



MASENO UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS 2013/2014

**FIRST YEAR FIRST SEMESTER EXAMINATIONS FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE
MANAGEMENT
(CITY CAMPUS)**

BMM 803: HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Date: 16th July, 2014

Time: 5.30 – 8.30 p.m.

QUESTION ONE

Read the following case carefully and answer the questions given at the end.

Training for Whom ?

Microelectronics, a California-based electronics defense contractor, has enjoyed a smooth growth curve over the past five years, primarily because of favourable defense funding during the Reagan administration's build-up of U.S. military defenses. Microelectronics has had numerous contacts to design and develop guidance and radar systems for military weaponry.

Although the favourable funding cycle has enabled Microelectronics to grow at a steady rate, the company is finding it increasingly difficult to keep its really good engineers. Based on extensive turnover analyses conducted by Ned Jackson, the human resources planning manager, Microelectronics problem seems to be its inability to keep engineers beyond the "critical" five year point. Apparently, the probability of turnover drops dramatically after five years of service. Ned's conclusion is that Microelectronics has been essentially serving as an industry college. Their staffing strategy has always been to hire the best and brightest engineers from the best engineering schools in the United States.

Ned believes that these engineers often get lost in the shuffle at the time they join the firm. For example, most (if not all) of the new hires must work on non-classified projects until cleared by security to join a designated major project. Security clearance usually takes anywhere from six to ten months. In the meantime the major project has started, and these young engineers frequently miss out on its design phase, considered the most creative and challenging segment of the program. Because of the nature of project work, new engineering often have difficulty learning the organizational culture - such as who to ask when you have a problem, what the general dos and don'ts are, and why the organization does things in a certain way.

After heading a task force of human resource professionals within Microelectronics, Ned has been designated to present to top management a proposal designed to reduce turnover among young engineering recruits. The essence of his plan is to create a mentor program, except that in this plan the mentors will not be the seasoned graybeards of Microelectronics, but rather those engineers in the critical three-to-five year service window, the period of highest turnover. These engineers will be paired with new engineering recruits before the recruits actually report to Microelectronics for work.

According to the task force, the programme is twofold : (1) it benefits the newcomer by easing the transition into the company, and (2) it helps the three-to-five-year service engineers by enabling them to serve an important role for the company. By performing the mentor role, these engineers will become more committed and hence less likely to leave. As Ned prepared his fifteen-minute presentation for top management, he wondered if he had adequately anticipated the possible objections to the program in order to make an intelligent defense of it. Only time would tell.

Required:

- (a) Identify the salient issues from HR point of view for this case. (5 marks)
- (b) If you were to study this turnover problem, how would you conduct a needs analysis or evolve a counseling programme? (5 marks)
- (c) Do you find the mentoring programme suitable to reduce turnover? Justify your answer. (5 marks)

QUESTION 2

'The nature and objectives of the organisation determine the role and type of HRD processes to be chosen for developmental intervention.' Comment on this statement and discuss underlying concepts with suitable examples. (15 marks)

QUESTION 3

- Write short notes on any three of the following: (15 marks)
- (a) Designing Reward System (5 marks)
- (b) Operationalising HRD for workers (5 marks)
- (c) Career Transition and Choices (5 marks)

QUESTION 4

Define HRD and discuss various value anchored HRD processes. How do they affect development of an organisation? Explain with suitable examples. (15 marks)

QUESTION 5

What is Performance Management? How are Performance Management systems different from Appraisal systems? Briefly outline the problems which may affect Performance Management effectiveness. (15 marks)

QUESTION 6

People need competencies to perform tasks. Without continuous development of competencies in people, an organisation is not likely to achieve its goals. Competent and motivated employees are essential for organisational survival, growth and excellence." Comment on this statement and discuss the underlying issues, with suitable examples. (15 marks)