



## **Strategic People Power: A Review of Gary Dessler's *Human Resource Management***

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### **Introduction**

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a very important aspect in any given organization that does not only determine the level of efficiency in the workforce but business success in general. With the numerous academic sources covering the subject matter, Human Resource Management by Gary Dessler is also one of the best sources and among the most frequently read textbooks. The book is an all-encompassing guide to theory and practice of HR and has an important role to play in student, practitioner and management life.

This review will focus on giving a detailed assessment of the contents, structure, main themes, strengths, weaknesses of the book and the contribution it makes to the field of HRM. The analysis represents the scholarly and practical insight into HRM and reflects the topicality of the book in the modern global and technologically oriented business world.

### **About the Author**

Gary Dessler is a world renowned scholar of human resource management. Dessler, an ex-professor at Florida International University, is an author on management, supervision, and human behaviour in organizations. They usually find their way to business schools all over the world with their clarity, scholastic consistency and applicability.

The books of Dessler are well-founded because of his academic background and experience in consulting. He has continually made changes to every version of his book on HRM to make it appropriate to the changing trends, technologies and legal environments in the human resources sector.

### **Overview of the Book**

- Title: Human Resource Management
- Author: Gary Dessler
- Edition Reviewed: 15th Edition
- Publisher: Pearson Education
- Pages: 720
- Target Audience: HR students, professionals, and academicians



This book is divided into five large sections:

- Introduction to HRM
- Recruitment and Placement
- Training and Development
- Compensation
- Employee Relations and Strategic HRM

Learning objectives, real-life case examples, and case studies and review questions at the end of each chapter reinforce what has been studied. The recent versions contain the debates of HR analytics, diversity and inclusion, globalization, and ethical practices.

### **Thematic Analysis and Key Features**

#### **Foundational Concepts**

The book is initiated by establishing a sound base of HRM as a field. It describes the development of the HRM, the strategic role that the HR plays in organizations today and the need to align HR strategies with organizational objectives. It touches upon the different models of HRM such as the Harvard model and the Michigan model which provide students with a theoretical basis and then proceeds to the practical subjects.

#### **Recruitment and Selection**

This part is very realistic and elaborated. It includes job analysis and job design, HR planning and forecasting, recruitment techniques (in

house and outside), and selection procedures (interviews, evaluations, a background check). Dessler highlights the legal and ethical aspects in the hiring process especially in the area of discrimination laws, diversity and inclusion.

#### **Training and Development**

Training is offered as a strategic instrument, as opposed to an administrative undertaking. The book writes about analysis of training needs, training programs design, educational efficiency analysis, and career development. Examples of such companies as Google and IBM are provided to support the chapter.

#### **Performance Management**

The performance appraisal process is approached as a multidimensional process that encompasses goal setting, appraisal methods (360-degree, MBO, rating scales), feedback, coaching and legal considerations. It is concerned with objective, fair and strategy-oriented appraisal.

#### **Compensation and Benefits**

Dessler talks of the approach of developing internally fair and competitive compensation forms on the outside. Job evaluation, pay structures, incentive plans, and such benefits as healthcare and retirement are among the topics. The role of compensation in motivation is



discussed with the aid of economic and behavioral approaches.

#### ***Employee Relations and Labor Law***

In this category, the industrial relations, collective bargaining, grievance and employee discipline are discussed. Legal provisions are given such as the national labor relation act (U.S.) that is related to ethical HR practices.

#### ***Strategic HRM and Trends***

The final chapters of the book are used to connect HRM to the organizational strategy, HR scorecards and analytics, technology in HR, global HRM, managing diversity and inclusion and remote/hybrid work models.

#### ***Pedagogical Strengths***

##### ***Case-Based Learning***

Both chapters contain brief case studies and end of chapter problems that help in applying theory into practice. Real-life companies tend to provide an inspiration on such cases and the content is realistic and practical.

##### ***Visual Aids and Layout***

Tables, flowcharts, checklists and HR toolkits are used to simplify complex topics. This makes the book very easy to read and ideal to the visual learners.

##### ***Academic and Industry Balance***

The book is based on the line of scholarly research without ignoring the life issues. It combines the industry best

practices and is hence textbook and practitioner guide.

#### ***Critical Evaluation***

##### ***Strengths***

- Comprehensive coverage of HRM concepts
- Practical relevance through real-world examples
- Strong global and ethical perspective
- Up-to-date technological, analytical and DEI reports.

##### ***Weaknesses***

- Heavy focus on U.S. labor laws
- Density and length can be confusing to new people.
- Small-scale cases about the Indian HR case.

#### ***Relevance in Today's HR Landscape***

The post-pandemic world has transformed the HR radically. Remote work, mental health awareness, DEI, and AI-led HR systems have turned HR professionals into the strategic leaders. All these changes are well traced in the book that prepares the readers to:

- Managing hybrid teams
- Leveraging HR technology
- Navigating ethical dilemmas
- Aligning HR goals with business strategy



HR metrics and analytics activity provide the performance measurement and workforce planning with a data-based edge.

### Use in Academic and Professional Settings

The book is commonly recommended within the academic institutions as part of the undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in HRM. It is aligned to the MBA, PGDM and BBA curriculum.

The book is used by HR practitioners in the professional setting as a reference to policy making, training, performance assessment, remuneration and legal issues. It is also useful in preparing the certifications of SHRM-CP, PHR and CIPD.

### Comparison with Other Books

Other top texts like:

- Managing Human Resources by Snell and Bohlander
- Human Resource Management by VSP Rao
- Armstrong's Handbook of HRM Practice.

Dessler has made a well balanced book that is lucid in both academics

and pragmatic views. Others are more informative (e.g. VSP Rao on India), though Dessler is much more approachable and universally applicable.

### Conclusion

It is an all time classic text by Gary Dessler, Human Resource Management that have stood the test of time. The book is suitable to both students and the HR practitioners and integrates theory with the practices in the real world. It is U.S centric although the principles can be popularized. This book is considered a valuable guide to the HRM practices with the augmented digital and strategic orientation of the HR.

### References

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