



**MODULE:
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**ASSIGNMENT TITLE:
STAY ALERT VITAMIN ENERGISERS**

DECEMBER 2009

Important Notes:

- ❖ Please refer to the Assignment Presentation Requirements for advice on how to set out your assignment. These can be found on the NCC Education *Campus*. Scroll down the left hand side of the screen until you reach Personal Support. Click on this, and then on Policies and Advice. You will find the Assignment Presentation Requirements under the Advice section.
- ❖ You must familiarise yourself with the NCC Education Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Policy and ensure that you acknowledge all the sources which you use in your work. The policy is available on *Campus*. Follow the instructions above, but click on Policies rather than Advice.
- ❖ You must complete the ‘**Statement and Confirmation of Own Work**’. The form is available on the Policies section of *Campus*. Scroll down the left hand side until you reach Personal Support. Click on this and then click on Policies and Advice.
- ❖ Please make a note of the recommended word count. You could lose marks if you write 10% more or less than this.
- ❖ You must submit a paper copy and digital copy (on disk or similarly acceptable medium). Media containing viruses, or media which cannot be run directly, will result in a fail grade being awarded for this module.
- ❖ All electronic media will be checked for plagiarism.

Marker's comments:

Moderator's comments:

Mark:

Moderated

Final

Mark:

Mark:

Introduction

This assignment is based on an organisational scenario for an established transportation company. There are various components to the scenario, and the Tasks described below address these components. Your role and background is that of an HRM generalist consultant who has been called in to provide observations and suggestions regarding the current situation.

Therefore, this assignment requires knowledge of:

- Human resource management as a discipline
- Organisational development as a process

Stay Alert Vitamins Energisers (SAVE) is a multinational corporation (MNC) whose home office is located in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. It has been in operation since 1984, though has changed its branding and client base several times. *SAVE* first expanded into the international marketplace in 1992, as the founder is Virginia Wayreach, a forward thinking individual who is energetic, dynamic, forceful, a hard worker, and not afraid to take risks. *SAVE* has continuously shown increased profits and growth, with the average annual increase at 8%.

SAVE has subsidiaries in London, Berlin, Rome, Beijing, and it now has plans to expand into Tokyo, Japan. Even during these difficult financial times, *SAVE* has continued to grow. It attributes this to several factors. Research shows that its products are reasonably priced, there is a continual interest in health and wellbeing, and during recession people often resort to working harder, and believe that vitamins will help their performance at work and guard against being sick. In addition, e-commerce plays a big part in its business model, though it also wants to have a local presence in shops.

SAVE has an experienced HR manager; however, it will be appointing a local Japanese HR manager in Tokyo, though this will be his first assignment with a multinational corporation. The Japanese HR manager believes that all resources within *SAVE* must contribute to the firm's competitive advantage, and that HR has a key role to play in this. One of the first activities that *SAVE* must consider is the recruitment and selection of local employees. The aim will be to recruit local employees at various management and operational levels. There will be two American Managers relocating to Japan for an initial period of two years. This decision is based on the belief that the American business approach gives *SAVE* a competitive advantage in how it does business and manages employees, that has resulted in continuous growth. However, this approach does aim to exclude union involvement as the preference is for local managers being able to hire and fire employees as needed. It also takes the viewpoint that harmony is not necessarily a desirable goal in organisational life, which runs counter to the Japanese approach of a 'family'.

After the initial recruitment and selection activity is completed, another immediate need will be the induction and training of new employees so that they can begin marketing the *SAVE* range of products. There are differing views on how this might be done, which has resulted in a degree of conflict between the Japanese HR manager and the American expatriate managers. The approach to managing and measuring the performance of the new employees is another issue for consideration. While there is a strong team ethos in Japan, the American approach tends to put greater value on individual performance. Both the Japanese and American managers are looking for solutions that will reflect best practice in HRM in relation to the above issues.

As you are currently taking a course in HRM, it has been decided to ask you to join the group of American and Japanese managers to discuss the best way forward to design HRM policies for the Japanese subsidiary in Tokyo, which will be able to determine local HRM policies and practice.

Aim

The aim of this assignment is for you to address Task questions in the section below. Therefore, your objective is to provide a practical set of recommendations to SAVE in response to the managers' questions in the Task areas below.

Task 1 – 12 Marks

The three *SAVE* managers want to take a strategic view of HRM. This view is especially relevant as it relates to the relationships between internal resources (HRM), strategy, and firm performance. This viewpoint has also been termed the resource-based approach. It has been stated that in order for a resource to result in sustained competitive advantage, it must meet four criteria. What are these four criteria, and how might they be applied to *SAVE*?

Task 2 – 15 Marks

One of the immediate needs for the *SAVE* managers is to determine what approach is needed in the recruitment and selection of local managerial and operational personnel. What approach might you recommend?

Task 3 – 18 Marks

Another key aspect needing consideration is that of unions. There are five categories of management styles in employee relations. What are these five styles, and which one might you recommend and why?

Task 4 – 16 Marks

The need to train *SAVE*'s new employees is also seen as a critical activity. Identifying learning and training needs would be at the heart of this activity. What would be an approach or model for a people development strategy that is linked to the business strategy? This model would include four steps – what are they?

Task 5 – 15 Marks

Performance is a key issue for *SAVE*, especially for its new subsidiary in Japan. The three managers need to consider aspects of effective performance. With reference to the performance cycle, what are the three key aspects of managing individual performance, with examples associated with each aspect?

Task 6 – 15 marks

The American and Japanese managers have different views of working in teams. In considering which approach to take, what are the broad types of teams, and what might be some implications of working in teams for the HRM function?

Task 7 – 9 marks

Combine your findings into a single, written report to the CEO that is properly structured and contains:

- Title page
- Table of contents
- Main body of the report
- References and bibliography
- Appendices (if necessary)

Guidance

Consult with your tutor if you are uncertain about any aspect of the assignment.

You should ensure that you refer to the relevant module concepts and theories to demonstrate your understanding of the relationship between theory and practice.

Submission Requirements

You must submit one word-processed report from you to the managing director as indicated above in Task 7. Your report should answer Tasks 1 to 6 and should be **no more than 5000 words**. The assignment needs to be signed and dated by your tutor.

The report is to be submitted both in paper form and in digital form on a disk.

Warning: All media must be virus free!

Media containing viruses, or media which cannot be run directly, will result in a FAIL grade being awarded for this module.

**You must read and understand NCC Education's policy on 'Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism'.
You must complete the 'Statement and Confirmation of Own Work' form and attach the completed form to
your assignment.**