1 STRATEGIES, TRENDS, AND CHALLENGES IN HRM

CHAPTER LEARNING OBJECTIVES

What Do I Need to Know*? After reading this chapter, you should be able to:*

1. Define human resource management, identify the roles and responsibilities of human resource departments, and explain how human resource management contributes to an organization's performance.
2. Summarize areas in which human resource management can support organizational strategies.
3. Summarize the types of competencies needed for human resource management.
4. Explain the role of supervisors and managers in human resource management.
5. Describe typical careers in human resource management.
6. Describe trends in the labour force composition and how they affect human resource management.
7. Discuss the role of high-performance work systems and how technological developments are affecting human resource management.
8. Explain how the nature of the employment relationship is changing and how the need for flexibility affects human resource management.

POWERPOINT® SLIDES

Human Resource Management, Third Canadian Edition includes a complete set of Microsoft PowerPoint® files for each chapter. In the lecture outline that follows, a thumbnail illustration of each slide for this chapter is placed beside the corresponding lecture material. The slide number helps you to see your location in the slide show sequence and to skip slides that you don't want to show to the class. (To jump ahead or back to a particular slide, just type the slide number and hit the Enter or Return key.)

LECTURE OUTLINE (with PowerPoint® slides)
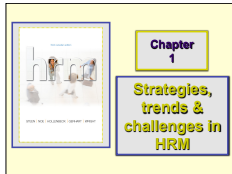
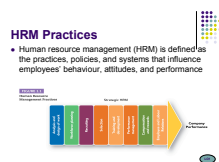Strategies, Trends, and Challenges in HRM

Slide 1

Real People and HR
Steven Berger, Senior
Vice-President

Slide 2

Earning a Reputation as a
Great Employer

Slide 3

HRM Practices
Slide 4

STRATEGIES, TRENDS, AND CHALLENGES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

REAL PEOPLE AND HR – STEVEN BERGER

Steven Berger, senior vice-president Corporate Services, leads a consolidated global service unit comprised of Human Resources, Transformation, Employee Communications, Real Estate, Facilities Procurement, Engineering, and Corporate Security. Mr. Berger has more than 25 years of experience leading major change initiatives across global enterprises

- Steven provides a variety of insights and perspectives on his experiences including someone beginning an HR career

INTRODUCTION

The list of employment awards is growing and Molson Coors Canada, the University of Toronto, NB Power, the BC Public Service, and Google Inc. are examples of organizations that have been recently recognized as excellent employers with progressive human resource management practices

- **Mediacorp Canada's Top 100 Employers now includes additional annual competitions:**
  - -- Canada's Top 100 Employers for Young People
  - -- Canada's Most Earth-Friendly Employers
  - -- Best Employers for New Canadians
  - -- Canada's Top 10 Family Friendly Employers
  - -- Regional recognitions e.g. Nova Scotia's Top Employers

Human resource management (HRM) centres on the policies, practices, and systems that influence employees' behaviour, attitudes, and performance

- **Important HR practices include:**
  - -- **Analysis and design of work**
  - -- **Workforce planning** (determining how many employees with specific knowledge and skills are needed)
  - -- **Recruiting** (attracting potential employees)
  - -- **Selection** (choosing employees)
  - -- **Training and development** (preparing employees how to perform their jobs and for the future)
  - -- **Performance management** (supporting performance)
  - -- **Compensation and rewards** (rewarding employees)
  - -- **Employee and labour relations** (creating a positive work environment)

WHY ARE PEOPLE SO VALUABLE?

Managers and economists traditionally have seen human resource management as a necessary expense, rather than a source of value to their organizations

- **Human capital**—an organization's employees, described in terms of their training, experience, judgment, intelligence, relationships, and insight
- **Organizations need resources that provide competitive advantage and human resources have these qualities:**
  -- Valuable, rare, cannot be imitated, have no good substitutes
- **High-performance work system**—effective HRM can form the foundation for creating an organization in which technology, organizational structure, people, and processes all work together to provide an advantage in the competitive environment

IMPACT OF HRM

HRM contributes to measures of an organization's success such as quality, profitability and customer satisfaction

WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF HR DEPARTMENTS?

1. Administrative services and transactions
- Handling administrative tasks e.g. processing tuition reimbursement applications
- Requires efficiency and commitment to quality
- Requires expertise in the particular tasks

2. Business partner services
- Developing effective HR systems
- HR people must understand the business so it can understand what the business needs

3. Strategic partner
- Contributing to the company's strategy
- HR people must understand the business, its industry, and its competitors

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENTS

1. Analyzing and Designing Jobs
- Companies require tasks to be performed and tasks are grouped together to form jobs
- **Job analysis** is the process of getting detailed information about jobs
- **Job design** is the process of defining the way work will be performed and the tasks that a given job requires

2. Recruiting and Hiring Employees
- **Recruitment** is the process through which the organization seeks applicants for potential employment
- **Selection** is the process by which the organization attempts to identify applicants with the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics that will help the organization achieve its goals

RESPONSIBILITIES OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEPARTMENTS (cont'd)

3. Training and Developing Employees

- Most organizations provide ways for employees to broaden or deepen their knowledge, skills, and abilities
- **Training** is a planned effort to enable employees to learn job-related knowledge, skills, and behaviour e.g. safety training
- **Development** involves acquiring knowledge, skills, and behaviour that improve employees' ability to meet the challenges of a variety of new or existing jobs e.g. preparing employees for management responsibility

4. Managing Performance

- **Performance management** is the process of ensuring that employees' activities and outputs match the organization's goals

5. Compensation and Rewards

- Planning pay and benefits involves many decisions including understanding legal requirements
- Administering pay and benefits requires systems and extensive record-keeping and reporting to management, employees, and others while ensuring compliance with all applicable legislation

6. Maintaining Positive Employee and Labour Relations

- Organizations depend on HR professionals to provide for satisfying and engaging work environments and maintaining positive relations with employees—labour relations entail additional responsibilites

7. Establishing and Administering Human Resource Policies

- HR helps establish policies to provide for fair and consistent decisions

8. Ensuring Compliance with Federal and Provincial Legislation

- HR needs to keep up to date with all laws and regulations that concern the treatment of employees

WHY FOCUS ON STRATEGY?

Traditional management thinking treated HR primarily as an administrative function, but managers are increasingly seeing a more central role for HRM. They are looking at HRM as a means to support a company's strategy—its plan for meeting broad goals such as profitability, quality, and market share

- **Evidence-based HR**—collecting and using data to show that human resource practices have a positive influence on the company's bottom line or key stakeholders
- **Corporate social responsibility**—an organization's commitment to meeting the needs of its stakeholders
- **Stakeholders**—the parties with an interest in the company's success (typically, shareholders, the community, customers, and employees)

More central role for HRM
- Workforce planning
  - Identifying the numbers and types of employees the organization will require to meet its objectives
- Evidence-based HR
  - Collecting and using data to demonstrate that HR practices have a positive influence on the company's profits or key stakeholders
- Corporate social responsibility
  - Organization's commitment to stakeholders

More central role for HRM
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WHY FOCUS ON STRATEGY? (cont'd)

1. Productivity Improvement
- Companies need to enhance productivity to compete in a global economy
- **Productivity**—the relationship between an organization's outputs (products, information or services) and its inputs (e.g. people, facilities, equipment, data, and materials).
- Canada's record of productivity growth has underperformed the United States over the past two decades

2. Expanding into Global Markets
- To survive and prosper companies compete in international markets and fend off foreign competitors e.g. develop global markets, keep up with competition from overseas, hire from an international labour pool, and prepare employees for global assignments
- Talent comes from a global workforce
  - -- HR practices must take into consideration differences in culture and business practices
  - -- Hiring in Canada may also involve selection of employees from other countries—significant levels of immigration
  - -- Due to declining population and predicted labour shortages, employers will increasingly turn to immigrants to fill available job openings
- International Assignments
  - -- HR will require expertise in selecting and preparing employees for international assignments
  - -- **Expatriates** are employees who take assignments in other countries

3. Outsourcing
- **Outsourcing** is the practice of having another company (a vendor, third-party provider, or consultant) provide services
  - -- Gives the company access to in-depth expertise and is often more economical e.g. manufacturing, software development and support, and call centre operations
  - -- Many HR functions are also being outsourced—expanding from benefits and payroll administration to include recruiting, relocation, etc.
- **Offshoring** involves setting up a business enterprise in another country e.g. building a factory in China

4. Mergers and Acquisitions
- **Mergers** involve two companies becoming one
- **Acquisitions** involve one company buying another
- **HRM should have a significant role in carrying out a merger or acquisition**
  - -- Often, failure to meet expectations is due to people issues e.g. there is a need to engage top talent and sort out differences related to rewards, performance management, and other HR systems

What competencies do HR professionals need?

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WHAT COMPETENCIES DO HR PROFESSIONALS NEED?

These competencies fall into 6 basic groupings—all require interpersonal skills. Successful HR professionals must be able to share information, build relationships, and influence persons inside and outside the organizaiton (Figure 1.4)

-- **Credible activists**—means being so well-respected in the organization that you can influence the positions taken by managers

-- **Cultural steward**—involves understanding the organization's culture and helping to build and strengthen or change that culture

-- **Talent manager/organizational designer**—requires knowledge of how the organization is structured and how that structure might be adjusted to help it develop and use employees' talents

-- **Strategy architect**—spots ways effective management of human resources can help the company seize opportunities and confront threats

-- **Business allies**—know how the business achieves its success, who its customers are, and why customers support the company

-- **Operational executors—**carry out particular HR functions to ensure policies and transactions deliver results

ETHICS IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Ethics in HRM

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- **Ethics** refers to the fundamental principles of right and wrong—ethical behaviour is consistent with those principles
- **Three Standards for Identifying Ethical Practices**
  1. Greatest good for the greatest number of people
  2. Respect legal requirements including human rights and privacy
  3. Managers must treat employees and customers equitably and fairly
- Each of the HR provincial associations has standards for professional and ethical conduct of members—the HR Best Practices provides the Code of Ethics for the Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations

WHAT ARE THE HR RESPONSIBILITIES OF SUPERVISORS AND MANAGERS?

What are the HR responsibilities of supervisors and managers?

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HR activities are not just limited to HR specialists—many HR activities are carried out by supervisors and managers

- Help define jobs i.e. what kind of work needs to be done
- Forecast HR needs
- Interview and select candidates
- Train, coach, and develop employees—some or all parts of the job
- Appraise performance
- Recommend pay increases and promotions
- Communicate policies and comply with legal requirements
- Provide motivational environment

CAREERS IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

- Some HRM positions are specialists e.g. recruiting, training, etc., however other positions are generalists who usually perform the full range of HRM functions
- **CHRP** (Certified Human Resources Professional)—nationally recognized designation
  - -- Single exam requirement, National Knowledge Exam (NKE) tests academic HR knowledge
  - -- CHRP has an experience requirement (since January 1, 2013) and a minimum of a bachelor's degree
- CCHRA (Canadian Council of Human Resources Associations) represents member associations is the largest Canadian professional organization for HRM—more than 41,000 professionals across Canada. See www.chra.ca

TRENDS IMPACTING HRM

Major environmental trends impacting HRM include: changes related to composition of the labour force and how HRM can support organizational strategies such as maintaining high-performance work systems, maintaining effective employment relationships, and technological change

HOW IS THE LABOUR FORCE CHANGING?

- **Labour force** refers to all the people willing and able to work
- **Internal labour force** consists of the organization's workers—its employees and people who work at the organization
- **External labour market** consists of the individuals who are actively seeking employment
- The number and kinds of people in the external labour market determine the kinds of human resources available to an organization (and their cost)
- HR professionals need to be aware of trends in the composition of the external labour market—these trends affect the organization's options for creating a well-skilled, motivated internal labour force
- **Canada's population and labour force are aging**—fastest-growing age group is expected to be workers aged 55 and older. The 25-54 year-old group will decrease slightly and young workers between the ages of 15-24 will be fewer in number. Figure 1.18 provides the age distribution projection of the Canadian population (2011 & 2021). HR professionals will deal with:
  - -- Creating a work environment that supports needs of a multigenerational workforce
  - -- Planning retirement and re-skilling workers
  - -- Controlling cost of health-related benefits
  - -- Finding ways to attract, retain, and prepare the younger generations in the workforce and recruiting and retaining older workers

HOW IS THE LABOUR FORCE CHANGING? (cont'd)

- **The workforce is become more diverse**—the four designated Employment Equity groups represent a strategic resource in Canada's labour force i.e. women, Aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, and members of visible minorities
  -- Many organizations e.g. banks have well-developed business cases for diversity—they need to reflect their communities and clients
  -- **Aboriginal employees** provide opportunities for a source of skilled workers—almost one third of the Aboriginal population is under age 15
  -- **Persons with disabilities** comprise a productive but often overlooked source of employees
- **Skill deficiencies of the workforce**—shifts in the kind of skills needed
  -- Most employers are looking for mathematical, verbal, and interpersonal skills rather than physical strength
  -- If employees lack advanced literacy and thinking skills they may be unable to perform their jobs and adjust to change
  -- Required technical skills relate to use of technology. Most organizations are looking for educational achievements, but shortage of workers in skilled trades (e.g. plumbers and electricians) is a concern

HIGH-PERFORMANCE WORK SYSTEMS

High-performance work systems have the best possible fit between their social system (people and how they interact) and technical system (equipment and processes)

1. Reliance on knowledge workers

- **Knowledge workers**, employees whose main contribution to the organization is specialized knowledge, such as knowledge of customers, a process, or a profession—are in a position of power and companies are increasingly trying to attract, develop, and retain them

2. Employee Engagement

- **Employee engagement** refers to the extent that employees are satisfied, committed to, and prepared to support what is important to the organization
- HR practices are important for creating employee engagement

3. Teamwork

- **Teamwork** is the assignment of work to groups of employees with various skills who interact to assemble a product or provide a service
- Employees increasingly need to have the authority and the ability to make decisions about how to do their work—teamwork is often used to increase employee responsibility and control including the use of virtual teams

4. Increasing Levels of Education

- The educational attainment of Canada's population is increasing

How is technological
change impacting HRM?

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How is the employment
relationship changing?

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How is the employment
relationship changing?
(cont'd)

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HOW IS TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE IMPACTING HRM?

- **Human Resource Information System (HRIS)**
  - -- Computer system used to acquire, store, manipulate, analyze, retrieve, and distribute information related to an organization's human resources
  - -- Support to strategic decision making, provides data for evaluating programs, and support for day-to-day decisions
  - -- **HR dashboard**—a display of a series of HR measures, showing human resource goals and objectives and progress toward meeting them
- **The Internet Economy**
  - -- The way business is conducted has changed rapidly during the past two decades—much of the change is related to the widespread adoption of the Internet by businesses and individuals
  - -- The Internet economy creates many HR challenges e.g. fast pace of change in IT requires continual skill updates
- **e-HRM Applications**
  - -- **Electronic Human Resource Management (e-HRM)**--the processing and transmission of digitized HR information, especially using computer networking and the Internet e.g. post job openings online, online learning, and use of social media
- **Sharing of Human Resource Information**
  - -- **Self-service**—system in which employees have online access to information about HR issues and go online to enrol themselves in programs and provide feedback through surveys

HOW IS THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONSHIP CHANGING?

Psychological contract is a description of what an employee expects to contribute in an employment relationship and what the employer will provide the employee in exchange for those contributions

- **Traditional view**—employees contribute time, effort, skills, abilities, and loyalty—in return the organization provides job security and opportunities
- **A new psychological contract**
  - -- **Employers** demand excellent results and expect employees to take more responsibility for their careers—results in less job security for employees
  - -- **Employees** want flexible work schedules, effective work environment, more control over their work, training and development opportunities, and financial incentives linked to organizational performance
- **Flexibility**
  - -- **Flexible staffing levels**—organization can quickly resize to meet its changing needs. Use of **alternative work arrangements**—methods of hiring other than the traditional hiring of full-time employees (e.g. contract workers, independent contractors, on-call workers, and temporary workers
  - -- **Flexible work schedules**—to protect employees' free time, and to more productively use employees' work time.

HR OOPS! : WHEN A CONTRACTOR ISN'T A CONTRACTOR

Case Summary:
Although the use of independent contractors sounds like it presents advantages for an employer, because the employer does not have to pay employee benefits like Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance (EI), it is not a matter of opinion to classify workers as contractors.

Questions

1. Why might a company legitimately want to hire contractors rather than employees?

   A company may choose to hire contractors for short assignments, and it may choose to hire contractors for their particular expertise on a particular type of project. A company may hire contractors who require that the relationship be on a contract basis. Not every professional, in other words, desires full time captive employment by one company. Therefore, there may indeed be legitimate reasons for companies to hire contractors. Because classifying an employee as a contractor means not having to pay employee benefits like Canada Pension Plan and Employment Insurance the savings on payroll expenses could be significant depending on how many contractors a company hires.

2. Given that employers may not direct the details of when and how contractors do their work, what HR challenges could result from relying on contractors rather than employees?

   For positions that require control over the way that employees do their work, the reliance upon contractors presents several challenges. One, an employer cannot dictate the schedule of a contractor. Therefore, it would be a challenge for HR to determine scheduling. It would be difficult to use contractors in, for example, customer service positions that require fixed schedules. Two, HR would find it a challenge to manage the performance of contractors or determine their needs for training and development. All of these HR–related interventions likely cross the lines between employee and contractor, which presents a challenge.

THINKING ETHICALLY: WHOSE BUSINESS IS IT WHEN YOU BLOG OR TWEET?

Case Summary:
Just as companies have become used to the idea of warning employees that their e-mail messages are not private, along come blogs (Web logs) and Twitter, with their own set of issues. The privacy issue involves the line between what people do as employees and what they do on their own time. Examples of the impact the use of blogs and tweets can have on working individuals are presented in the case study.

Questions:

1. Who might be affected by a blog or tweet written about a company? What kinds of work-related information are public? What information does a company have a right to keep private?

    The impact of blogs and tweets can affect the way the entire organization is viewed by the general public, customers, job candidates, current employees, and even suppliers. Sometimes it only takes a little negative information, whether true or false, to tarnish an organization's reputation. Social media can affect both the organization and the individual who wrote the blog or made the tweet—negative information about a company can cause customers to take their business elsewhere and can also influence prospective job candidates to not seek employment elsewhere.

    Public work-related information may include size of the organization, what purpose it serves, who is in control of it, and certain financial aspects of the business. An organization's overall philosophies and ways of conducting its business are also public information.

    Organizations have a right to keep private many financial aspects of the business. Companies have a right and a duty to maintain confidentiality of certain parts of an employees' private human resource records. Trade secrets should be allowed to remain private and confidential.

2. Imagine that you work in HR and you learn that an employee of your company has tweeted or blogged about work-related topics. What would you do?

    Various responses are possible to this question. One suggested response may be to speak with the employee to discuss the impact blogs and tweets may have on the organization and to find out if the employee has issues with the organization that may be resolved through discussion.

ANSWERS TO CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. How can human resource management contribute to a company's success?

   Human resource management consists of an organization's "people practices" such as the policies, practices, and systems that influence employees' behaviour, attitudes, and performance. HRM influences who works for the organization and how those people work. These human resources, if well managed, have the potential to be a source of sustainable competitive advantage, contributing to basic objectives like quality, profits, and customer satisfaction.

2. Why do organizations outsource HRM functions? How does outsourcing affect the role of human resource professionals? As an HR professional, would you rather work for the HR department of a large organization or for a firm that provides HR outsourcing services? Explain your answer.

   HRM functions are outsourced to afford the company access to in-depth expertise and is often more economical for the organization as well. The utilization of outsourcing provides human resource managers more time to study and work on the strategy and vision of the organization. Human resource management's responsibilities can be more focused on responsibilities that add value to the business.

3. How does engaging in evidence-based HR change the role of the human resources department within an organization?

   Evidence-based HR refers to demonstrating that human resource practices have a positive influence on the company's profits or key stakeholders. This practice helps show that the money invested in HR programs is justified and that HR is contributing to the company's goals and objectives. As a result, the human resources department is more likely to be viewed as a strategic partner in the organization in contrast to fulfilling more traditional human resource administrative responsibilities.

4. What skills are important for success in human resource management? Which of these skills are already strengths of yours? Which would you like to develop further?

   The six basic grouping of competencies for HR professionals are illustrated in Figure 1.4:
   - Credible activists—gain credibility by mastering all of the other competencies
   - Cultural steward—involves understanding the organization's culture and helping to build and strengthen or change that culture
   - Talent management/organizational designer—requires knowledge of how the organization is structured and how that structure be adjusted
   - Strategy architect—requires awareness of business trends and an understanding of how they might affect the business
   - Business allies—know how the business achieves its success, who its customers are, and why customers support what the company sells
   - Operational executors—carrying out particular functions efficiently
   - In addition, all of these competencies require interpersonal skills. Successful HR professionals must be able to share information, build relationships, and influence persons inside and outside the organization.

   The student responses will vary as to which skills are their current strengths and which skills they would like to develop.

5. Traditionally, human resource management practices were developed and administered by the company's human resource department. Increasingly, supervisors and managers are playing an active HRM role. What are the potential benefits of supervisors and managers taking a more active role in HRM? Potential problems?

   As the relationship between various HRM practices and the productivity and performance of employees has been recognized, supervisors and managers have strong reasons to become involved in the development and implementation of HRM practices. The information from supervisors and managers is critical to determining needed and appropriate policies and practices that will reinforce the strategic and operational needs of the organization.

6. Does a career in human resource management appeal to you? Why or why not?

The answers provided by the individual students will vary contingent upon their personal career goals and understanding of the chapter material.

7. How does each of the following labour force trends affect HRM?
a. Aging of the workforce
b. Diversity
c. Skill deficiencies
d. Higher levels of education

An organization's internal labour force comes from its external labour market—individuals who are actively seeking employment. In Canada, this labour market is aging and becoming more diverse. The share of women in the Canadian workforce has grown to approximately half of the total. (A) To compete for talent, organizations must be flexible enough to meet the needs of older workers, possibly redesigning jobs. (B) Organizations must recruit from a diverse population, establish bias-free HR systems, and help employees understand and appreciate cultural differences. (C) Organizations also need employees with skills in decision making, customer service, and teamwork, as well as technical skills. The competition for such talent is intense. (D) Organizations facing a skills shortage often hire employees who lack certain skills, train them for their jobs, and offer educational opportunities.

8. What HRM functions could an organization provide through self-service? What are some advantages and disadvantages of using self-service for those functions?

The concept of self-service is indicative of the way employees can now receive information that they consider vital to them. This means that employees have online access to information about HR issues such as training, benefits, compensation, and contracts; go online to enroll themselves in programs and services; and provide feedback through online surveys. While it is advantageous to have immediate access to information, it has the disadvantage of losing the one-on-one contact with the HR professional.

9. How does the employment relationship typical of today's organizations differ from that of a generation ago?

The employment relationship takes the form of a psychological contract that describes what employees and employers expect from the employment relationship.

It includes unspoken expectations that are widely held. In the traditional version, organizations expected their employees to contribute time, effort, skills, abilities, and loyalty in exchange for job security and opportunities for promotion. Today, modern organizations' needs are constantly changing so organizations are requiring top performance and longer work hours but cannot provide job security. Instead employees are looking for flexible work schedules, comfortable working conditions, greater autonomy, opportunities for training and development, and performance-related financial incentives. For HRM, the changes require planning for flexible staffing levels.

CASE STUDY 1.1: DO COMPANIES NEED HR?

Case Summary:

This case discusses the varied roles that organizational leaders see for HR.

Answers to Questions:

1. Why might these senior leaders have such varying views of the role and relevance of HR?

   The role and relevance of HR varies significantly among organizations. In organizations that expect HR to focus primarily on administrative services and transactions rather than serving as a strategic partner or business partner, the HR department is more likely to be accused of being too transactional and bureaucratic. In organizations that see a more central and strategic role for HR, the department is more likely to be staffed with HR professionals who have the competencies to contribute to strategy and serve as a partner to the business. CEOs and senior organizational leaders are ultimately responsible to ensure that HR leadership has a prominent role on the executive team and the necessary resources and support to attract and retain HR professionals with the necessary competencies to support the organization's strategy and effectively partner with managers.

2. Should organizations outsource, perhaps even "fire" their HR department? Why of why not?

   Outsourcing the administrative services and transactions work of the HR department will permit the remaining HR professionals to focus on the more strategic aspects of HR responsibilities—as long as these individuals have the required competencies to serve in a more strategic capacity. The responses provided will vary. However, all responses should indicate understanding of the chapter concepts i.e. referencing the competencies (other than operational executor) outlined in Figure 1.4.

CASE STUDY 1.2: SPIDERWEB INC.

This case study is adapted from the short case used in the Semi-Final 2011 - Event 1 of Excalibur (the Canadian University Tournament of Human Resources).

To simulate the Excalibur experience in the classroom it is recommended responses to the following questions be developed by student teams with coaching provided by the instructor. The instructor may wish to establish a panel of HR colleagues from their college/university and/or the business community to serve as a judging panel for in-class student presentations.

Your Mandate:

In view of the analyses performed and your meetings with senior management, executives, and employees:

1. Indicate what concrete actions you will take in the next three months to ensure that:

    a. The executive committee understands the strategic role you wish to play (at least four concrete actions);

    b. You establish your credibility with senior management (at least four concrete actions).

2. Identify the three main issues that should be incorporated into your HR management plan in the next year and develop an action plan for one of them. The plan should:

    a. Include strategic and operational elements (at least five elements);

    b. Include communication activities and follow-up;

    c. Be logically implemented over time;

    d. Be creative and feasible in the context of a young SME run by young entrepreneurs.