



Human.Net



Issue 34 –May 2013

Keeping you up to date with the latest news on Human Resource issues and developments as well as Association news.

Contents

1. Welcome Note
2. Bright idea
3. HR in Black & White
4. HR on Screen
5. Book Review
6. Makes you think!
7. HR Forthcoming Events
8. Editorial Team (for feedback)

Interesting Quotes

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success.”

— *Henry Ford*

1. Welcome Note from Mr. Ken Moore, colleague and friend of the CyHRMA

Dear members of the CyHRMA,

I would like to let you know that we in America are following closely your financial situation in Cyprus. It is a major news and editorial focus of the Wall Street Journal and other US national business-related publications. It is a real, but intensely difficult, education in global economics. I remember fondly my visit to your beautiful country and meeting many of your colleagues. I came away very impressed by the level of financial and business intelligence that your HR colleagues displayed during the conference.

While it may be difficult for some people to make a direct link from their HR positions to the current economic uncertainties of Cypriot business, I am confident that your nation will emerge from this situation wiser and more competitive in your development of a sound economy.

I wish you continued best of luck.

Ken Moore
Strategic Management Professor
State University of New York - Albany

2. Bright Idea

Win Over Your New Boss

The experience of getting a new boss can be fraught with anxiety and risk. Uncertainties abound when someone new takes the reins – but you have a role to play in taming them. Here’s how to establish yourself as someone your new manager can turn to:

- **Ease into the relationship.** Pick only a few vital issues to cover early on so you don’t overwhelm him/her. Over time, you can discuss your other projects in more depth.
- **Observe his/her style.** Does your new boss prefer short or long conversations? A buffet of options or one best recommendation? Hard data or soft? Use these indicators to shape the way you present yourself and your ideas.
- **Be honest.** New leaders must depend on relative strangers for honest opinions. Look for openings to provide helpful candor or some key aspect of the new boss’s agenda.

Today’s Bright Idea was adopted from Harvard Business Review, Management Tip of the Day, February 28, 2013



3. HR in Black & White

Summarised Registered Unemployment data

During April 2013 the number of registered unemployed individuals has continued to increase compared to the same month in previous years, reaching 45,201 people.

Monthly comparison between April and March 2013

During April 2013 the number of registered unemployed people increased by 918 people or by 2.07%, compared to the previous month. During the same period in previous years there was a decrease in 2012 (2,045 people or 5.46%) and in 2011 (1,490 people or 5.25%). The biggest unemployment decrease, by economic activity, was in the hotel/restaurant sector while big increases were shown in the construction, commerce/retail and manufacturing sectors.

State pledges €30 million to create 8,000 jobs

The government rolled out three schemes worth over €30 million to boost employment as Cyprus experiences its worst jobless rates in three decades. Around 45,000 people were registered as unemployed in April, with 33,500 being Cypriots.

Labour Minister Zeta Emilianidou said the schemes, which are co-funded by the European Union, aimed at providing work for 8,000 people, the majority in the wider tourism sector.

The first scheme – worth €6.8 million – provides for the employment of 1,000 people looking for flexible hours. The scheme subsidises 65 per cent of the wages for eight months, provided that the duration of the employment is ten months. It will also subsidise the workers' cost of travelling to their place of employment. Eligible businesses were those that had not reduced their workforce after the announcement of the schemes on April 19 and will create one or more jobs under a flexible regime.

The bulk of the budget, €20 million, has been earmarked for the hotel and food industries – the tourism industry in general – in a bid to find jobs for 6,000 currently unemployed people. This scheme will subsidise 40 per cent of workers' salaries for eight months, provided they are employed for 12 months or 30 per cent for five months if they were given a job for seven months. It applies to businesses that would not have laid off any staff between April 19 and the date they submit their application to participate in the plan. Exemptions are made if the positions had been left vacant following voluntary or age-related retirement, or legal dismissal due to disciplinary offence. Employers must also pledge they will not cut staff engaged in the same area as the subsidised person for the duration of the scheme.

The government also unveiled a €4 million scheme targeting 1,000 unemployed university degree holders under 35-years-old. It will run for six months and its aim is to keep youths in Cyprus by allowing them to gain some experience in their field while on a salary of €500 per month. Priority will be given to holders of masters or doctorates degrees, those married with children, single parents and the long-term unemployed.

Currently going through the worst economic crisis in decades, Cyprus is bracing for a jump in unemployment in the coming months.

The European Commission said last week it expected Cyprus' unemployment to reach 15.5 per cent this year and 16.9 per cent in 2014.

EU economy: slowly recovering from a protracted recession - 03/05/2013

The economy is projected to return to growth in the second half of 2013. However, annual GDP is forecast to contract by 0.1% in the EU and 0.4% in the eurozone.

Following the recession that marked 2012, the EU economy is forecast to stabilise in the first half of 2013. GDP is expected to start growing again in the second half of the year, slowly at first, but picking up speed in 2014.

Due to the slow rate of recovery of economic activity joblessness will not be reduced in the short run. Unemployment is forecast to reach around 11% in the EU and 12% in the euro area in 2013 and to stabilise there in 2014. There will continue to be large differences between EU countries.

Inflation in the EU has continued to slow down as the impact of past energy-price rises has faded. It is projected at 1.8% in the EU and 1.6% in the eurozone in 2013, stabilising at 1.7% and 1.5%, respectively, in 2014.

Fiscal deficits are set to continue falling in 2013 - to 3.4% of GDP in the EU and 2.9% in the eurozone. The pace of structural consolidation is expected to be slower this year than in 2012. Debt-to-GDP ratios are forecast to reach 89.8% in the EU and 95.5% in the eurozone.

Code of conduct and ethics for Cyprus public workers

The Cyprus cabinet of Ministers has approved a Code of Conduct and Ethics for public workers, authorising the finance minister to take the necessary steps to ensure its implementation.

Introduction of the new code is aimed at improving the service provided to citizens and the image of the public sector by describing in a clear and simple manner the responsibilities, obligations and expected behaviour of public servants throughout the public service and across all ranks.

Last week, President Nicos Anastasiades announced a series of measures aimed at restoring the public's trust in government following the banking fiasco. He set June 15 as the final deadline for completing all outstanding bills that parliament will need to approve.

The measures include lifting MPs' immunity for all offences, but preserving their freedom of speech during the exercise of their duty; legally regulating ministers' and independent officials' civil and criminal responsibilities for actions and omissions committed while on duty; obliging more state officials to file income statements at fixed intervals, making public tenders in the wider state sector; and, setting up a committee in each ministry to ensure compliance with suggestions made in the Auditor-general's annual reports.

4. HR On Screen



Office Space is a cult classic 1999 American comedy film satirizing work life in a typical 1990s software company. Written and directed by Mike Judge the film stars Ron Livingston as Peter Gibbons, the protagonist, Jennifer Aniston as Peter's new love interest, Stephen Root, as Milton Waddams and Gary Cole as Bill Lumbergh among others.

This hilarious movie is like the Bible on how to be a horrible boss / employer! There are a number of wrong policies and practices the company in this film implements which cultivate such a demoralising culture. Employees were given no challenge or motivation to perform their daily tasks. There was no recognition for going the extra mile. People were asked to work on weekends without some sort of reward or even acknowledgement.

Employees were suffocating and felt that they are not meant to sit in cubicles and watch screens all day, it was a motivation killer. But as long as staff were clocking in on time, managers were not interested in what they were doing during their working day.

More bad examples of a horrible corporate culture and bad practices follow: There was complete lack of clarity with regards to hierarchy levels. As the main movie character mentions at some point, he has 8 different bosses who tell him what to do! Who could work with so much accountability confusion! There was an employee who was fired five years earlier and nobody bothered to inform him and remove him from payroll!

On one occasion, one of the most annoying bosses, Bill Lumbergh, ignored the company rules by parking his Porche at the disabled car parking space when another employee took his spot. The bosses' overall attitude towards their employees was annoying, their management style, their attitude, even their tone of voice when talking was patronising.

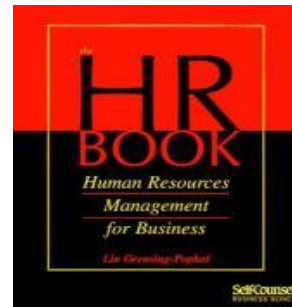
When a team of Consultants came in to do a restructure/efficiency exercise in the company, everyone felt threatened and insecure they will lose their jobs, which proved to be true. During the consultants' private interviews with staff those who felt the pressure had extreme reactions, like one who was yelling at the consultants trying to prove that he has people skills without seeing the irony behind his words/action! The consultants did downsize by deciding to fire some employees and promoting and paying more money to others. This created a feeling of injustice among the affected staff that lost all respect to the company. Some of those affected even went to the extreme of deciding to harm their employer for personal gain using illegal means.

In the end, it is the disgruntled employee Milton, who had been fired 5 years earlier but hadn't been notified who puts an end to everyone's corporate misery. He sets fire to the building and our main character, Peter finds himself working in the office debris, as a construction worker doing manual labour but loving it because he finally sees some meaning to what he does!

If not for the bags of laughs this entertaining comedy has to offer, it definitely has some good examples of what to avoid if you don't want your employees demoralised, demotivated and disengaged.

Contributed by Yota Tsiokri and Kiki Kallis

5. Book Review



[The HR Book: Human Resources Management for Business](#)

By Lin Gresning-Pophal

ISBN: 1451822413

Finding and keeping good employees is crucial to the efficient operation and success of every business, and today's employers must select and nurture employees who most closely fit their company's culture and performance objectives.

Several businesses appreciate the need for high-quality HR management. Recruiting and retaining employees who value to the company is of utmost importance to the success of every business, while for business owners and managers who find themselves in the situation of hiring properly themselves understanding the importance of HR management becomes crucial. The first chapter of the book tackles the hiring process. Employers are trained how to generate a job advertisement, evaluate CVs, deliver interviews, verify references, ending up to a candidate and offering the job. Different techniques are applied in respect to the behavior of the interviewer as well as the psychological questions that were demonstrated.

One of the things that I liked a lot about this book is that each section is based on legal HR issues. For instance, on some sections, the writer outlines forbidden areas of pre-employment questioning. For instance, on some sections, the writer outlines forbidden areas of pre-employment questioning in other sections, the need to have employees sign an acknowledgement stating they have read the employee handbook is also explained.

Another very useful aspect of this book is a mixture of templates included as guidance to professionals. The letter confirming employment, personnel record, non-disclosure and non-competition covenant, punitive warning letter and discharge letter are such practical examples.

The HR Book addresses both U.S. and European employers, where dissimilar laws (concerning employers depending on their location). It would be better if each sample contract had included information on which local and regional legislation it was based on when each sample contract had been drafted. This would help employers understand whether they could use the templates in their country.

Overall, The HR Book: Human Resources Management for Business is an admirable resource that deliberates to help employers hire and manage their employees. It helps the reader who has no involvement into the HR field to understand in a summarized mode the role and the impact of HR strategies and techniques into the world of Business.

Contributed by Christos Constantinou

6. Makes you think!



7. HR Forthcoming Events

CYPRUS:

20th June 2013

Annual General Meeting of the CyHRMA

INTERNATIONAL:

22nd May 2013

EAPM Executive Committee Meeting, Florence, Italy

23rd May 2013

EAPM Delegates Assembly, Florence, Italy

8. Editorial Team of this issue

Christos Constantinou
 Costas Papakyriacou
 Irene Papadopoulou
 Ken Moore
 Kiki Kallis
 Yota Tsiokri

Name of the Association: Cyprus Human Resource Management Association (CyHRMA)
Address: P.O. Box 28785, 2082 Nicosia
Telephone: +357 22 318081
Fax: +357 22 318083
Email: info@cyhrma.org
Website: www.cyhrma.org