CHAPTER 9

Maximizing Organizational Performance through Human Resources Planning

CHAPTER OUTLINE

- Selecting, Hiring, and Retaining the Optimum Mix of Staff
- Human Resources Law
- The Letter of the Law versus the Spirit of the Law
- Human Resources Planning
- Achieving Excellence through Human Resources Planning

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter, the reader will be able to:

- Identify the major protected classes covered by human resources law and cite the laws, executive orders, and regulations that prohibit discrimination.
- Create a framework for human resources planning for a human service organization.
- Explain how four different strategies can be used to change an organization’s personnel profile.
- Prepare a plan for initiating changes in the human resources system.

Assumptions

- That every organization should analyze its staff needs and attempt to produce what it considers to be an optimal personnel profile.
- That diversity in areas of expertise and in demographics can contribute to creativity, high energy, and high levels of productivity.
- That an organizational culture that attempts to make full use of the talents and abilities of its staff will contribute to optimum performance.
- That human resources planning can contribute to achieving an organization’s optimal personnel profile.
The foregoing chapters have examined some of the elements that play a part in contributing to organizational excellence. This chapter will examine what may well be the most important component of organizational life—the staff. It will explore ways to maximize organizational performance by selecting, building, and retaining the right mix of staff. When coaches or managers recruit and build athletic teams, their first priority is talent. But successful teams also value an ingredient that they refer to as “chemistry.” In fact, it is not unusual for teams with good chemistry to be more successful than teams that have better talent but lack good chemistry. Unfortunately, no one ever seems to define the term. It has something to do with positive relationships between and among members of a team or group and includes such factors as mutual support, leadership, and mentoring. One would be hard-pressed to duplicate the phenomenon without more specific guidelines.

In many ways organizations are more successful or less successful based on the extent to which they function as a team. Even some very large organizations have been successful in promoting a team spirit, with an attitude of mutual caring and support between and among employees at all levels in the organization but especially between management and staff. Southwest Airlines, for example, during the 1990s was consistently cited as one of the best places to work, based on surveys of employees in major corporations. Their high level of motivation and morale begins at the top and is reinforced throughout the organization. Many similar examples exist throughout management literature.

Achieving such harmony and balance is no accident. It is the result of careful planning and of a clear understanding of what types of people work best together to achieve high levels of productivity while demonstrating a firm commitment to the organization’s mission. This type of planning does not begin at the point at which there is a vacancy and it is time to hire a replacement. It begins long before that point, early in the life of the organization when a human resources plan is compiled with a clear sense of direction and vision focusing on the qualities and characteristics that are needed to achieve the organization’s mission, goals, and objectives. In many instances, however, a newly appointed manager may discover that such planning has never taken place. Fortunately, it is never too late to begin human resources planning. With staff turnover and newly funded positions, opportunities to hire more staff will present themselves, and these occasions should be recognized as critical milestones in the process of achieving excellence.

A core or hub around which human resources planning revolves is made up of three elements: human resources law, a profile of staff needs, and a job analysis for each position. With these elements at the core, a plan is developed that involves (1) recruitment, (2) selection, (3) orientation, (4) supervision, (5) training and development, (6) performance appraisal, (7) promotion and career development, and, if necessary, (8) termination. These components are depicted in Figure 9.1.

Note that each segment of the planning process as depicted in the diagram goes through job analysis and profile of staff needs, all the way to the core in human resources law. The diagram is designed in this way to indicate that each segment must take all these core issues into consideration and must ensure internal consistency and integrity throughout the entire human resources plan. For example, in planning for recruitment and screening of applicants for an open position, a search committee must consider not only how to
attract applicants but also must be familiar with the job analysis for the position, the profile of staff needs, and human resources law.

**Human Resources Law**

The recent history of corporate life in the United States is filled with examples of lawsuits filed in court and complaints filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) over such issues as race, sex and age discrimination, sexual harassment, and failure to accommodate for an employee’s disability. Although the U.S. Constitution and its amendments have guaranteed equal treatment for well over one hundred years, as a practical matter Congress and presidents took little action to support and defend individual rights until the early 1960s (Dessler, 1997). Following landmark legislation contained in the Civil Rights Act of 1964, a series of federal and state laws has been passed and executive orders issued focused on safeguarding the rights of various protected classes. Early acts were focused generally on prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, or national
origin. Later acts focused on more specific groups defined by age, disability, veteran status, or other factors. Some of the highlights of these acts and orders are covered in the following sections. The intent is to provide a brief overview. For comprehensive coverage, copies of the original acts, amendments, and executive orders or more complete reference works should be consulted.

Race, Color, or National Origin

**Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended)** Title VI prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. It is enforced by the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights in which complaints are filed by persons who believe they are victims of discrimination. Organizations found guilty of discrimination may lose their federal financial assistance.

Title VII prohibits discrimination in employment, stating that it shall be unlawful for an employer:

1. To fail or refuse to hire or to discharge an individual or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his/her compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.
2. To limit, segregate, or classify his/her employees or applicants for employment in any way that would deprive or tend to deprive any individual of employment opportunities or otherwise adversely affect his/her status as an employee, because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. (Dessler, 1997, p. 35)

Title VII created the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), which has the power to investigate employment-related discrimination in response to complaints filed by persons who feel that they have been victims of discrimination. Remedies may include back pay, attorneys’ fees, injunctions, or compensatory and punitive damages.

Affirmative Action

**Executive Orders** Following the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, during the Johnson administration, it was recognized that the mere absence of verifiable discrimination was not enough to change the patterns of employment and increase the numbers of ethnic minorities and women in the workforce. Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 created the concept of affirmative action. Under these executive orders, employers with fifty or more employees and a federal contract of $50,000 annually are required to have a written plan with specified goals and timetables illustrating how they will bring an increased number of women and minorities into the workforce. Discrimination based on age or physical handicap is also prohibited. The Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs (OFCCP) was established and made responsible for enforcement of laws relating to affirmative action.

Sex/Gender

**Equal Pay Act of 1963** This act, amended in 1972, prohibited discrimination in rates of pay when jobs involve equal work performed under the same or similar conditions. Equal work is defined as including equivalent skills, effort, and responsibility. The act applies to
all educational institutions and other employers that are covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act. It is enforced by the EEOC, and remedies include back pay and salary increases.

**Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972**  This title prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities. All recipients of federal financial assistance must comply, and violators can lose federal funding. Enforcement is through the Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. Applications have been primarily but not exclusively focused on gender equality in educational and athletic programs.

**Sexual Harassment**  EEOC guidelines define sexual harassment as

unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that takes place under any of the following conditions:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual’s employment.
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment.

(Rowe, 1981, p. 44)

Employers have a duty to maintain a work environment that is free of intimidation and can be held responsible if they fail to take corrective action. Many precedents for dealing with sexual harassment have been established through court cases.

**Veterans’ Status**

**Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974**  Under this act, employers with federal contracts of $10,000 or more must demonstrate affirmative efforts to employ qualified special disabled veterans and veterans of the Vietnam era. The act is administered by the Department of Labor, OFCCP, and Veterans’ Employment Service. Remedies include termination or cancellation of contracts or exclusion from future contracts.

**Age**

**Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (amended 1978)**  This act applies to federal, state, and local government agencies and private employers of twenty or more persons. The act makes it unlawful to discriminate against either applicants or employees between the ages of forty and sixty-five. The 1978 amendments extended the upper age limit to seventy, with no upper limit for federal government employees. The act is enforced by EEOC in response to complaints filed by persons who believe they have been victims of discrimination in employment. Remedies include back pay, reinstatement, or promotion, where appropriate, and attorneys’ fees.

**Disabilities**

**Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973**  This act extends the concept of affirmative action to the employment of qualified persons with physical disabilities or limitations. The
act also requires organizations to make reasonable accommodations to buildings or to the physical environment so that people with physical limitations can function independently. Much attention in individual cases has been focused over the years on what constitutes “reasonable accommodation.” OFCCP has enforcement authority for the rehabilitation act, and remedies include withholding of federal funds and termination or cancellation of contracts.

**Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990** This is a major, comprehensive act that prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability in private sector employment, in services provided by state and local governments, in places that accommodate the public, in transportation, and in telecommunications relay services. Title I applies to employment, Title II to public services and public transportation, Title III to public accommodations and private transportation, and Title IV to telecommunications. Each title has a different enforcing agency with different sanctions or remedies applied.

To be in compliance with the ADA, employers must meet the following specifications:

a. An employer must not deny a job to a disabled individual if the person is qualified and able to perform the essential functions of a job. Reasonable accommodation must be made to enable a qualified person to perform an essential function, unless making the accommodation would cause an undue hardship.

b. Employers are not required to lower performance standards to accommodate a job candidate, as long as all standards and tests are job related and apply to all employees and candidates for the job.

c. Employers may not make preemployment inquiries about a person’s disability. Questions must be focused on the candidate’s ability to perform job functions.

d. Employers may not ask job applicants questions about health, disabilities, medical histories or previous worker’s compensation claims.

e. Employers should have clear job descriptions which specify essential functions. This is not specifically required by ADA, but becomes an important issue if a legal question arises. (Dessler, 1997, p. 50)

**Civil Rights Act of 1991** This act provides for damages and jury trials in cases of intentional sex, religious, and disability bias. These rights were previously available only to racial and ethnic minorities. Signed by President Bush, the act overturned a number of Supreme Court decisions that were unfavorable to victims of employment discrimination.

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### The Letter of the Law versus the Spirit of the Law

Human resources law is an area of specialization within the legal profession, and it is not realistic to expect that agency managers and administrators will be familiar with every act or executive order. New laws are continually being proposed at the federal and state levels. Precedents are being established through court decisions. All of these developments make it imperative that agency directors have available to them a consulting attorney with exper-
tise in human resources law. The dynamic nature of this field requires a fresh look at recent changes in the law each time a situation with legal implications emerges. When a human resources problem is handled without the benefit of legal expertise, the agency administrator runs the risk of relying on outdated information, and the penalties can be severe.

The responsibility of the human service agency administrator or manager, especially one committed to excellence, is to understand the spirit of laws that protect potentially vulnerable people and to incorporate this spirit into the agency’s human resource plan. The field of human services is in some ways qualitatively different from business and industry in this regard. Although a business may focus on having a diverse workforce in response to the letter of the law, a human service agency must recognize that its business is to serve a diverse community. In order to be effective in helping people use their strengths to deal with their problems and needs, there must be a recognition that strengths, problems, and needs may be understood differently within cultural and gender contexts. Effective use of staff goes far beyond merely hiring a diverse workforce in order to satisfy the letter of the law.

**Valuing, Respecting, and Maximizing the Benefits of Diversity**

A brief review of Thomas’s (1991) concepts of affirmative action, valuing differences, and managing diversity may be useful in understanding the unique responsibilities of human service agencies as they determine the makeup of their workforces.

Level 1, affirmative action, Thomas reminds us, is an approach that acknowledges that women and persons from various ethnic groups have historically been excluded from many employment opportunities. In some instances this exclusion has been the result of discrimination, in that the woman or ethnic applicant presented qualifications that were superior to those of the person hired. Because employing organizations were not taking the initiative to remedy these types of discrimination, it became necessary to coerce them to change their hiring practices. Although the practice of affirmative action has produced results in terms of increased numbers of women and people of color being hired, the practice has failed to bring about fundamental changes in the ways that organizations view and define their jobs. Qualities that women and persons from ethnic groups bring to the workplace are not necessarily valued when the approach to diversity is limited simply to affirmative action.

Level 2, valuing differences, represents a higher level of appreciation of diversity and is designed to encourage mutual understanding and respect within the workplace. In this type of organization, training and sensitivity sessions are focused on understanding the dynamics of individual differences. Employees, especially managers and administrators, are encouraged to explore how differences might be used in constructive ways to improve the quality of work life and increase productivity. As staff members gain an appreciation for the meaning of culture and gender to an individual’s identity, there is a hope and an expectation that staff members will become less inclined to perceive their own cultural identities as superior and more inclined to treat other cultural identities as different but not inferior. Although greater levels of understanding are achieved in this type of organization, says Thomas, valuing differences has little impact on empowering
the workforce or drawing on the strengths that each unique individual has to contribute to the organization.

Level 3, managing diversity, goes beyond hiring based on gender and racial preferences and beyond enhancing mutual understanding. Managing diversity focuses on initiating fundamental changes in the organizational culture. Its objective is the full utilization of employees’ potential, both as individuals and as members of a team. Within this system there is a recognition that people bring with them to the workplace more than just their educational achievements and their experience. Lifetime experiences as a member of an ethnic group, as a woman, as a disabled person, as a gay or lesbian, or for that matter as a white male nurture a perspective that can be valuable to an organization. The more diverse the perspectives the greater (potentially) the strength of decision making, when diversity is addressed in a positive way. Organizations that manage diversity look for that unique niche that employees can fill to keep the organization productive, competitive, and on the cutting edge of change and innovation.

Encouraging Full Participation

Daley and Angulo (1994), in their study of the makeup of boards of directors of nonprofit agencies, introduced the concepts of demographic and functional diversity. Demographic diversity refers to factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, or other characteristics that, because of the different life experiences they foster, may cause individuals to view issues from different perspectives. Functional diversity refers to the extent to which representatives of diverse groups have a voice in and participate in the life of a group or organization. Although efforts may be made to include representatives of previously excluded demographic groups, it often happens that their voices continue to be excluded from the functional life of the group or organization by ignoring input or continuing business as usual by valuing input only from dominant group members. When this happens, the organization achieves only demographic diversity without the full participation envisioned by functional diversity and fails to enjoy the full benefits that new voices and new perspectives can provide.

Conscientious Attention to Issues Surrounding Sexual Harassment

Employees do not function well in an environment that they believe is hostile and threatening. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has issued guidelines that state that an employer is expected to be proactive in ensuring that the workplace is free of sexual harassment and intimidation. Employers should be aware of three major factors that can be used to prove sexual harassment and should raise the following questions to ensure that these situations are not present within the organization:

- *Quid Pro Quo.* Are there any instances within the organization where an employee who rejects a supervisor’s advancements could be negatively impacted through denial of tangible benefits like raises, promotions, training, or travel opportunities?


- **Hostile Environment Created by Supervisors.** Are there units within the organization where a supervisor’s advancements may have such a profound psychological or emotional effect on one or more employees’ ability to function that they cannot perform under existing conditions?
- **Hostile Environment Created by Coworkers or Nonemployees.** Are there units within the organization where people in the workplace whose presence is sanctioned by the employer create an environment that an employee might consider hostile, and that inhibits optimum performance? (Dessler, 1997, p. 39)

Employers are increasingly being held responsible for preventing and eliminating sexually harassing and intimidating environments, and precedents for court judgments are rapidly accumulating. Perhaps as important, however, is the spirit of the directives on sexual harassment. The employer who aspires to excellence in organizational performance wants a workplace environment in which employees feel comfortable and confident and are able to perform at the highest levels. This is more likely to happen when employees recognize the benefits of diversity and project a sense of mutual respect.

When an organization develops a culture in which diversity is incorporated into the philosophy of management, in which widely varying perspectives are welcomed, and in which the work environment is free of intimidation, it is moving toward the spirit of human resources law and is probably, at the same time, less likely to find itself in violation of the letter of the law.

### Human Resources Planning

Earlier in this chapter we identified three elements that formed the foundation of an organization’s human resources plan: (1) human resources law, (2) a profile of staff needs, and (3) a job analysis for each position. This section will discuss the second element, the profile of staff needs. Development of such a profile is based on the working hypothesis that there is an optimal mix of staff in terms of abilities, demographics, and personal characteristics, and that the more closely the organization approximates the ideal profile, the greater is the likelihood that it will be successful. Success is typically measured in terms of achievement of strategic and program goals and objectives in a way that is consistent with the mission of the organization.

Strategic plans ask the question, “Where do we hope to be in the next four to five years?” The attempt is to anticipate changing community needs, demographics, economics, location of population centers, and other such variables, and to project new and redesigned programs and services, branch offices, technology, and other solutions. The human resources plan attempts to anticipate the types of personnel that will be needed to take on the new challenges presented within the strategic plan. As Cascio (1987) defines it, human resources planning is “an effort to anticipate future business and environmental demands on an organization and to meet the personnel requirements dictated by these conditions” (p. 214). The process, he says, involves an analysis of current conditions, a forecast of the future, the development of a plan of action, and an evaluation of efforts.
For Human Resources Planning

Basic Questions: What types of resources do we need now in terms of knowledge, skills, personal characteristics, diverse backgrounds, education, and experience? What types of resources will we need in the future? What types of discrepancies are there between present and future needs? How will we achieve the mix of staff that we need in a timely way so that we are optimally prepared for coming changes?

Time Frame: Preparation of an initial plan will take a substantial investment of time and resources. After the initial plan has been developed, management and board, with staff input, should review and update it annually.

Process: The lead person in human resources produces a profile of current staff. Total staff brainstorm about future personnel needs in relation to the strategic plan, based on both internal and external data and information available. A retreat setting is preferable.

Analysis: Review types of knowledge, skills, personal qualities, diverse backgrounds, education, and other variables represented by those currently employed as compared to those needed. Examine supply of and demand for persons with needed qualifications, both internally and externally.

Report: A plan with goals, objectives, activities, and timetables for carrying out the full spectrum of the human resources processes. Any or all of the following policies and procedures may be included: recruitment, selection, hiring, staff development and training, performance evaluation, retention, promotion, and termination.

Achieving Excellence through Human Resources Planning

A variety of methods and strategies has been proposed for optimizing the mix of staff in response to the expectations of the strategic plan. Schmidt, Riggar, Crimando, and Bordieri (1992) define the human resources planning process in terms of four interrelated sub-processes: (1) conduct a current human resources audit, (2) forecast human resource supply and demand, (3) develop and implement an action plan, and (4) control and evaluate these procedures. The following section will make some slight modifications but will basically follow this same logic. The steps recommended include:

1. Project personnel needs in accordance with strategic goals and objectives.
2. Develop a plan for achieving the desired personnel profile.
3. Implement the changes necessary to achieve the plan’s goals and objectives.
4. Monitor and evaluate the effects of changes as they are implemented.

These steps will be covered in the following sections.
**Step 1: Project Personnel Needs**

Estimating or forecasting personnel needs requires a number of subprocesses. A useful framework for projecting personnel needs is a matrix that presents a profile of job expectations and qualifications. Within the matrix, each position from top administrator through entry-level support staff is included. Each position must then be examined first in terms of job expectations. What are the minimum qualifications? What are the educational and experience requirements? Are there any special personal characteristics, such as “ability to work as a member of a team,” that are required? All this information is contained in the job analysis (which will be covered in the next chapter). In projecting personnel needs, the attempt is to identify these factors in a brief, summary format so that those developing the human resources plan will understand the expectations of the position. A format for summarizing job expectations and qualifications is illustrated in Figure 9.2.

When a profile of job expectations and qualifications has been compiled, it is helpful to know how well the existing staff profile fits with the ideal. One approach to gathering information about existing personnel is what Schmidt et al. (1992) describe as a personnel and skill inventory. The personnel and skill inventory is an instrument used to gather employee information. Specific information depends on organizational needs, but suggestions include “name, age, length of employment with the organization, education, experience, present position, performance level and past company achievements, and an assessment of future potential of each employee” (p. 14). Compiling information about existing staff using the personnel and skill inventory can provide a valuable profile that will be useful in identifying current strengths as well as areas that need to be addressed in human resources planning.

A third tool useful for projecting personnel needs is a matrix that depicts agency demographics. In this matrix, each position within the agency is again used as part of the framework, with selected demographics such as age, gender, ethnicity, education, and other

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**FIGURE 9.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Top Administrative</th>
<th>Middle Management</th>
<th>First-Line Supervision</th>
<th>Direct Service</th>
<th>Paraprofessional</th>
<th>Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minimum qualifications</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Education required</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Experience required</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Major duties</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Skills required</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Special qualities</strong></td>
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important variables identified for each position. It may be useful at this point to review human resources law to ensure that each of the protected classes has been included in this matrix. Incorporating protected classes into the matrix gives this tool, in a sense, a dual purpose: (1) it permits an overview in terms of demographic diversity, and (2) it provides a reminder that there are employees (e.g., pregnant employees, Vietnam-era veterans) who are covered by various state and federal laws and executive orders. Once the demographic matrix has been developed, the lead human resources person for the agency fills in the cells, based on information drawn from personnel records. Because this matrix may contain confidential information, care must be taken to ensure that it is not shared with anyone who is not authorized to receive personnel information and to ensure that affected staff have agreed to release the information. A format for summarizing demographic factors is illustrated in Figure 9.3.

Working from these basic documents, which identify job qualifications, staff skills, and other characteristics, and a demographic profile of current staff, human resource planners develop the optimum personnel profile. Goals and objectives contained in the strategic plan form the basis for projecting need. The following example illustrates how an agency might use the strategic plan to develop a human resources plan.

An agency that provides services to children and families is located in a community whose demographic profile is changing with the influx of immigrants from Southeast Asia. The agency has developed goals relating to initiating culturally centered programs, more emphasis on extended family, the need
for bilingual, bicultural staff, and perhaps a new branch office. From these
goals an ideal or optimal staff profile is generated, again examining job
expectations, current staff qualifications, and demographic diversity. The
profile is then used to ensure that the appropriate job qualifications and
demographic considerations are incorporated into the human resources plan.

A final activity to be undertaken in step 1 is to attempt to forecast the number of
vacancies that should be anticipated for each position within the agency. A review of vol-
untary and involuntary terminations over the past three to five years should provide some
useful information. The total number of budgeted positions at each level provides a base-
line for analyzing turnover. The number of employees who left a particular position
divided by the number of positions budgeted in a given year will yield a percentage of
turnover. For example, if an agency budgets for sixteen Caseworker I positions in budget
year 2001–2002, and if four Caseworker I staff resign or retire during that year, the
turnover rate for that year is 25 percent. By adding together the numbers over two, three,
or more years, turnover rates can be calculated for extended periods of time. Some resi-
dential treatment centers and child care agencies have found that the position of Child Care
Worker has a turnover rate of over 100 percent. What that means is that more staff quit
their jobs during a given year than there are positions (some positions turn over more than
once during the year). Turnover should be analyzed not only in terms of percentages but
also for the purpose of understanding why staff leave the agency. Recruitment, hiring, and
training are expensive, and loss of staff should not be taken lightly. Furthermore, it can
take anywhere from several weeks to several months to replace and train an employee,
depending on the complexity of responsibilities and the available job pool. During that
time, services not provided can result in significant lost revenue. Surveys and exit inter-
views can be helpful in understanding reasons for turnover. Figure 9.4 illustrates an
approach to turnover analysis.

### Figure 9.4

**Format for Calculating Turnover Rates**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Budgeted positions this fiscal year</th>
<th>Voluntary terminations this fiscal year</th>
<th>Involuntary terminations this fiscal year</th>
<th>Total terminations this fiscal year</th>
<th>Turnover rate (total terminations divided by budgeted positions)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top Administrative</td>
<td>Middle Management</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Step 2: Plan for Achieving the Desired Personnel Profile**

When an optimum profile has been developed, the next question is: “How will the mix of employees needed in the future become a reality over time?” The first resort is often to think only in terms of turnover within the agency and recruitment and hiring from outside. This, however, is only one of many options. More immediate and, in many cases, less costly options exist within the current system. This section will explore (1) internal options made possible by organizational change, (2) internal strategies focused on the human resources system, and (3) external strategies.

**Internal Strategies to Change the Personnel Profile**

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 looked at ways to change the organization to achieve greater efficiency, effectiveness, quality, and productivity. Approaches included reviewing (1) organizational structure, (2) job design, and (3) the motivation and reward system. These techniques may also be used to promote the desired personnel profile.

**Changing the Organizational Structure**

In Chapter 4, options for both formal and informal organizational structure were explored. Formal structure includes departmentalization by program, function, process, market, consumer/client, or geographical area. Changing from one type of departmentalization to another can present opportunities for reassignment of personnel. The following example illustrates how organizational restructuring can create opportunities to change the personnel profile.

A family-service agency is structured by program with three program managers, one each for foster care, adoptions, and family counseling. In response to a need for closer cooperation between the foster care and adoptions staff, it was determined that these two programs could be combined into one program under the heading of child welfare, with branch offices established to serve target communities. New positions were then created to manage the combined programs and to oversee each branch office. Because these positions require different skills, an internal search was opened and selection made from existing staff. The family counseling program was then subdivided into marital and family, adolescent, and individual counseling programs in response to a changing profile of problems and needs. Once again, this restructuring effort makes available new positions that can be filled internally based on newly established selection criteria.

Figure 9.5 illustrates an approach to restructuring of programs.

Informal structures include the linking pin, project team, collegial, and mixed-matrix models, as described in Chapter 4. The foster care and adoptions staff described in the foregoing example could be brought into a closer working relationship through the use of the linking-pin model.

Instead of restructuring by bringing the adoption and foster care programs together under one program manager, the two programs could be linked through specialized positions. Certain casework positions would be designated as
linking-pin positions between foster care and adoptions units. Others would be designated as the linking pin between management and staff. Once again, this structure provides opportunities to redesign jobs and appoint personnel from within to newly created positions. In a redesigned family counseling program, a modified collegial model could be used to provide greater flexibility in working with client families. Each worker would operate relatively independently and would turn to team members for consultation. One team member would be designated as liaison to management for communication and reporting purposes. This would have the effect of eliminating the supervisory positions and opening up new specialist positions within the team.

Linking-pin and collegial models are illustrated in Figure 9.6. Project team and mixed-matrix models described in Chapter 4 can be used in similar ways to create new positions.

**Changing the Job Design** Chapter 5 explored six approaches to job design and redesign that included (1) job enlargement, (2) job enrichment, (3) job rotation, (4) creating teams, (5) varying working conditions, and (6) using technology. Job enlargement refers to adding responsibilities and making the job more complex and challenging. Job enrichment refers to having workers assume more responsibility for their own work, thus decreasing the need for supervision and requiring new and different approaches to monitoring, evaluation, and accountability. Both job enlargement and job enrichment can be
used to change a job description, thus requiring new and different skills and necessitating a selection process, as illustrated in the following example.

A social service agency contracts to provide counseling services through its employee assistance program to employees of corporations in the metropolitan area. Referrals are accepted from affiliated corporations, and employees are counseled around drug, alcohol, or family problems. As clients come in for service, they are assigned on a rotating basis to available caseworkers. The agency’s assistant director notices that the work has become very routine and that referrals from affiliated corporations have declined slightly over the last two years. No new contracts have been developed over the past eighteen months, even though new businesses in the community increased by 9 percent during that same period.

Job enlargement could be used in this instance to create positions in which corporations within the community are assigned to specific workers. Instead of simply waiting for referrals, the worker would be expected to market the program to corporation executives and negotiate new contracts. Workers would be paid on an incentive basis, with those who bring in new contracts realizing substantial financial rewards for their efforts. Monthly reports would be designed to monitor marketing efforts and progress toward goals. Redesigned in this way, the job calls for new skills, a job advertisement, and a selection process.

In the same way, jobs can be redesigned by creating teams, varying working conditions, or introducing technology. Redesigned jobs can then be opened to a competitive selection process.

**Using the Human Resources System to Make Personnel Changes**  The human resources system (formerly referred to as the personnel system) includes everything from initial recruitment for the job through termination. Each of the components of the
human resources system will be covered in detail in the following chapters, but this section will briefly address (1) performance appraisal, (2) staff training and development, (3) career development, and (4) termination.

The performance appraisal system, when conscientiously integrated with the organization’s mission, strategic plan, structure, job design, and motivation and reward system, can serve as a valuable tool to change the personnel profile in a positive way. Performance appraisal for every employee is typically an annual event, sometimes with quarterly or semiannual progress reports. Some organizations treat appraisal in a routine, perfunctory manner designed merely to meet the letter of personnel policies. Although a simplified, routine approach to evaluation may require less time and effort on the part of the evaluator, it provides minimal useful information for changing the personnel profile. A well-integrated performance appraisal system is tied to the work performed, accurately indicates, through a scoring system, each employee’s level of performance, and provides a reliable indicator of an employee’s strengths and weaknesses. By charting and comparing performance appraisal data for all employees, managers and administrators can identify employee skill and productivity profiles and can work with supervisors and employees to get the highest performers into key positions.

Another set of options for moving employees into key positions includes staff training and development and career development. Training can include on-the-job training, in-service training provided by the agency, or out-service training workshops and institutes provided by professional organizations and other groups. Career development requires careful planning between supervisor and employee focused on the employee’s short- and long-range career goals. Through mentoring and on-the-job training, an employee can be groomed for higher-level responsibilities. Staff development and training options can be integrated into the career plan by selecting courses and workshops that will provide a foundation of knowledge and skill for the responsibilities to be assumed.

A technique referred to as replacement charting may be useful in grooming employees for higher-level responsibilities (Schmidt et al., 1992). Replacement charts are “visual representations of who will replace whom in the event of a job opening” (Werther & Davis, 1989, p. 103). A replacement summary accompanies the chart and indicates potential candidates’ strengths and weaknesses. The purpose of replacement charting is to encourage managers and administrators to focus on the future and to think in terms of making optimal use of the talent available within the organization. Charts, however, should be used as planning tools and not as foregone conclusions about personnel decisions.

A final option for changing the personnel profile, to be used in extreme circumstances, is termination. Terminating an employee against his or her will is a difficult and time-consuming process and can be very costly to the agency if not handled conscientiously and carefully. Because termination is so emotionally charged, requires a substantial paper trail, and consumes so much of a supervisor’s time, many organizations fail to exercise this option and choose to keep a nonproductive or even a destructive employee on the payroll. However, it should be recognized that termination is a two-edged sword. Although making the difficult decision to terminate may be traumatic to the organization, taking the passive approach and ignoring poor performance can have an even more insidious effect and can erode morale for many staff members. Once staff recognize that management lacks the will to terminate an employee who clearly is not performing up to job expectations, a new minimum standard is established for performance. Employees know they will not be terminated as long as they do not fall below this new minimum standard. In some ways, a termination
that is warranted—once carried out—can reinvigorate remaining staff and can provide a new sense of respect for the organization.

**Using Internal Options with Integrity** None of the foregoing approaches discussed in this section should be interpreted to mean that managers and administrators should be intentionally manipulative in planning to achieve a desired personnel profile. If the organization is to be restructured in any way, the restructuring should be designed to provide more effective, better-quality services in a more efficient manner. If jobs are redesigned, the effort should be undertaken to make better use of knowledge and skill, to eliminate or reduce inefficient functions, to get better results, or to achieve other objectives related to service provision and outcomes. If performance appraisal, training, career development, and termination are used as part of a strategy to change the personnel profile, the strategy should be open and above board. All employees should know about opportunities and about the standards that will be used to make personnel decisions.

When any of the foregoing strategies is used in a manipulative way simply to move one employee aside and move another into a key position, the action taken is very likely to be recognized by employees for what it is, and they are unlikely to support either the action or the promoted employee. Anything less than an open and honest approach to personnel-related decisions will invariably lead to grievances, lawsuits, or at the very least, employee competition, jealousies, and low employee morale. Handled with integrity, however, these changes can be useful in moving the organization toward optimal use of its personnel and toward excellence in overall organizational performance.

**External Strategies to Change the Personnel Profile** Important focal points for changing a personnel profile are the recruitment and selection processes established by the agency. It is not unusual to find that these processes are undertaken in a routine manner with the assumption that a superior candidate will somehow emerge from the pool of applicants. Marsden (1996) notes that informal recruitment practices have a number of drawbacks. “Current employees and others who distribute information about openings through interpersonal channels will tend to pass it along to socially similar persons” (p. 135). Informal recruitment through current staff limits the organization’s ability to reach heterogeneous applicant pools, causes employers to miss opportunities to attract qualified personnel, and inhibits efforts to comply with equal employment opportunity regulations.

Successful organizations today need diversity. Search committees, in fact, should be looking for someone who is in some way different from those who are already employed by the organization. Finding someone who fulfills a particular demographic and skills profile is not likely to happen if the recruitment and selection processes are handled in a perfunctory manner. To maximize the recruitment opportunity, those in charge of the recruitment, selection, and hiring processes, with extensive staff input, should work to develop a profile of desirable qualities for the position. These qualities should include knowledge, skills, personal characteristics, and demographics that can clearly be tied to the job and will move the organization toward achievement of its desired personnel profile.

Schmidt et al. (1992) suggest that human resources planning should reflect the organization’s affirmative action goals. Some of the activities they propose include:

1. Special recruitment efforts toward underrepresented groups.
2. Training to eliminate bias toward underrepresented groups.
3. Removal of barriers to employment that work to the disadvantage of underrepresented groups.
4. Preferential hiring of qualified members of underrepresented groups. (p. 20)
Demographics that warrant special consideration include ethnicity, gender, disability, age, and other factors covered by human resources law. Sexual orientation, although not covered by the law in terms of special employment consideration, is a characteristic that also contributes to diversity and adds a voice and a perspective from an oppressed and under-represented group. Again it should be emphasized that first consideration is always given to qualifications, and no attempt should be made to circumvent qualifications itemized in the job announcement. The focus of effort in recruitment must be on attracting as large and diverse a pool of applicants as possible, thereby offering a wide range of choices at the point of selection and hiring. More will be said about recruitment and selection in Chapter 11.

Step 3: Implement Changes Necessary to Achieve the Plan’s Goals and Objectives

Once all of the options proposed in step 2 have been examined and considered, a specific set of strategies and tactics is selected and translated into goals, objectives, and activities. Human resources goals typically focus on future employment of people with the characteristics that will help to achieve demographic and skill diversity and will contribute toward the achievement of strategic and long-range goals and objectives. The following examples illustrate the types of goals, outcome objectives, process objectives, and activities that might be included in a human resources plan.

**Goal:** To recruit, select, and hire people who demonstrate exemplary qualifications and provide a wide range of diverse characteristics consistent with the agency’s mission and strategic plan.

**Outcome Objective 1:** By December 31, 2005, at least 75 percent of agency hires for Caseworker I, II, and III positions will rank among the top 10 percent of candidates for vacant positions and will fit within the desired personnel profile.

**Process Objective 1.1:** By June 30, 2002, the job analysis for Caseworker I, II, and III positions will be revised to reflect culture and gender competencies, final draft to be approved by management team.

**Activities:**
1. Appoint a task force to revise job analysis for each position.
2. Complete review of existing job analysis for each position.
3. Identify culture and gender competencies.
4. Draft revision of job analysis for each position.
5. Circulate first draft to relevant staff members.
6. Incorporate feedback from staff.
7. Circulate second draft to relevant staff members.
8. Forward final draft to management team.

**Process Objective 1.2:** By September 30, 2002, the job description and announcement for Caseworker I, II, and III positions will reflect the revised job analysis for each position, final wording to be approved by the management team.

**Activities:** Repeat preceding activities.
Additional outcome and process objectives (and their activities) would focus on any other strategies needed to move the organization toward the achievement and the retention of its desired personnel profile. These additional objectives may propose changes in organizational structure, job design, and motivation and reward systems, or any of the components of the human resources system. In translating desired outcomes into goals, objectives, and activities, human resource planners should carefully consider the appropriate target of change. Options may include such factors as organizational culture and philosophy, agency policy, or procedures and practices.

Organizational philosophy and culture are probably the most elusive targets and, consequently, the most difficult to change. Philosophy and culture encompass the underlying values, beliefs, and traditions supported over time by staff but rarely found in any written form. Changing values, beliefs, and traditions requires a substantial investment in terms of time and energy devoted to articulating current philosophy, identifying needed changes, proposing specific changes, and following up to reinforce the value and importance of the proposed changes. The following example illustrates the need for a change in organizational culture and philosophy.

A large social service agency provides services to families referred by the Child Protective Services division of the state department of Child Welfare. Over the years the number of Spanish-speaking-only clients has increased, and a position of translator has been created to address the language barrier. Managers and supervisors recognize that some qualities very important to the worker-client relationship were lost by using the translator as a go-between and are attempting to create new positions for bilingual/bicultural workers. Existing workers, for a variety of reasons, oppose this change, expressing the belief that caseloads should not be segregated by ethnic group and strongly defending the quality of their relationships with their Spanish-speaking-only clients. Management recognizes that if they force the change without the support of existing staff, a permanent rift might be established between old and new staff, and it could conceivably be along racial and ethnic lines. A series of workshops is proposed, focused on culture and the casework relationship, designed to co-opt existing staff into understanding the problem and becoming part of the solution. Although there is a recognition that this approach will be time-consuming, it is felt that in the long run the effort will be worthwhile if it contributes to a permanent change in philosophy toward building positive relationships between existing staff, new staff, and Spanish-speaking-only clients.

Changes that have the greatest formalized support are those that are translated into policy. Flynn (1985) defines policy as “those principles which give expression to valued ends and provide direction to social welfare action” (p. 6). He makes the point that a great deal of social welfare action takes place at the agency level, and agency employees need to be aware of the implications of social agency policies.

Agency policy is created in written form, approved by a board of directors, and published in some form for use by staff. Some agencies issue a complete policy manual to each new staff member. There is an expectation that new staff members will become familiar with the policy manual over time, and that all staff members will carry out their responsibilities in a way that is consistent with agency policy. Changes or additions to agency policy must
be written out in a format that is consistent with the rest of the manual and submitted through the chain of command to the agency director and ultimately to the board of directors for a decision. A paragraph or two explaining the rationale for the new or revised policy usually accompanies the policy statement. Once formally approved by the board, it is expected that all employees will follow new or revised policies, and it is for this reason that policy changes are most likely to achieve the desired result. A proposed policy change is illustrated below.

**Section 9: Employee Recruitment**

**Old policy:**
9.1 A strategy for recruitment shall be established by employees who are appointed to the recruitment and selection committee.

**New policy:**
9.1 The recruitment and selection committee shall complete all of the following steps in planning for the recruitment of new employees:
1. Review the job analysis for the position to be filled.
2. Review the agency’s summary on applicable human resources laws.
3. Review the agency’s human resources plan.
4. Identify recruitment sources designed to attract applicants who have the necessary qualifications and who will contribute to demographic and skill diversity.
5. Develop and implement a plan for communicating job availability information to recruitment sources.

If a less formal approach to change is preferred by human resource planners, they may wish to target procedures or practices. Procedures typically follow policies and specify in greater detail how policy is to be implemented. They may be written out and inserted into a policy manual, or they may be placed in a separate document. Different units within an organization may have their own procedural manuals. In some cases, procedures may take on the form of protocols or step-by-step processes designed to ensure uniformity in the way certain types of cases are processed. Because child abuse and neglect and family violence cases have important legal implications, it is not unusual to find that highly specific procedures are required. Procedures do not require approval by a governing board. In some instances they may be approved within the unit affected. In changing or proposing new procedures, the level of decision making depends to a great extent on the scope of programs and staff affected.

An even less formal approach can be taken when changing or initiating new practices. The term *practices* refers to the ways in which staff members perform certain aspects of their jobs. Practices are not formalized in writing, so changes must be agreed to by consensus. Little can be done to enforce new or changed practices if staff do not agree to support the change. If practices cannot be successfully changed through informal agreement, a more formal change, in writing, of policies or procedures may be necessary. The following example illustrates how staff members might agree on a change in practice.

An agency provides treatment programs for drug and alcohol abusers. A series of scales is administered by the worker, designed to produce a profile of problem severity in a number of areas. Administration of these scales requires about one-and-one-half to two hours of time. Workers agreed informally to experiment with having clients self-administer the scales without
direct face-to-face involvement from the worker. Some workers were concerned that important information would be lost and were reluctant to support the change, although all agreed that a significant amount of time would be saved if clients completed the scales on their own. Because uniformity in the way the scales are administered is an important consideration, either workers must unanimously agree to the change practice, or a written policy or procedure must be approved through the proper channels.

In writing and implementing goals, objectives, and activities for the human resources plan, those responsible should carefully consider the appropriate target for each desired change and explore the options of philosophy and culture, policy, procedures, and practices.

**Step 4: Monitor and Evaluate the Effects of Changes**

A complete human resources plan will include a number of sets of goals, outcome objectives, process objectives, and activities. Contained within a well-written objective will always be some criteria for monitoring and/or measurement. For example, in the outcome objective used earlier in this chapter, the expected outcome is that 75 percent of agency hires for Caseworker I, II, and III positions will rank among the top 10 percent of candidates for vacant positions and will fit within the desired personnel profile. These outcomes can be measured in two ways. First, the selection process must be reviewed for all hires for Caseworker I, II, and III positions to determine their overall ranking in relation to other applicants for the vacant positions. This approach to measurement presumes that there is a valid and reliable scoring system for applicants and that records have been kept on all applicants for the designated positions. Examining the ranking of each person hired will enable human service managers to determine whether, by December 31, 2005, at least 75 percent of new hires for Caseworker I, II, and III positions actually ranked among the top 10 percent of applicants.

A second approach to measuring the achievement of Outcome Objective 1 is to examine the desired personnel profile for Caseworker I, II, and III positions for the agency. This document should reflect the balance of demographics, including age, gender, ethnicity, and other factors that the agency is attempting to achieve. By comparing the desired profile to the existing profile, a determination can be made of which characteristics are needed to achieve the desired profile. Comparing demographics of new hires to those needed will help to determine how successful the agency has been in recruiting and hiring to meet diversity needs. In the same way, knowledge, skill, and personal characteristics profiles can be used to help the agency move toward the achievement of an optimum mix of staff who bring the highest professional qualifications as well as a rich and diverse blend of demographic and personal characteristics.

The approach to human resources planning proposed here is not without risks. Whenever human characteristics are translated into numbers, there is always the risk that the numbers become reality for planners and evaluators. Numbers that suggest success may foster convictions that the system is the solution. If recruitment and selection goals and objectives are met, the organization may feel no need to continue to examine the system for its validity and reliability.

However, it should be recognized that hiring is really the beginning, not the end, of implementing the human resources plan. There are many ongoing components to human
resources planning. Proposed changes may relate to changes in organizational structure, in job design, in the motivation and reward system, or in recruitment, selection, or any part of the human resources system. Those who monitor and evaluate the plan must continually determine, first, if the recommended change was made. Second, if the change was made, they must evaluate the results. For example, Process Objective 1.1 earlier in this chapter proposed that job analysis documents for Caseworker I, II, and III positions be revised. Revision of a job analysis is not for its own sake but rather so that the knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics identified become more in line with the realities of the job. Changes are then incorporated into the job description and, at the time of a vacancy, into the job announcement. All this activity is undertaken so that persons hired will bring the knowledge, skills, and personal characteristics needed to do the job as envisioned in strategic, long-range, and program plans.

Viewed in this way, monitoring and evaluating the human resources plan are cyclical activities in which one review leads to another, eventually encompassing a comprehensive review and evaluation of the entire service system, and the extent to which it is supported by the human resources plan.

**SUMMARY**

1. **Selecting, Hiring, and Retaining the Optimum Mix of Staff.** Internal harmony and teamwork among staff are important for optimum organizational functioning. Planning increases the likelihood that staff will work well together.

2. **Human Resources Law.** Many protections are built into laws, regulations, and executive orders. Managers cannot be expected to know all the details but should be familiar with the general parameters of human resources law.

   - **Race, Color, or National Origin.**
     Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended). Prohibit discrimination based on race, color, and national origin.

   - **Affirmative Action.**
     Executive Orders. Executive Orders 11246 and 11375 created the concept of affirmative action. Employers with fifty or more employees and a federal contract of $50,000 or more are required to have a written plan to increase the numbers of minorities and women in the workforce.

   - **Sex/Gender.**
     Equal Pay Act of 1963. Prohibits discrimination in rates of pay when jobs involve equal work under equal conditions.
     Title IX of Education Amendments of 1972. Prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs and activities.
     Sexual Harassment. Court cases have established the employer’s responsibility to maintain a work environment that is free of unwelcome sexual verbal or physical contact.

   - **Veterans’ Status.**
     Vietnam Era Veterans’ Readjustment Assistance Act of 1974. Employers with federal contracts of $10,000 or more must demonstrate affirmative efforts to employ disabled and Vietnam vets.
■ **Age.**

Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967 (amended 1978). Employers may not discriminate against applicants or employees between the ages of forty and sixty-five because of their age.

■ **Disabilities.**


3. **The Letter of the Law versus the Spirit of the Law.** Human service agency managers should be acquainted with the laws but use consultants for decision making. Encouraging diversity will support compliance with the spirit of the law.

■ **Valuing, Respecting, and Maximizing the Benefits of Diversity.**

■ **Encouraging Full Participation.**

■ **Conscientious Attention to Issues Surrounding Sexual Harassment.**

4. **Human Resources Planning.** A profile of staff needs should be developed that reflects an optimal mix of staff in terms of demographic characteristics, abilities, and personal qualities.

5. **Achieving Excellence through Human Resources Planning.** A strategy should be developed designed to achieve the optimum mix of staff.

■ **Step 1: Project Personnel Needs.** A matrix should be designed to present a profile of job expectations and qualifications for each position. A personal and skill inventory will reflect a profile of actual employee skills and qualifications. A matrix of current staff demographics and a forecast of vacancies are basic tools used for human resources planning.

■ **Step 2: Plan for Achieving the Desired Personnel Profile.** Achieving the optimum profile is not something that will just happen. It must be planned, changes initiated, and effects monitored and evaluated.

**Internal Strategies to Change the Personnel Profile.** Some actions can be taken internally to work toward achieving the optimum mix of staff.

- **Changing the Organizational Structure.** Restructuring may create new positions and allows for moving people around within the organization.

- **Changing the Job Design.** Changing a job can open it up to an internal selection process.

- **Using the Human Resources System to Make Personnel Changes.** Performance appraisals, career planning, and termination can initiate changes in jobs that may lead to new openings.

- **Using Internal Options with Integrity.** Changes should genuinely be needed and not be manipulated just for the sake of making the change.

**External Strategies to Change the Personnel Profile.** Recruitment and selection processes, if used effectively, can help achieve the optimum personnel profile.
Step 3: Implement Changes Necessary to Achieve the Plan’s Goals and Objectives. Human resources goals, objectives, and activities should be written out in detail as the basis for human resources planning.

Step 4: Monitor and Evaluate the Effects of Changes. Data and information should be collected and used to monitor and evaluate the effects of change.

EXERCISES

Please complete the following sections of your manual based on the content covered in Chapter 9.

Section 9: Human Resources Planning

9.1 Compliance with Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunity Requirements. Write a policy statement that makes clear your agency’s position on compliance with all federal and state requirements for affirmative action and equal employment opportunity. Include an attachment that summarizes the major laws or cite references.

9.2 Job Expectations and Qualifications. Identify the variables to be used to establish job expectations and qualifications. Attach, as Document 9.2a, a format that can be used to display overall job expectations and qualifications for the organization.

9.3 Staff Demographics. Identify the variables to be used to establish a demographic profile for the organization. Attach, as Document 9.3a, a format that can be used to display an overall organizational demographic profile.

REFERENCES


