

The Lamar University Electronic Journal of Student Research  
Summer 2007

## **Human Resource Management: Managerial Efficacy in Recruiting and Retaining Teachers – National Implications**

**Jennifer Butcher**

PhD Student in Educational Leadership  
The Whitlowe R. Green College of Education  
Prairie View A&M University  
**Assistant Principal**  
Aldine Independent School District  
Houston, Texas

**William Allan Kritsonis, PhD**

**Professor and Faculty Mentor**  
PhD Program in Educational Leadership  
Prairie View A&M University  
Member of the Texas A&M University System  
**Visiting Lecturer**  
Oxford Round Table  
University of Oxford, Oxford, England  
**Distinguished Alumnus**  
Central Washington University  
College of Education and Professional Studies  
Ellensburg, Washington

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## ABSTRACT

**Human Resource Management is a branch of an organization which recruits and develops personnel to promote the organization's objectives. Human Resource Management involves interviewing applicants, training staff, and employee retention. Compensation, benefits, employee/labor relations, health, safety, and security issues are a few of the aspects of the Human Resource Management division. The ultimate goal of the human resource department is to manage people, human capital, and culture for the organization's success. In the educational arena, the selection of an effective school administrator is crucial in maintaining a nurturing and supportive environment for teachers.**

**Note: Special note of gratitude to Dr. Kimberly Grantham Griffith for her assistance in getting this article published. See: [www.nationalforum.com](http://www.nationalforum.com)**

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## Introduction

Human Resource Management creates an alignment between an organization's strategy and the objectives of the organization. Human Resource Management's purpose includes activities such as staffing, recruiting, training, and ensuring that personnel and management conforms to regulations. The ultimate goal is to help an organization attract and maintain employees. Efforts in retaining an employee should start the minute the employee steps in the door.

## Purpose of the Article

The purpose of this article is to discuss managerial efficacy in recruiting and retaining teachers. Recruitment provides an opportunity to select from a pool of qualified applicants. Human Resource Management is responsible for designing a plan for employee retention. Treating all employees with dignity and respect is the key in retaining employees. The objective of human resource management is to help an organization meet strategic goals by attracting and maintaining employees, and also to manage them effectively. The ten recommendations noted in this essay will help an organization fulfill this objective.

## Effective Leadership

Kritsonis precisely states (2002), "Schools are complex organizations that must have leaders. In schools, leaders are called administrators. Without administrators, schools would have no direction" (p.264). The word "administer": derives from the Latin *administrare*, meaning to help or assist – to "minister to". An administrator's highest priority should be teaching. It is their responsibility to remember the daily stress of teaching. Effective school administrators know that their actions can enhance teacher happiness, which in turn contributes to improving the quality of the learning environment (Graseck, 2005). The following examples are ways in which administrators can be effective:

1. Administrators listen to teachers.
2. Administrators ask questions of teachers.
3. Administrators sympathize with teachers.
4. Administrators embrace their teachers.
5. Administrators recognize that their teachers are the backbone of the school.
6. Administrators build community among the members of the staff.
7. Administrators trust their teachers and involve them in decision making.
8. Administrators articulate a vision that unifies the faculty.
9. Administrators exhibit a passion for educational excellence.
10. Administrators teach in classrooms to let the teachers know that they remain on their side.

Effective leaders should possess technical, human, and conceptual skills. Technical skills involve the ability to use knowledge, methods, and techniques that are used in performing certain tasks. Human skills necessitate self-understanding and acceptance. Conceptual skills involve the leader's ability to view the school and the entire educational systems as a whole.

There are numerous personality factors that are associated with effective leadership. According to Hoy and Miskel (2005, p. 380), there are four personality factors that seem particularly important. These factors are self-confidence, stress tolerance, emotional maturity, and integrity. Self-confident leaders are more likely to set high goals for themselves and their followers, to attempt difficult tasks, and to persist in the face of problems and defeats. Stress tolerant leaders are likely to make good decisions, to stay calm, and to provide decisive direction to subordinates in difficult situations. Emotionally mature leaders tend to have an accurate awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and to be oriented toward self-improvement. Integrity means that the behaviors of leaders are consistent with their stated values and they are honest, ethical, responsible, and trustworthy. Leadership skills help formulate and implement solutions to multifaceted social and technological problem and to achieve goals effectively. Retaining teachers is a goal for all school leaders.

### **Employee Retention**

Employee retention starts at orientation. Human Resource Management should provide an outline of information to new employees regarding policies, values, operations, and culture. The orientation should also include a multimedia presentation such as video, audio, written material, and computerized presentations. The school district's personnel policies should be explained. The orientation should be thorough and include time in the training for questions from new employees. After the orientation, feedback should be given as to what was effective and what should be done differently for future orientations.

According to Antaya (2005), research demonstrates that people don't start looking for new jobs because of money. They change jobs to work for companies that make them feel valuable, offering the opportunity for empowerment, career and personal growth, and the development of new skills. Employees should be shown that you care about them. Bonuses can be rewarded for good service. Handwritten notes can express appreciation. Employees' should have the opportunity to attend workshops, conferences, and conventions. Employees can also be rewarded with special lunches and dinners. Studies have shown that higher employee satisfaction leads to increased customer satisfaction.

## **Hiring Standards**

Kritsonis (2002) states, “Teaching is a noble profession; it requires an ability to impart knowledge, provide leadership, instill values, and help prepare young individuals for the future” (p. 282). Some characteristics of teachers are the following:

- Good teachers love children;
- Good teachers set proper examples;
- Good teachers provide knowledge;
- Good teachers have community acceptable morals;
- Good teachers motivate children to learn;
- Good teachers know they are not in the profession for financial rewards;
- Good teachers work well with parents;
- Good teachers keep children under control.

It is the responsibility of Human Resource Management to recruit and select “good” teachers. Human Resource Management must be knowledgeable of state regulations regarding the hiring of teachers. Although most federal dollars in the No Child Left Behind Act are directed to high-poverty local schools through Title I, part of the school improvement plan will focus on enhancing the quality of teachers and administrators (Trahan, 2002). The language in the bill state that all Title I schools are expected to hire only “highly qualified” teachers, ensure that all teachers are assigned to teach in their field, are fully licensed, and meet other criteria outlined in the law. According to No Child Left Behind, a highly qualified teacher must have full state certification and/or pass the state’s licensing examination.

Based on the law, states receiving Title I aid must develop yearly report cards documenting the success of their students in meeting the achievement goals outlined in No Child Left Behind. In this progress report, states must advise the federal government of the number of teachers who are not fully licensed, who are teaching under an emergency waiver, and who are not teaching in the field in which they were prepared and have demonstrated competence.

At the beginning of each new school year, school districts must provide to parents of students attending Title I schools, information regarding the professional qualifications of the students classroom teacher. Parents are entitled to know whether the teacher is teaching under emergency waivers. With teacher shortages, states have chosen to implement other methods to certify teachers other than through traditional college programs. Several states have implemented alternative certification provisions.

## **Diversity**

Diversity in the workplace adds a special appeal to the environment. An effective diverse working relationship is critical. Human Resource Management should help employees use their talents and skills to contribute to the overall accomplishments of an organization’s objectives. Employees should also be respected and valued for their contributions. There should be an environment created for people to enjoy their work and their coworkers. It is important to create an atmosphere where people understand and appreciate diversity. By acknowledging the similarities and likenesses, it helps create a point for understanding and appreciating diversity. Providing opportunities for team building is ideal in accomplishing mutual goals.

It is also important for children to understand, accept, and identify with cultural and diverse ethnic groups other than their own. Children need an awareness of the various cultures and

diverse ethnic groups that are represented in the country. A diverse faculty can enable children to understand and appreciate diversity.

### **Benefits**

Salaries and benefits are key components in attracting future employees and retaining current employees. Districts typically have competitive salaries in comparison to other school districts within the area. Critical needs supplement pay is normally found in the areas of Montessori, ESL, Bilingual, Special Education, Certified Assessment Specialist, and Speech Pathologist. Some districts also pay supplements to 7<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> grade Math, Science, and Reading teachers. Longevity pay is another means of attracting and retaining employees. Districts in the state of Texas award performance pay for TAKS which is monetary rewards for excellence in instruction on Recognized and Exemplary campuses. Offering incentive pay to current employees who recruit teachers is another way to enhance recruitment and retention.

In addition to salaries, teachers usually receive a package of other benefits from the school board. Benefits include participation in a teacher retirement plan, disability insurance and sick leave, professional liability insurance and personal days, professional development, professional membership association membership, and time away from teaching, extended vacations as compared to other workers (Kritsonis, 2002, p. 281). Providing retirement plans for employees is an essential element in Human Resource Management. The Texas Retirement System of Texas also provides pension, death, and disability benefits to Texas public school employees. Plans such as a tax sheltered annuity allow employees opportunities to plan for their future. The districts should also provide a variety of medical benefits that meets the needs of employees. Allowing employees to accrue sick leave as well as personal days is a practice of most school districts. The payment of a certain number of sick days upon retirements is also an option.

### **Mentoring**

First-year teacher are frequently left in a sink or swim position. Mentors are used as a buddy system to provide emotional and material support to decrease isolation of new teachers. Mentor teachers should be selected based on a clearly articulated vision of teaching and learning, knowledge of content, accomplished curriculum developer, professional interests, expressed educational philosophies, and compatible personalities (Mullinix, 2002). Mentors help beginning teachers learn the philosophy, cultural values, and expectations of the school where they are employed. One way of selecting a mentor is based on their reputation as effective classroom teachers. The benefits of mentorship programs not only reduce attrition rates among new teachers, but also improve teaching capabilities.

Mentoring can be perceived as a way to engage, challenge, and retain effective teachers. Mentors serve as role models and feel appreciated through the process of mentoring. It is important to recognize the expertise of mentors and compensate them for their contribution to the professional development of new teachers. Training and support designed for mentors also serves as a mechanism for retaining them. Mullinix (2002) noted that compensation of mentors take the following forms:

- Stipends paid to mentors;
- Additional time for planning and observations;

- Financial support for training workshops and conferences;
- Allocation of funds to support costs such as substitutes.

### **Professional Development**

According to Trahan (2002), professional development includes activities that:

- Improve teachers knowledge of academic subjects they teach;
- Are part of the school wide campus improvement plan;
- Will help them teach students to meet challenging standards;
- Improve classroom management skills;
- Are high quality, sustained, intensive and classroom focused;
- Support teacher recruitment, hiring, and training;
- Are connected to effective instructional practices base on scientifically based research;
- Increase the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers;
- Are aligned with state standards;
- Are developed with participation of educators and parents;
- Assist teachers of limited English proficient students;
- Provide training in the use of technology;
- Are regularly evaluated for impact;
- Provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;
- Include instruction in the use of data and assessments;
- May include instruction in working with parents;
- May involve partnerships between K-12 schools and institutions of higher education;
- And may help paraprofessionals meet state standards.

Professional development is essential for teachers to receive current information in the field of education. It also allows an opportunity for teacher's to strengthen weak areas. Professional development should be a priority in developing a campus plan. Opportunities to enhance one's teaching ability will lead to meeting the needs of the students.

### **Professional Learning Communities**

Professional learning communities can be very beneficial to new teachers. Schools that operate as a "professional learning community" engage the entire group of professionals in coming together for learning within a supportive, self-created community (Berlinger-Gustafson, 2004). Participants can network, test ideas, challenge their inferences, and process information with each other. Professional learning communities reduce teacher isolation and increase commitment to the mission of the school. Teachers share responsibility for the development of students' success. The communities also create more satisfaction, higher morale, and lower rates of absenteeism among teachers.

Collaboration is the key to developing learning communities. Collaboration must be purposeful, structured, facilitated, and show accountability. There must be a commitment to continuous improvement and shared decision making. The supportive and shared leadership of the learning communities allows the principal to facilitate and participate without dominating. The communities create a time to meet and talk. There is also a sense of school autonomy and teacher empowerment.

## **Organizational Climate**

School climate refers to the teachers' perceptions of the work environment of the school. School climate is influenced by the organization, personalities of participants, and organizational leadership. The climate of the school may be conceived as the personality of a school. Organizational climate has a significant impact on employee retention. Schools with an open climate lead to higher employee retention. The open climate is characterized with cooperation and respect within the faculty and principal. The principal listens and is open to suggestions, gives praise, and respects the faculty. Principals also provide facilitating leadership. Teachers are supportive of each other and there are high collegial relations among the faculty. Teachers are close and there is an atmosphere of cooperation and commitment.

## **Performance Evaluation**

All school districts in the state of Texas have two choices in selecting a method to appraise teachers. A teacher-appraisal system recommended by the Texas commissioner of education, or a local teacher-appraisal system can be used. The Professional Development and Appraisal System was developed in accordance with Texas Education Code. Teachers are evaluated on the following eight domains:

- Domain I: Active, successful participation in the learning process;
- Domain II: Learner-centered instruction;
- Domain III: Evaluation and feedback on student progress;
- Domain IV: Management of student discipline, instructional strategies, time and materials;
- Domain V: Professional communication;
- Domain VI: Professional development;
- Domain VII: Compliance with policies, operating procedures and requirements; and
- Domain VIII: Improvement of academic performance of all students on the campus based on indicators included in the Academic Excellence indicator System.

The ratings for each domain will help an administrator determine the strengths and weaknesses of the teacher. The overall rating can be used as an indicator for contract renewal. A performance evaluation is a report card for the teacher which is a measurement of growth.

## **Concluding Remarks**

In conclusion, the ultimate goal of Human Resource Management is ensuring that the organization attract and retain qualified employees who are committed to the vision. Human Resource Management creates an alignment between an organization's strategy and the objectives of the organization. Recruitment allows the opportunity to select from a pool of qualified applicants. Efforts to retain an employee should start the minute and employee steps in the door. Human Resource Management should be knowledgeable of the ten recommendations that were noted in the essay: effective leadership, employee retention, hiring standards, diversity, benefits, mentoring, professional development, professional learning communities,

organizational climate, and performance evaluation. The recommendations will enhance the effectiveness of Human Resource Management in recruiting and retaining teachers.

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