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## HR Management

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### Course aims and intended learning outcomes

The course aims at providing students with a comprehensive knowledge about the fundamental Human Resource Management activities and processes. From what used to be the 'Personnel function', both managerial practice and academic scholarship evolved in response to the challenge of making HR Management a fundamental pillar in an organization's strategy formation and implementation, while maintaining command on their typical day-to-day people management duties.

The course aim is to let students apprehend and discuss the basic principles and models behind the actions of HR professionals and their interaction with line managers. The course is also aimed to provide the knowledge and tools necessary to HR management activities performed in all stages of the Employee Lifecycle: recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, training and development, career management, and compensation and benefits. Emphasis is placed on employee engagement strategies and the role the HRM plays in creating an engaged and productive workforce.

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Understand the nature of HR Management as both a set of activities and a unit with an increasingly strategic role within the organization.
- Appreciate the links between HR Management, corporate and business strategy, and organizational performance.
- Comprehend the HR Management practices (recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, training and development, career management, and compensation and benefits) and their interdependences.
- Diagnose basic issues in job design and managing people, applying the required HR Management actions in order to attain outcomes such as employee engagement and job satisfaction, ultimately tied to organizational performance.
- Apply their knowledge and skills to business cases and role-playing, in order to address issues and devise solutions in HR Management.
- Practice their communication skills, thanks to the numerous case study discussions and the teamwork to be developed throughout the whole course.

### Course content

The course starts locating the HR Management unit and activities within the organizational context, and presenting the basic challenges and issues of organizing and managing people in the current competitive context. Students are introduced to the main framework of the course by a presentation of the basic HR Management activities, the importance of Employer Branding for securing high-profile human resources, and the basic linkage of HR managers with other organizational constituents.

More specifically, sessions are dedicated to:

- The Employee Lifecycle (ELC), employee attraction and retention, and Employer Branding.
- Recruitment & Selection.
- Competency models as foundation of HR processes.
- Performance Management and appraisal.
- The role of professional Social Media in influencing HR Management.
- Development plans and Career management; International careers and cross-cultural issues in HR management.
- Developing compensation plans; the concept of Total Reward.
- Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) and the linkage between HR Management and organizational performance (the High-Performance Work Practices, the contingency, and the



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Resource-based View models).

## Reading list

G. DESSLER, *Fundamentals of Human Resources Management (Global Edition)*, 4th ed., Pearson, 2016 (pp. 558; ISBN: 978-1-292-09846-3).

Slides, notes and cases provided by the instructor.

## Teaching method

The teaching methods is based on an interactive and involving approach. Brief and long case studies will be followed by guided debriefing and a sharing of the theoretical models to enable students to summarize the main theoretical and practical 'takeaways' of each class. Furthermore, the course relies on numerous guest-speaking sessions to let students appreciate the complexity of the HR Management processes from direct insights by experienced professionals. Collaborative learning, through team working, will represent one of the pillars of the course.

## Assessment method and criteria

### *Attending students:*

The students' evaluation method is coherent with the goal of developing knowledge as well as problem solving abilities. To this aim, a final exam will represent the key moment for assessing the students' understanding of the course topics, their ability to organize the set of knowledge, and their ability to apply that knowledge to solve real problems related to HR Management. Moreover, a team assignment will stimulate students to practice collaborative learning and consolidate knowledge acquired through the prolonged application to a real case.

More specifically, the course evaluation will be based on:

- Final exam (75%): the exam will be closed-books. The exam will be based on the arguments covered in class with the instructor great value to ability of the student to make reference to the business cases, examples and invited speeches held in class.
- Team assignment (25%): students will be required to carry out an assignment in team, which will give them the opportunity to reflect on the meaning of the approaches covered in class and their managerial implications. (More precise instructions will be provided in the course syllabus at the beginning of the course). The grade for the team assignment will be valid until December of each solar year; after this date, students will be automatically considered non-attending and their grade on the team assignment will expire.

### *Non-attending students:*

Non-attending students will be evaluated on their knowledge of the specific book listed in the readings list. The exam will be composed of open questions referring to books' theories and approaches.

## Notes and prerequisites

Students are required to possess a basic knowledge of the principles of management and of organization theory and design. Those who do not, are advised to carry out a preliminary alignment activity, by resorting e.g. to the following texts:

A.L. CUNLIFFE, *A Very Short, Fairly Interesting and Reasonably Cheap Book About Management*. Sage Publications, 2014.

J. ROBERTS, *The Modern Firm: Organizational Design for Performance and Growth*, Oxford University Press, 2007