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ORIGINAL ARTICLE





PERSONNEL AGENCY IN INDIA – A CASE STUDY OF CENTRAL

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Abstract:

In modern times, we feel the need for creation of separate personnel departments in most of the organizations to' manage the human element. Managing the human component is the central and most important task, it and all depends on how well this is done. Some of the arguments, which justify the separate existence of a personnel department, are discussed below:

ADMINISTRATIVE FACTORS

In recent years, there has been great expansion and diversification of personnel activities in' most organizations. To ensure the optimum utilization of personnel, it is important to provide them a congenial environment and look after their needs scientifically. From time to time the management has to tackle problems posed by individual members, usually of a personal, domestic or disciplinary nature. All the issues pertaining to employees either in their individual capacity or groups can be dealt with conveniently and scientifically, if there is a separate department of personnel directly under the supervision and control of the chief executive.

ECONOMIC RELEVANCE

Experience has shown that the operations of personnel management will be less expensive if concentrated in a single department as compared to scattered arrangements to deal with separate activities. It would also require a lot of coordination if there are various sections dealing with personnel to ensure good results, which would be very costly.

PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFIT

The existence of a separate department would help the employees to develop a spirit of togetherness as all their issues are being examined In one department.

COMPREHENSIVE DEALINGS

Since all the records about an employee are maintained in a single department, it would be very easy to decide the issues of individual members quickly. This would raise the morale of the employees as they would not have to waste their energies in unproductive activities.

MANAGING NEW TASKS

Administration is tending to become more and more specialized, technical and scientific. The current administrative situation, as stated in the ARC report, may be summed up in the following terms:

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PERSONNEL AGENCY IN INDIA – A CASE STUDY OF CENTRAL



(a) Administration, particularly at higher levels, has ceased to be merely regulatory. It is directly involved in the formulation of policies and implementation of tasks concerned with social welfare and economic growth. There are specific tasks to be performed, particular projects and programs to be carried. Thus, new areas of administration have emerged and they call for new and special knowledge and techniques.

(b)Even in the field of regulatory administration, the increase in the volume of work and the emergence of new problems consequent upon activities such as increasing industrialization, urbanization and the growing social awareness of the community have created difficult problems, which require careful and expert handling.

(c) Science and technology in this nuclear age have projected new tasks for administration. Besides, these and other specializations like the economic and the social sciences have also acquired an important bearing on government decisions and policies.

(d) The enormous growth of personnel has rendered it necessary to devise special measures for ensuring that each member of the public service gives the best that he is capable of.

All these new trends can be handled by a department of personnel to ensure effective channelization. Thus, we can say that the personnel department is a specialized staff department to advise and assist line management officials to formulate policies and procedures and employ skills to optimize the use of personnel. Its raison d'etre is the reduction of departmentalism and politicization. In its absence, the operating agencies will go their own ways.

FUNCTIONS OF PERSONNELAGENCY

Formulating Personnel Policy

The first important task of any central personnel agency is to ensure the formulation of a good policy based on internal and external sources, research studies and special investigations. Personnel policy is the heart of personnel management. A good personnel policy would ensure the equity, uniformity and consistency, in dealing with personnel issues: By establishing 'ground rules' for administration, personnel policy helps to avoid confusion and misunderstanding as well as reduce the effects of pressures upon management. The policy should ensure job satisfaction among employees. An organization with a personnel policy can function more democratically. The policy must be such as to ensure the co-operation of the employees and not leave room for coercion.

Estimation of Current and Future Manpower Recruitments

It is responsible for recruitment planning, policy and research, running of centralized recruitment operations and selection processes. It determines future staffing requirements to meet the objectives of the service in the most effective and economical way, and ensure that suitable staff are recruited, trained and retrained to fulfill these objectives.

Research

It undertakes research in aspects of public personnel such as recruitment, reporting and training techniques, appraisal, interview, job-satisfaction, and manpower wastage. It also takes up follow-up programs in these areas.

Maintenance of Records

It maintains and develops personnel records and information systems and provides a common service to various departments, in the form of statistics relating to the manpower.

Development and Deployment

It ensures that the development and deployment of all groups of staff are achieved in such a way that the staff individually and in groups make their best contributions to meet the changing needs of the service.



Encouraging Effective Communication at All Levels

It develops effective communication; consultation and relations between all parts and staff of the organization, and helps to design and develop procedures for the resolution of personnel and institutional differences e.g., by means of joint consultation.

Provision of Physical and Financial Environment

It provides the organizational structures and working environment most suitable for the successful performance of tasks. It also determines the conditions of service.

Designing Appraisal Systems

It develops appraisal plans to facilitate the career development of personnel. The field of personnel resembles a lighting rod, attracting the tensions and human conflicts that abound in the organization and the community. If professionally handled, these challenges can be constructive and not a destructive force in the life of the organization.

Human Resource Accounting and Audit

The latest function, which must be carried out by personnel departments, is Human Resource Accounting. Since it is a new activity, we may deal with it in more detail.

Human Resource Accounting and Audit is the term used to describe the accounting methods, systems and techniques, which coupled with special knowledge and ability, assist personnel management in the evaluation of personnel in financial terms. In other words, it is the measurement of the cost and value of people, for the organization.

STAFFING OF PERSONNEL DEPARTMENTS

Proper implementation of these functions would depend upon the staffing of the personnel department and units. It goes without saying that unless the significance of the personnel function is appreciated by the chief executive and other top personnel in the organization, and unless the key personnel positions are filled with experienced, knowledgeable, professional, staff members, the objectives for, which personnel departments are established may not be achieved.

It must be clearly understood that personnel departments are to function as staff agencies for line departments, Although Departmental heads retain final responsibility for their own staff, yet, due to the increasing complexity of the work, they would and should like to look upto personnel department for specialist advice or service. In brief, we can say that personnel administration is a line management responsibility and not a staff function.

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