



Human Resources

Three spheres of contribution

The job of HR today is to make people and organisations succeed. In the first note we identify **three spheres in which HR can contribute value** to an organisation and motivate why outsourced HR offers an effective option for companies which aim to get the most out of HR departments. As usual, this edition has a **labour law case study** to foster employment relations best practice. Last, we start a new series on **enduring business ideas, tools, and models**. First in the series is a note on the application of a Johari Window. ...**To Page 2**



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Human Resources

Three spheres of contribution

HR leaders must position their departments as contributors of business value across the entire organisation. This note describes three spheres of influence through which an HR Department can contribute to business success.

1. Strategic contribution

In this sphere of contribution, HR practitioners collaborate with the CEO to help shape the business strategy, conduct organisational diagnoses to determine which HR capabilities are most critical and then design and implement organisation wide initiatives to support accomplishment of the organisation's business goals. The HR practitioner must be the CEO's sounding board and trusted partner.

"The job of Human Resources today is to make people and organisations grow."

Louis Efron

To succeed in the role of strategic contributor to business success, HR practitioners must:

- Have a seat on the CEO's top management team.
- See themselves first as businesspeople who specialise in HR, not as HR people who advise a business.
- Be clear how HR insights on talent, leadership and capability will deliver business results.
- Use talent to drive value rather than just respond passively to the routine needs of businesses.

- Build analytics capabilities and use their predictive power to drive better decision making.

2. Operational contribution

In this sphere of contribution, HR people partner with line managers to design, implement, provide technical HR expertise, monitor, and continuously improve the processes which convert HR strategies into action.

Examples of processes which fall within the scope of operational HR are recruitment and selection; performance management; training and development; remuneration; diversity; employment relations and wellness.

Outcomes of these processes may include business risk minimisation, cost reduction; employee engagement; business growth; and productivity gains. Organisations differ in their preferences for the HR skill sets that they look for at this level. Some favour generalists, who have a broad spectrum of competence in many aspects of HR, while others favour functional specialists such as IR Managers or OD Managers who have specialised skills in a narrow slice of the HR discipline. A third group of organisations employ a mix of specialists and generalists.

3. Administrative contribution

This is the sphere of HR in which the electronic (or paper) trail of employment events is created and actioned. Human Resources administrators perform transactional tasks associated with employment relationships. They capture employee data, make sure that employees are correctly paid, administer benefits and deal with statutory payments and record keeping amongst many other administrative tasks.

The value of HR administration efficiently executed must not be underestimated. While employees may not be inclined to call the payroll department at month's end to thank the administrator for getting their pay correct and paid on the right date, employees will be quick to give negative feedback when their pay is wrong. This is an illustration of Herzberg's motivation theory in operation. Getting paid is a satisfier. It does not lead to overt motivation. However,



withhold pay in error, and an employee is immediately dissatisfied and demotivated.

Technological advances have led to a trend of substitution of people by automated electronic systems and self-service portals. This will continue. However, even in a highly automated environment, the admin sphere of human resources support for business performance will continue to be a central element of HR.

Outsourced Human Resources

Setting up a human resources function which effectively supports an organisation in all three spheres of HR may lie beyond the means of many organisations. Outsourcing HR support to external experts is a solution to this challenge. For an entrepreneurial organisation, which has grown through its start-up phase without HR input, an external HR expert can cost-effectively set up and run the organisation's HR function. It is not only start-ups in a growth phase which should consider outsourcing. For a large established employer with an in-house HR function, external experts can take on assignments aimed at filling a competence gap and enhancing HR's support to the business.

Outsourcing to an HR consultant ensures that a business has the right level of HR expertise, in the right amount and at the right time. It is a cost effective and flexible solution to service delivery in the three dimensions of the HR role as contributor to business success.

Sources:

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Fair discipline

Consistency must be carefully considered

Five mineworkers were dismissed after ignoring verbal and written instructions to stop drilling work because certain safety measures were not in place.

The CCMA found that while the employees were guilty of the misconduct, their dismissals were unfair because the dismissal was inconsistent with the treatment of another employee. A sixth mineworker was also involved in the unsafe drilling but was not dismissed. She was the girlfriend of the Mine Overseer.

The Labour Court upheld the CCMA's decision on review. The Labour Court's reasoning centred on the issue of whether the employees were guilty of the misconduct rather than the issue of consistency. The Labour Court concluded that the mine failed to prove on a balance of probabilities that the employees had defied the written instruction to stop drilling.

The mine took the matter on appeal to the Labour Appeal Court (LAC), which was satisfied that the employer had proved the misconduct. The LAC turned its attention to the issue of the employees' claim that the mine was inconsistent in applying the sanction of dismissal and therefore unfair in dismissing them. The principle of consistency is that like cases should be treated alike.

In the original mine disciplinary proceedings, the sixth mineworker was acquitted because she was not present with the team when the Mine Overseer gave the instruction to stop working.

The LAC found that the acquittal of the sixth mineworker is not a reason by which the finding of inconsistency of discipline can come to the aid of the other employees. The LAC referred to a previous judgement by the same court. If a chairperson conscientiously and honestly, but incorrectly, exercised his or her discretion in a particular case in a particular way, and his or her assessment of the gravity of the disciplinary offence was wrong, it cannot be fair that other



employee’s profit from that kind of wrong decision. In a case of plurality dismissal, a wrong decision can only be unfair if it is capricious, or induced by improper motives or, worse, by a discriminating management policy. (SACCAWU & others v Irvin Johnson Limited [2008] BLLR 869 (LAC))

The LAC also emphasised the seriousness with which rules implemented to ensure employee safety must be regarded. The LAC held that where the conduct of employees carries a high risk of potential danger to the safety of others which is certainly the case when there is manifest disregard for safety regulations at a mine, dismissal (as imposed on the five employees of this case) is clearly justified.

Case

1. Samancor Limited (Eastern Chrome Mines) v Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration Limpopo and Others (JA140/2018) [2020] ZALAC 17; [2020] 9 BLLR 908 (LAC); (2020) 41 ILJ 2135 (LAC) (18 May 2020)

Enduring business ideas, tools, and models

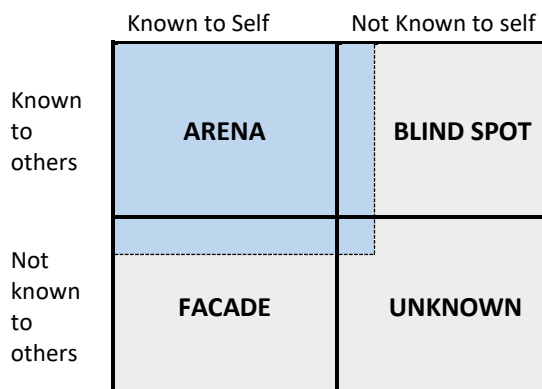
The Johari Window

The Johari Window Model, developed by American psychologists Joseph Luft and Harry Ingham in 1955, is a simple and useful 4-quadrant tool for illustrating and improving self-awareness, and mutual understanding between individuals within a group. (See illustration below.) The model can also be used to assess and improve a group’s relationship with other groups and is particularly useful in team development. There are other applications where the model is used as an "information processing tool". (Businessballs, 2017)

The four quadrants in a Johari Window are **(1) ‘the arena’** - what is known by the person about him/herself and is also known by others; **(2) ‘blind spot’** - what is unknown by the person about him/herself, but which others know; **(3) ‘façade’** - what the person knows about

him/herself that others do not know; and **(4) ‘unknown’** - what is unknown by the person about him/herself and is also unknown by others.

Johari Window



The aim in any group should always be to develop the ‘arena’ for every person because when we work in this area with others we are at our most effective and productive, and the group is at its most productive too. The ‘arena’, is the space where good communications and cooperation occur, free from distractions, mistrust, confusion, conflict, and misunderstanding. The arena is developed (increased in size relative to the other three quadrants) by voluntary disclosure of information about oneself, feedback solicitation and two-way sharing of information. (Blake, 2014)

“You can have anything you want in life if you just help enough other people get what they want.”

Zig Ziglar

Beyond self- and team-awareness, the Johari Window Model It is a powerful tool to surface what we know and do not know about a problem. You can consider using the model in applications such as project and risk management or design thinking. The model’s power comes from using a combination of techniques that allows you to surface all knowledge and lack of it (Justo, 2019). The table below illustrates techniques suitable for exploration of knowledge type:



KNOWN KNOWNS	analogies
	lateral thinking
KNOWN UNKNOWNNS	build hypothesis
	measure, iterate
UNKNOWN KNOWNS	brainstorming
	group sketching
UNKNOWN UNKNOWNNS	research
	exploration

In its original design purpose, the Johari Window aims to improve self-awareness and personal development among individuals when they are in a group. The model is based on two ideas (i) trust can be acquired by revealing information about you to others and (ii) you can learn about yourself from the feedback of others. (Communication theory.org). The model is useful in the 'toolkit' of managers in any environment where teamwork is important.

Sources

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Are your staff struggling with stress?

Stress is a major root cause of ailments which keep people away from work. Stress expert, Dr Rangan Chatterjee says that work related stress is the highest contributor to total stress in peoples' lives. Turn the page to see how Tennant Human Capital Solutions can help your organisation.



Psychological Well-being



Are your staff struggling to cope with excessive and prolonged stress caused by the pandemic and subsequent lockdown?

Tennant Human Capital Solutions can help! We are offering a 1.5 hour virtual workshop to help employees recognise the symptoms of negative stress (distress), how to manage it and the steps that can be taken to build resilience.

At a cost of R3000 per workshop*

We can assist with further intervention if necessary, and can help you to link up with an Employee Assistance Programme that is tailored to your needs.

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*Limited to 20 people per workshop for discussion purposes

