Chapter 13

Managing the Performance of Highly Mobile Skilled Individuals in Hi–Tech Firms

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ABSTRACT

The change in business terrain is accelerated by globalization, which has opened many avenues of growth. To survive in this environment, the organization requires alignment of its strategic goals and available human resources. The need is to manage the performance of the employee, who is the most important resource of the organization. The focus has now shifted to the highly skilled workforce in order to leverage technology. This chapter highlights the studies conducted on the factors affecting the people in the workplace. While some researchers have defined what it means to be a skilled employee, other researchers have provided their views on the inequity, identity, compensation, meaning of work and international policy and approach of various countries for workers. This study also came across various aspects of migration of skilled workers studied by number of researchers. The current research provides solutions in the form of requisites to improve performance of skilled employees, which will be especially useful to multinational corporations operating in the hi-tech sector. The validity of the factors can be judged from the research conducted across the continents that includes major industrialized countries in the world. It looked into the work practices followed in these countries. The chapter provides research propositions based on the literature reviewed.

1. INTRODUCTION

Hi-technology is a major driver of changes that has shaped the modern world. This has also positively impacted business scenario in every possible way around the world. Globalization with its very nature and forces it unleashed has opened avenues that have multiple endings. Transnational corporations have created growth trajectories that had not been paralleled any time in history. When identity of self and position in the society is concerned the individual looks for solution in what he does, his work. If the individual is not
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satisfied with his current identity thus created, then he looks for avenues that gratify his needs. When the available opportunities at the current location are unable to satisfy the needs and there are greener pastures available at other places, the movement is inevitable for those who dare and are capable. Moreover organizations ever hungry for success aspire to grab every opportunity that enables them to march ahead of others. Success is not an option in the global arena, it is the minimum criteria. With the focus on the future, the organization has no choice but to provide thrust that satisfies its strategic goals. But as history has shown the implementation of strategic plans is the biggest road block for achievement of goals. When technology is driving the industry, naturally the able technocrats are the drivers that all should look for. Unlike past the sources for expertise is not limited to the geographical boundary. The organization that is able to manage this resource with aim towards its goals will be the one that leads to success. There are also mutual needs between people and organization that gets fulfilled in the process. What we have in return is optimal results that satisfies the individual and provides the edge that every organization looks for to create, and that other competitors can only dream. This calls for the ways to manage the performance of skilled individuals who thrive in a boundary less world. Since there are ample opportunities available for these highly skilled people, the onus is on the organization to provide them with the proper working environment and benefits so as to achieve its own objective.

2. THE NEED FOR THE STUDY

Number of researches have been conducted previously on the need for work and what it means in the life of the individual concerned. Also studies have been made on the needs of the workers in both traditional and hi-tech industries. These studies are an attempt to understand the needs of the individuals involved in these industries. These have been made necessary considering the volatile business environment that current market forces have created. This results in creation of a complex interaction of internal and external factors. Also the individual has to perform in the work place which is not limited to a single location, but spread across the world. In today’s scenario the organizations have to keep moving just to retain their position. To get ahead of others the need is to integrate the resource based view with the market based view that stretches beyond the norms of existence to the realms of global triumph in the field of operation. The objective of this research is twin fold. The first one is to explore the dynamics of mobility of skilled individuals and the factors leading to this and the second is the management of the performance of these highly mobile skilled individuals working in the high tech industries. Challenges for hi-tech industries are due to the very nature and type of business environment it operates and the skilled associates it chooses to engage. On one hand they bring the required competence and agility to the organization and on the other the previous boundaries of ethnicity or nationality it breaks in the process of creating a flexible and hyper competitive organization. The solutions are aimed at the creation of ultimate high performing system. The attempts made across the continents in this regard, present an opportunity for creation of a new performance management platform that enables the creation of core competence for the hi-tech organization.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Skilled workers are the ones who are having a university degree or extensive experience in a given field (Iredale, 2001). Skilled migrants constitute an increasingly large component of international migration (Iredale, 1999). The human capital

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