Case Notes

# Chapter 1: A Brief History and Overview of Technology in HR

# Position Description and Specification for an HRIS Administrator

## Case Summary

This case examines an actual job description for an HRIS Administrator. The job description highlights the essential duties of the role as well as the requirements and qualification of the role. Examining this job description allows the student to draw connections between the role of HRIS and strategy and success of the organization. The job description showcases traditional, transitional, and transformational HR activities, and it depicts the alignment of the HRIS role with the system and the model of the organization.

**Case Analysis**

One way to assess the nature and importance of a particular function or position in an organization is to examine the job description and job specifications for this position, as they tell us what activities, duties, and tasks are involved in the job as well as what knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA) are required to perform the job. This is an actual job description that can be analyzed to show the alignment between the strategy of an organization and the important role that HRIS plays within organizations. Reviewing an actual job description in the field benefits the students by giving them real-world sightlines into how the HRIS function is deployed and how the role fits into the broader context of an organization.

## Sample Answers to Case Questions

1. How does this position help the HR function become a strategic partner of the organization?

There are multiple aspects of this position description that help the HR function become a strategic partner. You can pick almost any one of the responsibilities from the list and indicate that this responsibility would not be part of the job description for HR in a “caretaker” passive role, whereas a strategic partner is a much more active role. For example, consider the following:

* Ensures data integrity in both personnel files and the online human resource information system. Without data integrity, there would be no way to measure the contribution of the firm’s human capital to the “bottom line,” which is a critical part of strategic planning.
* Organizes and manages personnel file audits to ensure compliance with all regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines for records management. Lack of compliance with governmental rules and regulations can be very costly for a firm in terms of class action suits for unlawful discrimination or unfair dismissals. You can point to any number of court cases where companies had to pay major damages in such litigation.
* Works with end users and business managers to understand business processes and determine how to use the system to meet those needs. These activities are closely linked to the idea of a partnership between HR and the operationalization of the strategic plan of the company. Feedback from these partnerships could have major effects on the strategic planning process.

2. From the position description, identify the traditional, transactional, and transformational HR activities that this position is involved with.

Transactional

* Ensures data integrity in both personnel files and the online human resource information system
* Updates and administers enhancements to the human resource information system
* Updates and maintains system tables

Traditional

* Supervises the human resources information management team
* Organizes and manages personnel file audits to ensure compliance with all regulations, policies, procedures, and guidelines for records management
* Ensures security of the HRIS and time and attendance system
* Works in collaboration with payroll and finance to maintain the online interactive position control, personnel, and payroll database systems
* Develops HR dashboards and develops and runs reports, both scheduled and ad hoc
* Provides detail and aggregate information for salary surveys and regulatory reporting (i.e., CUPA, EEO, OSHA, and IPEDS)

Transformational

* Works with end users and business managers to understand business processes and determine how to use the system to meet those needs
* Partners with technology systems resources to support upgrades, testing, and other technical projects
* Collaborates with the human resource technical consultant and other human resource staff on operational issues and special projects
* Maintains current knowledge of best practices, vendor offerings, and market trends

3. Using the key responsibilities identified for this position, explain why and how the HRIS function plays a pivotal role in the organizational model as described in this chapter.

Actually, all of the responsibilities can be related to the parts of the organizational model, although some students may disagree with other students’ allocations. This could be a good class project by having students work in groups for 10–15 minutes to allocate all of the responsibilities to a part of the organizational model. Then, have each group report and have open discussion on what are the correct allocations. Of course, a number of these responsibilities can be assigned or allocated to multiple parts of the organizational model, and thus, there is no “right” answer.