

01

Introduction and overview

Our purpose

Our purpose is to set out a practical approach to HR practice. We hope that anyone wanting a good working understanding of HR practice will find that this book meets their needs. Students on a variety of certificate, diploma, foundation degree and undergraduate programmes should find it valuable as an introduction and as a supporting text that provides a practical perspective to the issues that they are studying. The structure of the book follows the rationale set out in the CIPD foundation qualifications for the Certificate in Human Resources Practice (CHRP) and the Diploma in Human Resources Practice (DHRP). These programmes are self-standing and can also provide an access route to further qualification. CHRP/DHRP students, enrolled at a CIPD-approved centre, will find that this book provides essential background reading to reinforce their learning.

The central purpose of the CHRP/DHRP is to develop competence in a range of core HR and development skills together with the acquisition of underpinning knowledge and understanding. Many line managers also need these skills, knowledge and understanding. This book has been written to provide a variety of readers with a grounding in the basics of HR activities. It therefore considers the breadth of knowledge and range of skills necessary for the effective performance of HR work, while taking into account the organisational culture and environment. Whether you are a line manager with responsibility for HR or an HR practitioner, you will be concerned with the many different aspects of employing and managing people in your organisation. You will be interested in not only ensuring compliance with the law but also in good practice; in the quality of relationships at work; in how to improve people's engagement with their work and the organisation; and in how to ensure both employer and employee get a good deal. We also consider ethics at work throughout the book, including, amongst other things, behaviours, fairness,

justice, values and culture. We see high-profile cases of lapses in ethics making the news on a regular basis – for example, insider trading, sexual harassment, fraud, conflicts of interest, whistleblowing, pay and matters of work–life balance. We have tried to address relevant ethical issues throughout the book – you’ll see references to good practice and see ethical dimensions in case studies. We would encourage you all to think about the ethical dimension of what you do – to think about the impact and consequences of your actions and to seek support and advice from colleagues and managers if you find yourself in a situation where you feel compromised or concerned.

A summary of the book’s structure and an overview of its contents follow. But first we consider the type of reader most likely to benefit from the book and the learning sources you could use.

You, the reader

This book’s focus on the core skills required in managing and working effectively with people makes it suitable for a large range of potential readers. The CHRP/DHRP programmes are widely regarded as ideal courses for all newcomers to the profession, but we expect that readers will belong to one or more of the following groups:

- HR officers and managers who are newly appointed to the role and who lack previous generalist experience (you may be the sole HR practitioner within your organisation, or your post may be a newly established one).
- HR assistants, administrators and PAs who support more senior HR staff.
- Students on the Certificate and Diploma in HR Practice programmes.
- Students on any of a variety of management, business and supervisory programmes with an HR unit or module.
- Employees working for new but rapidly expanding organisations who acquire responsibility for establishing and formalising HR policies, procedures and practices.
- Staff who work in HR-related areas – for example, a personal assistant to a managing director or a payroll supervisor.
- Staff who work in specialist areas of HR practice, such as learning and development, employee relations or reward, who wish to progress into or have more knowledge of generalist roles.
- Line managers or supervisors who have responsibility for HR activities.
- Owners or managers of small businesses who have overall responsibility for the ‘people element’ within them.

We’ve sought to achieve an easy and informal personal writing style that we hope will encourage readers to engage in the subject.

The text includes case studies, activities and reference material, updated for this edition.

Note: We use the title ‘HR practitioners’ throughout this book as a generic term to cover all the above types of job and all levels of HR work, including those for whom the activities may be only part of wider responsibilities.

If you are tutoring, we trust that the text will offer useful material for you. We hope you will find many opportunities that will encourage discussion and provide course work.

Learning sources

This book has been written by two authors, both experienced in the field of HR but with very different experiences, styles and, sometimes, perspectives. In order to understand each of the issues tackled within your own organisational circumstances, you will need to draw upon your own experience and perspective. Much of what we offer is considered good practice. We also provide coverage of relevant legal issues.

Further components are the culture and the commercial or political reality of your organisation that you will confront on a regular basis. Cultures and commercial and political realities vary in their effect enormously from organisation to organisation. While we touch on these where we can, you will need to use your experience of working in your organisation to fully understand the culture and the commercial and political reality.

Striking a balance between good practice, the law, the organisational culture and commercial/political realities will be important if you are to be effective.

To gain the maximum benefit from the book you will find it valuable to discuss the issues raised with appropriate people, particularly if you are relatively inexperienced in the areas under consideration.

These people, or 'learning sources', may include:

- Senior colleagues, such as HR specialists and line managers, peers and subordinates who have knowledge and experience of the organisation and how it operates.
- HR managers and officers from sister/parent companies and outside organisations.
- Specialists within your organisation such as company solicitors, health and safety officers, data analysts, medical personnel and occupational health advisors.
- Members of your local CIPD branch and other networking bodies.
- College tutors and fellow students.
- Other contacts that you have made through networking activities.
- Appropriate contacts that you might make through social networking.
- Employees of advisory bodies such as the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (Acas – see Chapter 3), the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC), and representatives of employers' organisations and trade union bodies.

You should establish contacts with these learning sources and make use of them to facilitate your learning experience. We shall be making periodic reference to your 'learning sources' throughout this book, so – bearing in mind the above list – choose those sources that are going to be of most benefit to you in terms of their knowledge, availability and willingness to help.

In addition to these ‘people resources’ there is also a range of publications available that provide general guidance and practical help. If you are a member of the CIPD you should already have information on the following:

- The CIPD Professional Standards.
- The CIPD Profession Map.
- Continuing professional development (CPD).
- The CIPD Code of Professional Conduct.
- Any relevant CIPD resources – for example, survey reports.

We also make reference to CIPD factsheets, which are an invaluable source of further detail on the topics we cover.

You will find all this information, and much more, on the CIPD website: cipd.co.uk.

Acas also has a wide range of useful information in its ‘advice’ section on the website (acas.org.uk). In addition, you can find some useful information on the Acas archive (archive.acas.org.uk), along with copies of various advisory booklets that may still provide invaluable assistance in a wide range of people-management activities.

It is also worthwhile becoming familiar with a number of useful websites, such as Gov.uk, and various government departments, such as the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). It is worth noting that as this book went to press, Acas was undertaking a major redesign of its website. If you cannot find what is referred to in our References and Further Reading sections at the end of each chapter, look on the Acas archive at archive.acas.org.uk. If you add the most useful sites to your favourites list, you will be able to discover up-to-date information on almost any topic of interest. There are also a number of online bookmarking services that you might use. Other suggestions are made in Chapter 10.

In order to keep up to date with changes in the world of HR management, employment legislation and case law, you might also want to encourage your organisation to subscribe to a reputable information service such as those provided by the CIPD (for example, CIPD HR-inform), Croner or XpertHR. Subscriptions provide online reference material which is kept regularly up to date.

The structure

We have designed this book to make it easy for you to dip in to chapters and sections that are of particular interest. It is divided into 12 chapters (including this one). The subject areas represent the major activities associated with HR work at the level at which this book is aimed, and we highlight the links between these activities throughout. We also provide brief details of the contents of each chapter in ‘Overview’ below.

Chapters 2 and 3 set the scene for what follows. We examine the internal and external factors that exert an influence on an organisation along with their effect on the work of HR practitioners, and we look at the legal background to employment. While we see these two as setting the scene, each chapter can be read independently,

and cross-references between chapters are intended to assist this and to minimise duplication of material.

Each chapter contains the following features, where appropriate:

- Learning objectives.
- An introduction.
- An explanation of why the topics covered are important to hr practitioners.
- The main body of information.
- Case study material to reinforce key issues and demonstrate points of good and poor practice.
- The many and varied roles played by HR practitioners.
- A summary.
- Activities to encourage the acquisition and application of knowledge in an organisational setting and the planning of work experiences aimed at skills development.
- A section covering references, legislation and codes of practice, further reading, recommended websites and relevant podcasts.

The last two features highlight our desire to change your learning experience from a passive to an active one. You are recommended to tackle at least two activities from each chapter.

In this new edition we have incorporated recent and forthcoming legislative changes throughout the book (but particularly in Chapter 3). Recent trends in HR-related matters have been noted and commentary provided on the changing nature of employment and the changing organisational context of HR. Within the text, many examples have been revised to illustrate points in a current context. The impact of the rapid changes in technology that we see is examined and recognised throughout the book. We have also updated the suggested further reading and the references, including extended lists of relevant CIPD factsheets and surveys. Most of the latter material is also available to non-CIPD members by registering on the CIPD website. These and other changes are highlighted in the following section.

The chapters and content of the book reflect the units of the Foundation Awards in Human Resources in the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) (Table 1.1).

Table 1.1 How to find relevant material for each unit

Core units	The most relevant material
Developing yourself as an effective human resources practitioner	Personal Effectiveness (Chapter 12)
Understanding organisations and the role of human resources	The Organisational Context (Chapter 2) The Legal Background to Employment (Chapter 3) Learning and Development (Chapter 9)
Recording, analysing and using human resources information	Information and Communication Technology in HR (Chapter 10)
Optional units	The most relevant material

(continued)

Table 1.1 (Continued)

Core units	The most relevant material
Resourcing talent	Recruitment and Selection (chapter 5)
Supporting good practice in managing employment relations	Employee Relations (Chapter 8) The Legal Background to Employment (Chapter 3)
Supporting good practice in performance and reward management	Performance Management (Chapter 6) Reward (Chapter 7)
Contributing to the process of job analysis	Job Analysis and Design (Chapter 4)
Supporting change within organisations	Change in Organisations (Chapter 11)

NOTES: Suggested activities are included in each chapter, except Chapter 1. The practitioner's role is indicated at the end of every relevant chapter

Overview

Chapter 1 Introduction and overview

As you will have seen, here we cover our purpose and the types of reader borne in mind when compiling this book, the wide range of learning sources available to you, the book's structure, an overview of its contents and an indication of the main changes in content from previous editions.

Chapter 2 The organisational context

We consider the broader aspects surrounding the HR function, as well as the wide range of activities involved in its execution. We pay attention to the different types of organisation and organisational structures in which practitioners may work, as well as including the concepts of customer care and stakeholders. The effects of the internal corporate culture and the external corporate environment are summarised, noting the types of action that practitioners can take. In this new edition we refresh the information on organising the HR function and how changes in society and organisations are impacting on the role of people professionals.

Chapter 3 The legal background to employment

Building on the external influences on organisations that we examined in Chapter 2, in this chapter we address the complex area of legislation. Concentrating on aspects of employment law, we look at where employment legislation comes from and provide a summary of the relevant legislation at different stages of the employee life cycle under three main headings:

- Pre-employment and starting work with a new employer and in particular employment checks, contracts of employment and employment status.
- Rights and responsibilities during employment, concentrating on the important issues of equality, diversity and inclusion, flexible working rights and working time.

- Ending employment, concentrating on dismissal and redundancy, resolving disputes and dealing with claims.

In this latest edition, we address changes in certain employment rights, particularly around written particulars, agency workers, family-friendly rights and the removal of employment tribunal fees. Opportunity has also been taken to update many minor but important changes throughout the chapter. It is important to note that at the time of writing, the impact on employment law of the UK leaving the EU is unknown. This is a matter which is likely to have a significant impact over time on employment legislation and therefore you should ensure you keep up to date with the latest developments on this.

Next we start the process of homing in on specific groups of HR activities.

Chapter 4 Job analysis and design

We examine the importance of good job analysis in relation to HR activities and look at how job analysis has evolved over time. We look at the most commonly used approaches to job analysis. We consider the factors that impact on job design and how important it is in employee motivation and wellbeing. Job evaluation is covered in detail including the process for, and some of the implications of, using job evaluation. In this 8th edition we introduce the concept of good work and look at how employees might get involved in designing their own jobs.

Chapter 5 Recruitment and selection

Taking into account and updating the legal context, we consider the processes of:

- Recruitment – job analysis and design (job descriptions, person specifications and competency frameworks) and advertising.
- Selection – collecting information on candidates via application forms/CVs, various types of interviews, aptitude and personality tests and assessment centre performances, and assessing and comparing candidates (with specific guidance on good interviewing practice).
- Making an offer – conditional offers and employment checks.
- Induction – of new starters.
- Evaluation – of the whole process.

We have updated information on the changing nature of the workforce, reflecting the rise of the gig economy and atypical working. We draw attention to the changing demographics of the working age population particularly around the increasing need to attract and retain older workers. We consider the changing nature of work itself and reflect the transition in many workplaces to a digital environment and the now standard use of online methods of recruiting.

Chapter 6 Performance management

First we consider what performance management is and examine the differences between performance review/appraisal and the broader concept of performance management. In this latest edition we have updated the section on recent trends

in performance management practices in UK organisations, including the emergence of regular check-ins and strengths-based review and the growing importance of behaviours as well as skills and competencies. We use a case study to demonstrate the need for all performance management systems to be closely integrated and directed towards achieving business goals.

Performance review/appraisal is looked at in some detail: its purposes, motivational effects, trends, and the various components requiring consideration when designing a new scheme. We have also expanded the section on motivation at work and address various theories of motivation and how appraisal can impact on motivation. We continue to emphasise the importance of giving and receiving feedback. Although we touch on payment systems, including financial and non-financial rewards, more information on this is contained in Chapter 7. The legal references have also been updated.

Chapter 7 Reward

In this chapter we look at definitions of reward and why it is such an important issue. We consider the different types of pay systems and structures in some detail, and explore the use of flexible benefits. We also look at non-pay reward. We look at the National Living Wage, the changing pensions scene, and how collective bargaining can affect jobs that are transferred between businesses. We examine the link between pay and performance and motivation. We take a detailed look at the legal aspects of reward including updated information on equal pay and an introduction to gender pay gap reporting. Finally we consider the different things that impact on decisions about pay in organisations and where supporting information can be found.

Chapter 8 Employee relations

In this chapter we survey the changing nature of employee relations and changing focus of activity and examine individual conflicts, looking at disciplinary procedures and rules and grievance procedures against the backdrop of relevant employment legislation. We provide tips on good practice in carrying out disciplinary, capability and grievance interviews, and highlight the need for an organisation to follow the correct procedures at all times. We stress that poor handling of conduct or capability cases increases the risk of claims to employment tribunals of unfair dismissal, and that employee relations problems may result from the mismanagement of formal grievances. A section on absence management tools is also featured. We also take a look at employee voice and employee engagement. We consider the area of preventing and managing conflict, the importance of partnership and collaboration, and the role and practice of mediation as an alternative approach to managing conflict. As in Chapter 3, we cover the impact of the Information and Consultation Regulations, and provide further information on the role of the psychological contract in employee relations.

In this revised edition we have provided a general updating in the light of further development in the field of employment relations and updated the section on bullying and harassment.

Chapter 9 Learning and development

In this chapter we look at definitions of learning and development (L&D) and then work through the stages of the learning cycle, starting with the identification of learning needs and proceeding through the stages of planning, implementing and evaluating. We consider important issues such as the range of available L&D methods and techniques. In addition, we consider national schemes and initiatives such as Apprenticeships and National Vocational Qualifications. This latest edition includes information on digital learning and a new case study.

Chapter 10 Information and communication technology in HR

This chapter has been substantially updated. We have looked at how technology is continuing to impact the world of HR and some of the types of technology you might use. We look at the importance of data in HR and the legal background to information and records is addressed here. This includes the implications of data protection and GDPR legislation, which are spelled out in stressing the importance of keeping accurate HR records. A section on job references is included. We have looked at workforce reporting and introduced the concept of people analytics. We have updated the section on social media.

Chapter 11 Change in organisations

In this chapter we look at why change is important and why organisations need to change. We reflect that change has become an almost constant state for many organisations in a fast-moving world and as such will be something all HR practitioners will become experienced in dealing with. We consider different tools, techniques and approaches for managing change, building capability and confidence in handling change, and then move on to consider in some detail the impact of change on individuals. We also look at individual responses to change and consider the different behaviours that those affected by change might display. We examine the impact of change on the psychological contract and look at different approaches to supporting employees through change. In this new edition, we give some recent examples of change in organisations with which all readers will be familiar and introduce some additional models and frameworks for managing change.

Chapter 12 Personal effectiveness

The final chapter seeks to provide further guidance on the variety of skills necessary for effective performance in an HR role, along with consideration of the important area of behaviours. We look at the updated CIPD Profession Map in detail. We examine the broad issue of self-development before covering the following skills areas:

- Communication – report-writing, making presentations and making a business case for introducing change.
- Negotiating, influencing and persuading – in formal and informal situations.
- Handling difficult conversations (including the use of counselling techniques).
- Assertiveness – in work-related and personal situations.

We include additional material in this new edition on working effectively in a team and on skills for influencing. We also look at the important characteristics of empathy, emotional intelligence and resilience. Finally, we refer to the emphasis placed by a large number of professional associations, such as the CIPD, on the concept of CPD. The main focus of this concept is the proposition that learning (and the acquisition of knowledge and skills) is not a one-off process, but one that should carry on throughout your working life. We have tried to reinforce this message and hope that it is one you take to heart at this, the beginning of a new learning experience. May it open doors for you.

COPYRIGHT MATERIAL
NOT FOR REPRODUCTION