included at the end of these instructor notes. The assignment asks students to consider the future evolution of HR and how organizations and HR practitioners can prepare for that future.

POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

A PowerPoint presentation with notes for the instructor is included.

SUGGESTED READINGS

Salvatore, P., Weitzman, A., & Halem, D. (2005). How the Law Changed HR. *HR Magazine*, 13, 50, 47-56.

Rubis, L., Mirza, P., Fox, A., Shea, T., & Moss, D. (2005). 10 Changes That Rocked HR. *HR Magazine*, 13, 50.

Licht, W. (1988, February). How the workplace has changed in 75 years. U.S. Department of Labor Monthly Labor Review. Retrieved October 28, 2008, from www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/1988/02/art3full.pdf.

THE EVOLUTION OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT— STUDENT ASSIGNMENT

1. Read the three following articles:

Salvatore, P., Weitzman, A., & Halem, D. (2005). How the Law Changed HR. *HR Magazine*, 13, 50, 47-56.

Rubis, L., Mirza, P., Fox, A., Shea, T., & Moss, D. (2005). 10 Changes That Rocked HR. *HR Magazine*, 13, 50.

Licht, W. (1988, February). How the workplace has changed in 75 years. U.S. Department of Labor Monthly Labor Review. Retrieved October 28, 2008, from www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/1988/02/art3full.pdf.

2. Write an analysis paper:

Using ideas from class material and discussion, the assigned readings and your own research, write a three- to four-page paper (1,000–1,500 words) discussing the evolving future of HR practice. Discuss factors you believe will have the most influence on the future of HR. Why do you think these are more influential

than other issues? What does this say regarding the future practice of HR? What should organizations do to prepare for the future, and how should HR students and practitioners prepare for the future?

Submit your completed paper as indicated by your instructor.

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1800 Duke Street
Alexandria, VA 22314-3499