Chapter VIII

Managing IT Professionals: Human Resource Considerations

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Abstract

Attracting and retaining top IT talent is a major concern for most organizations. In the early part of this decade when the dotcom boom turned to a bust, Y2K was over and the recession hit, everything came to a dramatic halt. Today the economy is improving and the hiring of IT staff is on the rebound. Today new skills are required to compete in a global economy where organizations have new alternatives to choose from. Finding IT professionals with specific skills is no easy feat these days. Today’s job skills require strong technical skills and also excellent business, industry, communication, marketing and negotiating abilities. This chapter will focus on the results of recent research and their implications to IT human resource considerations. It also discusses what IT professionals are seeking in a position, the retention of IT talent, stress in workplace, and IT career development.
Introduction

The market for IT professionals is still the fastest growing sector in the United States economy with 68% output growth rate projected between 2002 and 2012. The IT market in the United States is predicted to add 632,000 jobs between 2001 and 2012 (USBL, 2005). In Australia IT jobs are up 60.4% in May 2005 compared to May 2004 (Foreshew, 2005). These IT job prospects are expected to be good as the demand for computer related positions increases due to advancement in technology, priority for information security, government regulation, and new opportunities for application development. In September 2005, Jerry Luftman presented at the SIMposium CIO Executive Summit (over 1,000 IT Executives) the results of his recent survey on key issues for IT executives (Luftman, 2005, 2005a). Among the insights presented was the top 10 IT management concerns (Figure 1) surveyed by the CIOs of SIM (Society for Information Management) companies. Retaining IT professionals was the second largest concern for the second year in a row, ranked among IT executives; only the perennial IT-business alignment received higher scores. This shows that IT executives are recognizing the need to invest in their professional staff. With the recent recession coming to an end, concern that staff will leave for other opportunities, and offshore outsourcing being the most discussed topic from the computer room to the board room, it is no wonder that

Figure 1. Top 10 IT management concerns

1. IT And Business Alignment
2. Security and Privacy
3. Attracting, Developing & Retaining IT Professionals
4. IT Strategic Planning
5. Business Process Reengineering
6. Introducing Rapid Business Solutions
7. True Return on IT Investment
8. Measuring The Value of IT Investment
9. Complexity Reduction
10. IT Governance
10. Project Management Capability
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