

THE HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES A HIGHER EDUCATION: MAPPING AND MEASURING THE MATURITY LEVEL

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ABSTRACT

In order to improve human capital capacity, this research aimed at mapping the maturity level and the role of human capital management (HCM) in the institution. The research employed qualitative and quantitative approach (mixed methods) among 58 respondents, including lecturers and academic staff. FGD and the questionnaires were administered after a comprehensive briefing about HCM principles using Bassi and McMurrer as well as Ulrich frameworks. Results indicated low scores (2.92 = poor) in all five human capital drivers which reflexed low HCM maturity level in the institution. Moreover, perception of the participants about the role of HCM in the institution was also poor since the score was only achieving 60.8% which was still below the standard of 80%. These results suggest the importance of systematic steps in order to develop HCM in the institution.

Keyword : Human Capital Management, Higher Education, Maturity

1. Introduction

Higher education institutions, such as university and institute, in Indonesia are expected to contribute significantly in order to develop the nation, by providing educational, research, and community development services. These contributions are also applicable for one of the higher education institutions which is located in Bandung, Indonesia. This higher education institution has been producing qualified and competent human resources, as well as science and technology products. To increase its contribution to the nation, this institution is struggling with an effort to enhance organizational capability. Human Capital Capacity is one of the relevant issues that should be improved gradually to achieve vision and mission of the institution and to face transformational era.

Ernst & Young (2014) study discovered Five Mega trends that will transform the higher education sector, namely:

1. Democratization of knowledge and access

2. Digital technologies (the increasing need of MOOC – Massive Online Open Course)
3. Integration with industry
4. Global mobility (global mobility of lecturer/student and the material course should be equivalent to other universities in the world)
5. Contestability of market and funding (the government capability in funding the national education becomes weaker, it creates the increasing competitiveness among the universities to attract the market and gain funding sources).

Moreover, Newsweek (August, 2006) explained the roles of higher educations in this century, such as:

- 1) They are the locus of scientific discoveries that move economics forward, and the primary means of educating the talent required to obtain and maintain competitive advantage. But at the same time, the opening of national borders to the flow of goods, service, information and especially people has made

universities a powerful force for global integration, mutual understanding and geopolitical stability.

- 2) In respond to the same forces that have propelled the world economy, universities have become more self-consciously global: seeking students from around the world who represent the entire spectrum of culture and values, sending their own students abroad to prepare them for global careers, offering courses of study that address the challenges of an inter-connected world and collaborative research programs to advance science for the benefit of all humanity.

Responding to the challenges of global change mentioned above, the institution is experiencing creative tension (pressure due to environmental dynamics in which the solution requires creative change). The pressure occurs especially as the government demands the higher education to be able to improve its capacity and quality. In addition to increasing the quantity and quality of the graduates, the higher education is also expected to improve the results of research and community service.

To fulfilling those demands, there should be improvements in facilities owned by the higher education, such as laboratory and research equipment. Then, the more important reform is related to the capacity of human capital (particularly the active participation of lecturers). There are at least two things that become the focus in the human capital management, namely the maturity (Bassi & McMurrer, 2007) and the role (Ulrich, 1997) human capital management within the organization.

Dealing with the global and national challenges, the higher education has a target that is realizing the higher education as the core of international network and making it as the leader of Indonesia technological independence. It is characterized by "Internationally recognized centers of excellence, including industrial technology research and development centers,

International network on research and education programs".

Referring to future and the strategic plan of higher education for 2015-2020, the target is not enough only depending on facilities, infrastructure, and financial capital but also more depending on the maturity and role of human capital management in the higher education. Currently, there is no mapping has been done about it. Whereas, the complete information about the level of maturity and the role of human capital management in the higher education can be used as the foundation in setting strategies and steps in its development to support the implementation of strategic plan. Therefore, this study is aimed at mapping the level of maturity and role of human capital management in the higher education.

2. Literature Review

Human Capital Concept

Traditional human capital theory research has focused on employees' human capital and its effect on earnings (Becker, 1985). Human capital refers to the collective knowledge, skills, and abilities of the individuals working in an organization (Snell and Dean, 1992). From an organizational perspective, human capital is the result of a firm's deliberate investment through the selective hiring of employees with high general skills (or formal education) plus a firm investment in training of more specific skills through "in-house" training activities (Lepak and Snell, 1999, 2002; Skaggs and Youndt, 2004). Firms can thus increase their human capital levels through human resource management practices related to employee selection and training.

Organizations can use selection to increase their generic human capital, while focusing on training to develop firm-specific human capital (Groot and Van Den Brink, 2000; Skaggs and Youndt, 2004; Pringgabayu and Ramdlany, 2017). Becker and Gerhart (1996) and Youndt et al.(1996) state that the usefulness of human capital will be more important in some

contexts than in others. This contingency perspective has traditionally been adopted to examine how company strategy moderates the effect of human capital on firm performance (e.g. Hitt et al., 2001; Skaggs and Youndt, 2004). Contingency studies using other organizational characteristics as moderators are needed to gain further insights into human capital-performance relationships (Youndt et al., 1996). It is our purpose to contribute to this line of research by jointly introducing two new moderator variables: organizational size and temporary employment.

The human resource practices that are effective in large organizations will not automatically work in small organizations (Tansky and Heneman, 2003) and, consequently, more attention should be given to the interaction between organizational size and human resource management practices related to human capital (Heneman et al., 2000). Unfortunately, studies that have analysed the impact of human capital on firm performance only considered organizational size as a control variable or took samples of either large or small firms (e.g., Hayton, 2003; Rauch et al., 2005; Skaggs and Youndt, 2004), therefore ignoring the potential influence of organizational size on the relationship between human capital and firm performance and preventing comparative studies between large and small firms.

Similarly, Burges and Connell (2006) point to the paucity of literature examining the interaction between temporary work and human capital. Various authors (e.g., Auer and Cazes, 2003; Pfeffer, 1998) warn that the use

of temporary contracts, a form of employment that firms increasingly resort to, can moderate the value of human capital.

Human Capital Driver

Bassi & McMurrer (2007) said that managers are fond of the maxim “Employees are our most important asset.” Yet beneath the rhetoric, too many executives still regard—and manage—employees as costs. That’s dangerous because, for many companies, people are the only source of long-term competitive advantage. Companies that fail to invest in employees jeopardize their own success and even survival. In part, this practice has lingered for lack of alternatives. Until recently, there simply weren’t robust methods for measuring the bottom-line contributions of investments in human capital management (HCM)—things like leadership development, job design, and knowledge sharing.

The empirical research from Bassi & McMurrer (2007) has revealed a core set of HCM drivers that predict performance across a broad array of organizations and operations. These drivers fall into five major categories: leadership practices, employee engagement, knowledge accessibility, workforce optimization, and organizational learning capacity. In each of those categories, HCM practices are subdivided into at least four groups. Leadership practices, for example, include those related to managerial communication, inclusiveness, supervisory skills, executive skills, leadership development, and succession planning systems. For more on HCM categories and practices, see the table below:

**Table 1. Human Capital Drivers
(Bassi & McMurrer, 2007)**

| HCM Drivers | Leadership Practices | Employee Engagement | Knowledge Accessibility | Workforce Optimization | Learning Capacity |
|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| HCM Practices | <i>Communication</i> Management's communication is open and effective | <i>Job Design</i> Work is well organized and taps employee's skill | <i>Availability</i> Job-related information and training are readily available | <i>Processes</i> Work processes are well defined and training is effective | <i>Innovation</i> New ideas are welcome |
| | <i>Inclusiveness</i> Management collaborates with employees and invites input | <i>Commitment</i> Jobs are secure, employees are recognized, and advancement is possible | <i>Collaboration</i> Teamwork is encouraged and enabled | <i>Conditions</i> Working conditions support high performance | <i>Training</i> Training is practical and support organizational goals |
| | <i>Supervisory skills</i> Managers eliminate barriers provide feedback, and inspire confidence | <i>Time</i> Workload allows employees to do jobs well and enables good work/life balance | <i>Information sharing</i> Best practices are shared and improved | <i>Accountability</i> High performance is expected and rewarded | <i>Development</i> Employees have formal career development plans. |
| | <i>Executive skills</i> Senior executives eliminate barriers, provide feedback, and inspire confidence | <i>Systems</i> Employee engagement is continually evaluated | <i>Systems</i> Collection systems make information easily available | <i>Hiring</i> Hires are chosen on the basis of skill, new hires complete through orientation | <i>Value and support</i> Leaders demonstrate that learning is valued. |
| | <i>Systems</i> Leadership development and transition systems are effective. | | | <i>Systems</i> Employee performance management systems are effective. | <i>Systems</i> A learning management system automates aspects of training. |

Human Capital Strategic Roles

According to Ulrich (1997), Human Capital Management (HCM) in the organization plays an important and strategic role, because as a unit in charge of managing human capital in the organization, this unit is required to have the views and orientation

forward, and able to answer the challenges facing the organization. Ulrich calls this strategic role HCM as a multiple role model, based on two axes that represent the focus and activity of HCM. This is shown in the figure below:



Figure 1. Human Capital Management Roles (Ulrich, 1997)

These two axes illustrate the four main roles of the HR unit:

Management of strategic human resources visualized in form of **strategic partner**. The strategic HR role focuses on aligning HR strategies and practices with business strategy. In playing this role, the HR professional works to be a strategic partner, helping to ensure the success of business strategies. By fulfilling this role, HR professionals increase the capacity of a business to execute its strategies. Translating business strategies into HR practices helps a business in three ways. First, the business can adapt- to change because the time from the conception to the execution of a strategy is shortened. Second, the business can better meet customer demands because its customer service strategies have been translated into specific policies and practices. Third, the business can achieve financial performance through its more effective execution of strategy.

Management of firm infrastructure visualized in form of **administrative expert**. Creating an organizational infrastructure has been a traditional HR role. It requires that HR professionals design and deliver efficient HR processes for staffing, training, appraising, rewarding, promoting, and otherwise managing the flow of employees through the

organization. As a caretaker of the corporate infrastructure, HR professionals ensure that these organizational processes are designed and delivered efficiently. While this role has been down-played and even disclaimed with the shift to a strategic focus, its successful accomplishment continues to add value to a business. HR professionals create infrastructure by constantly examining and improving the HR processes. The deliverable from the infrastructure role is administrative efficiency. HR professionals accomplish administrative efficiency in two ways. First, they ensure efficiency in HR processes. For example, through reengineering HR processes, one firm recently found twenty-four separate registration systems for training; new efficiency and cost savings were achieved by streamlining and automating them into a single system. Another firm, finding that it required an average of six, months to staff key positions, improved the process and cut the time needed to one month. A second way in which HR executives can improve overall business efficiency is by hiring, training, and rewarding managers who increase productivity and reduce waste.

Management of employee contribution visualized in form of **employee champion**. The employee contributions role for HR professionals encompasses their involvement

in the day-to-day problems, concerns, and needs of employees.

In companies in which intellectual capital becomes a critical source of the firm's value, HR professionals should be active and aggressive in developing this capital. HR professionals thus become the employees' champions by linking employee contributions to the organization's success. With active employee champions who understand employees' needs and ensure that those needs are met, overall employee contribution goes up.

The deliverables from management of employee contribution are increased employee commitment and competence. HR practices should help employees to contribute through both their competence to do good work and their commitment to work diligently. In an era when downsizing has eroded the employer-employee psychological contract, HR executives can be business partners by continuing to be employee champions who pay attention to employee needs. The metaphor for this HR role as implied above is "employee champion".

Management of transformation visualized in form of **change agent**. A fourth key role through which HR professionals can add value to a firm is to manage transformation and change. Transformation entails fundamental cultural change within the firm; HR professionals managing' transformation become both cultural guardians and cultural catalysts. Change refers to the ability of an organization to improve the design and implementation of initiatives and to reduce cycle time in all organizational activities; HR professionals help to identify and implement processes for change.

The deliverable from management of transformation and change is capacity for change. As firms undergo transformation, HR executives serve as business partners by helping employees let go of old and adapt to a new culture. As change agents, HR executives help organizations identify a process for managing change. As implied, the metaphor for work in this role is "change agent." As change agents, HR professionals face the paradox inherent in any organizational change.

3. The Methodology and Model

This study employs qualitative and quantitative approaches (mixed method). The methodological steps are:

- a. Focus Group Discussion (FGD) involves lecturers and academic staff (N = 58) in the higher education. They were invited to a workshop to equate perceptions about human capital management strategies, concepts, and methods (HCM). At the end of the workshop participants were divided into 6 groups consisting of 7-12 people. Each group is guided by a moderator and is given a question as the focus of their discussion within the group. Each group gets one topic of the five factors driving the HCM and a group gets the topic about the role of HCM management. Each group is equipped with stationery and flipchart. The process and results of the discussion are observed and recorded by an observer for each group.
 - b. Questionnaire was used to measure maturity level (Bassi & McMurrer, 2007) and the role of human capital management (Ulrich, 2007). The HCM maturity questionnaire was adapted from Bassi and McMurrer's (2007) and consisted of 58 items. The maturity is measured based on the existence of the 5 dimensions of HCM, namely: Leadership practice (14 items), Lecturers and academic staff involvement (13 items), Accessibility on knowledge (7 items), Employee Optimization (14 items), and Learning Capacity (10 items). Each of these dimensions also consists of 4-6 indicators. The Indonesian version of this questionnaire shows the validity ($r = 0.33 - 0.70$) and reliability (Alpha Cronbach = 0.96). While to measure the role of HCM, the questionnaire was developed based on Ulrich (2007). The questionnaire consisted of 40 items, each item measured one of four HCM roles (Strategic Partner, Administrative Expert, Employee Champion, and Change Agent). The Indonesian version of this questionnaire shows the validity ($r = 0.44 - 0.87$) and reliability (Alpha Cronbach = 0.98).
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Table 2
The standard score and Interpretation of the HCM maturity level

| Mean Score | Percentage | Interpretation |
|-------------|------------|----------------|
| 1,00 - 3,49 | 0 – 69 | Poor |
| 3,50 – 3,99 | 70 – 79 | Marginal |
| 4,00 – 4,49 | 80 – 89 | Enough |
| 4,50 – 5,00 | 90 – 100 | Superior |

The FGD results are the observation records and discussion conclusions processed by performing coding. Information from FGD was used to complete the results of questionnaire processing. The results of the questionnaire were processed using the standard score suggested by each theory. The table 1 shows the standard score of the HCM maturity level. Meanwhile, the questionnaire of HCM role used comparison of scores

between role and profile form. Based on the profile, it can be concluded which role of HCM is prominent in the organization. Furthermore, to measure the optimization, it can be determined by calculating the total score, where the total score higher than 159 (80%) means the perception of HCM role is good while below 90 (50%) is considered poor (see Table 2).

Table 3
The total score, percentage, and Interpretation of the HCM Role

| Total Score | Percentage | Interpretation |
|-------------|------------|----------------|
| < 90 | 0 –50 | Poor |
| 90 – 159 | 51 – 80 | Average |
| > 159 | 81 – 100 | Good |

4. The findings

Our findings are divided in two sections. First, we describe our results regarding HCM

maturity level and second, we continue with HCM roles in the institution

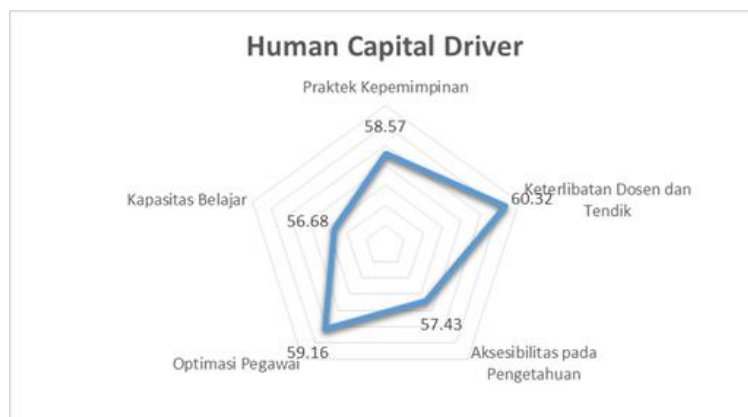


Figure 2. Human Capital Driver

4.1 HCM Maturity Level

Figure 2 depicts poor general result on HCM maturity level of the institution as perceived by

participants. All HCM drivers (total scores are 56.68 – 60.32) are interpreted as poor based on the guidelines in Table 1. According to Bassi

and McMurrer (2007), HCM maturity level below 70% is considered as a level that need total improvement in all areas of HCM. However, the scores are closed to the 70% which indicate the institution HCM maturity level is potential to be optimized by focusing the HCM developmental effort to the institution's vision and mission. By optimizing all HCM drivers, the institutional performance should be increased. Even though, from those five HCM drivers, the lower scores are in Learning Capacity (the score is 56.68) and Knowledge Accessibility (the score is 57.43), but the priority of improvement should be started by Leadership Practices (the score is 58.57). Leadership is a foundation in improving, sustaining, and deploying human capital successfully. Leadership practices thus build the foundation for the accomplishment of all organizational goals. Many studies have suggested that leadership is the most important factor in an organization to be able to retain its talented people (Bassi & McMurrer, 2007).

4.1.1 Leadership Practices

The Leadership Practices were measured by asking participants about communication between managerial functions (i.e., Rector, Dean, and other managers) and employees (i.e. lecturers and administrative staff), leadership styles of those managers, constructive feedback from them to the staff, availability and implementation of leadership system. Table 3 shows that all indicators of leadership practices are poor. Our results indicate a strong hierarchical pattern between managers and staff. There are not enough channel for informational flows from managers to the staff. Consequently, the process of decisions and policies making by managers, especially top level managers, are not involving the staff. Furthermore, there is no integrated system that compiles staff competencies and specific needs of development. Leadership successions are not systematically planned and still based on spontaneous decision of the top leaders and decision makers.

Table 4
The total score and Interpretation of the HCM Maturity Level in Leadership Practices

| Indicator | Mean Score | Interpretation |
|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Communication | 3.09 | Poor |
| Inclusiveness | 2.94 | Poor |
| Supervisory Skills | 3.02 | Poor |
| Executive Skills | 3.14 | Poor |
| System | 2.45 | Poor |

4.1.2 Employee Engagement

Regarding employee engagement, participants were asked whether they experience working environment in the institution has been effectively organized, and maximizing the opportunity for them to develop their talent and skills. They were also asked whether work design and system in the institution are interesting, meaningful, applicable, encouraging, motivating, evaluating, and satisfactory. Results indicated poor level of

employee engagement in the institution (see Table 4). The lowest score of Employee Engagement is System (the score is 2.70) that reflects low endowment from the system to improve involvement of the staff in organization. The system could not identify the level of engagement and provide developmental needs to enhance employee engagement. Work design in the institution does not facilitate effectively staff to perform optimally. Working patterns are not improved

which might inhibit creativity and innovation. In addition, appreciations from the managers

to creative and innovative staff are not effective.

Table 5
The total score and Interpretation of the HCM Maturity Level in Employee Engagement

| Indicator | Mean Score | Interpretation |
|------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Job Design | 3.01 | Poor |
| Commitment | 3.17 | Poor |
| Time | 3.19 | Poor |
| System | 2.70 | Poor |

4.1.3 Knowledge Accessibility

To Measure Knowledge Accessibility, participants were asked about their perception on facility and access to the center of knowledge for staff development. They were also asked about work guidelines, procedure to apply for a training or course, collaboration and teamwork, knowledge sharing, and system. Our results (see Table 5) suggest poor HCM Maturity Level in Knowledge Accessibility. The most important thing in Knowledge Accessibility is information and

how information be shared. There are limited guidelines (e.g., job descriptions) and information channels in the institution to direct staff in doing their job and to perform better. More specifically, there is no standard of procedure (SOP) for staff development and there is no system to identify developmental need. Team work is not facilitated in a wider policies, and there are limited places for the staff to have informal meeting to share their knowledge and experiences.

Table 6
The total score and Interpretation of the HCM Maturity Level in Knowledge Accessibility

| Indicator | Mean Score | Interpretation |
|---------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Availability | 3.12 | Poor |
| Collaboration | 3.08 | Poor |
| Information Sharing | 2.50 | Poor |
| System | 2.78 | Poor |

4.1.4 Workforce Optimization

We measured Workforce Optimization by asking participants about their perceptions on process to get work done, including continuous improvement of work definitions, work orientation and induction. They were also asked about their involvement in the process, especially in recruitment, selection, placement, and staff development. Table 6 depicts our results on HCM Maturity Level in Workforce Optimization which is interpreted as poor in all indicators. Even though the staff have already comprehended work process and procedure, they are only deal with routine job without any improvements and innovations to create more

effective and efficient process. There is no work evaluation that should be followed by systematic reward and punishment. Additionally, induction program has not been done by considering workload analysis and performance appraisal linked to organizational culture and values. Top level management creates policies without considering the staff opinions and suggestions (e.g., in recruitment process). In fact, there is no system and process in managing staff talent and performance in the institution. Most of the staff arrange their development plan by their own need which might not always linked to the institution need.

Table 7

The total score and Interpretation of the HCM Maturity Level in Workforce Optimization

| Indicator | Mean Score | Interpretation |
|----------------|------------|----------------|
| Processes | 2.83 | Poor |
| Condition | 3.13 | Poor |
| Accountability | 3.15 | Poor |
| Hiring | 2.90 | Poor |
| System | 2.72 | Poor |

4.1.5 Learning Capacity

Learning Capacity is measured by asking participants about opportunities for them and their confident to express their ideas. They were also asked about the important of their ideas for the management to create policies and the opportunity to get training and education in order to contribute more to the institution. Table 7 shows that all indicators of learning capacity are poor. Our results indicate a top down pattern of decision making process

in the institution. Ideas and opinions from staff and lower level management were not certainly appreciated. Higher level management and particular senior staff would be more involved in decision making process. This process might inhibit creativity and innovation of the staff and junior managers. Digital technology is not utilized to increase collective participation in decision making process in the institution.

Table 8

The total score and Interpretation of the HCM Maturity Level in Learning Capacity

| Indicator | Mean Score | Interpretation |
|-------------------|------------|----------------|
| Innovation | 2.91 | Poor |
| Training | 2.82 | Poor |
| Development | 2.62 | Poor |
| Value and Support | 3.08 | Poor |
| System | 2.74 | Poor |

4.2 HCM Roles in the Institution

In achieving its goals, of course, an organization requires the quality of human capital and its management as a system manager, so that this system runs, of course in its management it must pay attention to several important aspects such as knowledge, expertise and behavior of these humans. Human Capital Management (HCM) as one of the important indicators of achieving organizational goals effectively and efficiently, because human capital is a very vital organizational asset, therefore its role and function cannot be replaced by other resources. No matter how modern the technology is used, or how much funds are prepared, but without

professional and competent human capital, all of this becomes meaningless and of no value to the organization. It cannot be denied that, the sentence "The Man Behind The Gun", "The Right Man in The Right Place at The Right Time", is very absolute and true for the value added of the organization.

The ability of human capital to apply science and knowledge into their work makes a company have a competitive advantage. In addition, the challenge of rapid changes in the business environment marked by the era of information technology, a job turns into knowledge-based works, namely knowledge becomes the basis for carrying out work. Work

becomes complex, integrated and full of knowledge and knowledge. Knowledge workers become dominant in producing products or services for the organization. Finally, knowledge workers can no longer be easily replaced by other employees. Based on this, human capital must be managed properly.

5. Summary and Conclusions

The role of HCM is very instrumental in increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of an organization in generating added value. Broadly speaking, with a measurable, strategic and targeted HC management, it provides various benefits as follows:

1. Quality

The main function of management is to create qualified people according to their competence or expertise. Therefore, with HCM, it is hoped that employees will be able to provide benefits to themselves and their organization. Qualified employees will be able to produce quality products as well. This is one of the benefits of HR management in organizations.

2. Speed

A job handled by an expert will be able to produce output that is in line with expectations. Likewise, when professionals are required to work fast, the workforce will be able to do the work with full precision and accuracy, so that in a relatively short period of time, all work can be completed professionally.

3. Leadership Quality

A good HCM will be able to make leaders have the ability to carry out their leadership in an organization well as well. Effective leadership greatly influences the quality and quantity of the organization.

4. Adaptive Learning Ability

The existence of pluralism of human resources in an organization requires a good communication system between management and employees and fellow employees. Therefore, to be able to realize the synchronization of goals between management and employees, human resource management is needed.

With this HCM, it is hoped that each element knows its role and function, so that it can make it easier for the organization to achieve its goals. That is, the success of an organization can be seen from the extent of its ability to accommodate existing human resources to learn to adapt to the world around it.

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