

# The Health Care Manager's Human Resources Handbook

Second Edition

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# New to This Edition

The Second Edition updates *The Health Care Manager's Human Resources Handbook* by addressing several changes in the field. Topics such as increased pressure on HR to operate with fewer staff members; tendency toward decentralization of certain Human Resources activities; impact of organizational flattening, mergers, and acquisitions; and new laws and changes to existing laws that impact recruiting and interviewing, as well as documentation, termination, legal action, and unions are expanded and discussed.

- Chapter 1: This chapter expands the “human resources versus personnel” discussion and includes a brief additional section.
- Chapter 2: The material concerning human resources staffing has been updated, and the discussion of centralization versus decentralization has been expanded.
- Chapter 3: Information about several laws—Occupational Safety and Health Act, Immigration Reform and Control Act, Americans with Disabilities Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act—has been updated to reflect various changes and refinements (case law, court decisions, etc.).

A section has been added concerning the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 (PPACA) (“Health Care Reform”).

- Chapter 6: Recruiting concerns have been updated to reflect the present times.
- Chapter 7: The prohibitions concerning employment interview questioning have been updated.
- Chapter 12: The material concerning the importance and handling of informal documentation has been expanded.

## NEW TO THIS EDITION

Chapter 15: The material on the state of unions nationally and unionization and organizing specifically in health care has been updated.

The intent and hazards of the proposed (and presently defunct) Employee Free Choice Act are discussed in an added section.

One important area of advice for a manager's conduct during union organizing has been added.

All chapters have been re-edited to accomplish small improvements where necessary, correct minor errors, and add clarification where the need was apparent.

End-of-chapter questions have been clarified and expanded where necessary.

Following the text of every chapter, a section titled **Checklist for the Manager** has been added. This consists of a chronological rendering of the most significant points in the chapter in capsule form.

This edition is supplied with ancillary materials (there were none with the first edition). The ancillary materials include an Instructor's Manual, PowerPoint slides for every chapter, and a Test Bank covering the entire book.

# Preface

Most books written about human resources (HR) management view their subject from the inside looking outward. That is, they use the inside language of human resources almost exclusively and are written primarily for practitioners or students of human resources. Although any manager in any department can acquire useful information from such books, these volumes are of most value to persons employed in HR capacities or preparing to become so employed.

*The Health Care Manager's Human Resources Handbook, Second Edition* is a different sort of book. Rather than presenting HR topics from the viewpoint of the practitioner, this book examines human resources largely from the viewpoint of the department manager in a healthcare provider organization.

This is not another book intended to tell its readers how the HR function works in an organization. Although it necessarily contains a considerable amount of information describing how HR operates, it first and foremost describes what the HR function can do for you, and it shows you how to get the best value out of your organization's HR department. This book will guide you in using your organization's Human Resources capabilities to effectively manage your own organizational unit.

As an internal staff function or support activity, Human Resources does nothing to actively advance the creation of a product or to further the performance of a service for an organization's customers. However, Human Resources does exist to enhance the creation of products and the delivery of services. In the manner of other staff activities, Human Resources exists to support the organization's primary activities. The organization could carry on to some extent without an HR function, but with an HR

## PREFACE

function, it can carry on more efficiently and effectively than would otherwise be possible.

This book does not go into detail about the inner workings of Human Resources to the extent that it would in addressing HR practitioners. Rather, for each topic addressed, enough information is provided to convey an understanding of what is done and why it is done. Guidance is then offered concerning when, why, and how you can take advantage of certain HR services. Each topic is presented in a way that provides an understanding of the reasons behind the processes applied by HR personnel and the positions that HR practitioners generally advocate. The level of detail of this information is varied as necessary to provide that understanding.

For example, as a department manager, you may require considerable detailed knowledge of what occurs within HR when disciplinary action is called for. You need to know the applicability of certain laws so that you are able to avoid the numerous obstacles and pitfalls that plague the process, and you need detailed knowledge about the disciplinary processes because your job responsibilities require your active involvement in applying them. For a number of other topics, such as performance appraisal, you also need detailed knowledge of HR's involvement in order to fulfill your departmental responsibilities.

For other topics, however, you need see only the tip of the iceberg of HR activity. One example is the effects of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) of 1986. Although this particular piece of federal legislation raised many concerns and created additional and often frustrating work for Human Resources personnel, as a line manager your involvement with IRCA can be thoroughly addressed in a few brief paragraphs. Likewise, many of the details of some major aspects of benefits programs and their administration need not be of continuing concern to you. As long as you recognize the portion of the iceberg that is visible to you, you need know little of the part that lies beneath the surface—except to know that it is there.

For most of the topics addressed in this text, four kinds of information are presented:

- Some background information explaining how certain topics came to be necessary or desirable parts of the HR responsibility. Because

so much of what is done in Human Resources is governed by legislation, these explanations include the legal rationale for the HR position or approach.

- The Human Resources responsibility addresses what goes on in HR concerning some topics, and provides whatever the manager ordinarily needs—detail if necessary, but only the tip of the iceberg if that is sufficient—to understand the Human Resources approach to the specific topic.
- Some information addresses interfaces with line management, describing the outward appearance of some aspects of HR activity and identifying when and where the HR department and the line organization meet at points of common interest and activity.
- Guidelines are presented suggesting how you, the working department manager, can call upon the services of the HR department for maximum effect and benefit, so that you can get the best you can possibly obtain from your organization's Human Resources function.

A properly functioning HR department is a valuable resource for the organization. As with any resource, it should be used properly and to the fullest extent required—as efficiently and effectively as possible. Your organization's HR department exists to back you up as a manager, that is, to provide you with support and assistance in ensuring an interested, committed, well-functioning employee group.

If you ever believe you are not getting what you ought to be getting from your Human Resources department, put its staff on the spot. Challenge them. Reach out to help form the working relationship between Human Resources and line management that is so important to a well-functioning department. Let the information and guidance in this book show you how to encourage your Human Resources department to do the best it possibly can do for you and your employees.

—Charles R. McConnell



# About the Author

**Charles McConnell** is an independent healthcare management and human resources consultant and freelance writer specializing in business, management, and human resources topics. For 11 years he was active as a management engineering consultant with the Management and Planning Services (MAPS) division of the Hospital Association of New York State (HANYS); he later spent 18 years as a hospital human resources manager. As author, coauthor, and anthology editor he has published more than 25 books and has contributed numerous articles to various publications. He is in his 31st year as editor of the quarterly professional journal, *The Health Care Manager*.

Mr. McConnell received an MBA and a BS in Engineering from the State University of New York at Buffalo.

