

THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF SRI LANKA
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL ENGINEERING
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME - LEVEL 7
POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA / STAND ALONE COURSES



Final Examination – 2013/14

CEM7102 - Human Resource Management in the Construction Industry

Time Allowed: Three Hours

Date: 09th September 2014

Time: 0930-1230 hrs.

Answer any four (4) questions.
All questions carry equal marks

Q1.

- (a) Managers in the construction industry are often heard to say 'our people are our most important asset'. However, human resource management in the construction industry is severely under developed as compared to the other industrial sectors. Discuss in relation to the situation in Sri Lanka. (08 marks)
- (b) The construction industry is one of the largest sectors employing a large number of people, providing work to a significant proportion of the labor market and providing significant share of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country. What are the major objectives of the process of 'Human Resource Planning' for a construction company? (08 marks)
- (c) Explain why, the understanding of group behaviour is useful in influencing a construction organization. Discuss instances where informal group effect can be
 - (i) Advantageous
 - (ii) Disadvantageous
 for the smooth functioning of a construction company. (09 marks)

Q2.

- (c) Outline a complete organization structure for a road construction project. Discuss why Human Resource Management may not work as per the organizational set up when sub contractors working for main contractors are involved. (10 marks)
- (a) Draw the management grid depicting the basic leader behavior styles as identified by Blake & Mouton and outline the different situations with reference to a construction project. (15 marks)

Q3.

- (a) Briefly distinguish between the following two management approaches.
 - (i) Scientific Management approach by F.W.Taylor
 - (ii) Administrative or Classical Management approach by Henry Fayol
 (05 marks)

- (b) As a Construction Manager, explain how you would apply scientific management principles and concepts to improve the efficiency of different types of workers on a high rise building construction project.

(10 marks)

- (c) Discuss the further improvements that could be made if you also applied human resource management principles on the same workers of the above project.

(10 marks)

Q4.

- (a) Several researches have found that money has never been considered as the major criteria to retain the labor force in construction projects. It is a motivational force that accounts for high performance by executives. Outline one related theory and discuss its relevance.

(10 marks)

- (b) Explain the need for 'Job Design' and the 'Process of Job Design' for engineers.

(08 marks)

- (c) Explain the process of selecting the 'right kind of people' as engineering assistants for construction projects.

(07 marks)

Q5.

- (a) Under what circumstances are the following types of leadership styles more desirable in motivating supervisory level staff on a construction project?

(i) Autocratic leadership

(ii) Participatory leadership

(08 marks)

- (c) Discuss the different sources of Leadership Power and Influence.

Explain which type of Power sources you would prefer in managing workers of a construction site.

(08 marks)

- (c) You are appointed to a Task Force with the objective of eliminating corruption in the construction sites of a construction company. Outline how you would set about approaching the problem making use of your knowledge on Human Resource Management.

(09 marks)

Q6.

- (a) Suppose a Senior Civil Engineer in your construction project has just resigned. As Project Manager what information and details would you provide to the HR department to find the best replacement through external recruitment?

(08 marks)

- (b) How can a company determine whether its recruitment processes are working effectively?

(07 marks)

- (c) Discuss the processes, channels and instruments of communication used within a construction organization and possible causes of failure. What is the remedial action that can be taken to avoid such break downs in communication?

(10 marks)