

## HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT – WHAT AN AWFUL PHRASE!

Human resources management. What an awful phrase! The synonyms to that are ‘**human resistance**’, ‘recruiting’, ‘hiring and firing’, ‘holding peoples’ hands’, ‘they don’t know anything’, ‘contracts’; and all with a tone indicating *\* I’m so glad that I have nothing to do with that.\** And the thought that *\*sigh, I’ll just do whatever I need to in order to keep HR happy, and then I will do what REALLY works on my own\**

In some ways some of these responses are so true, and in some ways they couldn’t be more false. For example:

- human resources activities do cover the spectrum of hiring, firing, recruiting, contracts etc BUT the human resources department alone is not responsible for the successful performance of these activities.
- Many human resources practices are most definitely ‘resistant’ in nature and ‘resisted’ by everyone BUT BECAUSE they are so poorly thought through, developed, implemented and explained.
- You may not be in the HR department BUT if you are in any sort of supervisory position you should most definitely be involved in the implementation and use of HR tools and be conducting HR activities.
- Human resources management is no longer simply ‘personnel’ or ‘human relations’, it is a field which has grown enormously in the past few decades and which is more and more grounded in solid research, measured in terms of hard outputs and most definitely has a proven strong link to your business’s financial performance.
- Doing what you need to in order to keep HR happy may well be the worst thing you could do, while what you do on your own may very well be what HR should be doing!
- ‘holding peoples’ hands’ is CERTAINLY NOT what HR should be doing, it is not what anybody should be doing!
- some managers are better at human resources than their human resources managers. Some human resources managers struggle to deliver value because the organisation itself doesn’t value HR, doesn’t provide the mandate, or the budget, or the support that successful HR needs. Some human resources managers pour money into highly ineffective HR projects or implement destructive HR practices, keenly supported by an organisation that doesn’t realize the impact of what they are doing.

Credible research studies, conducted by impartial researchers, over a number of years and on a variety of industries and businesses, conclusively show that the **manner** in which organisations approach their human resources management activities is a LEADING indicator as to that organisation’s financial performance in years to come. In plain speak – human resources practices conducted properly now will reap rewards later, and human resources practices conducted poorly now will impact negatively on your organisation – you may have been better off doing nothing at all.

**In the next 12 months a series of articles will be presented to you to shed fresh light on how to understand this field and how to get it to practically work for you.**

## WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM THESE ARTICLES?

**Picture One** depicts the ‘ecosystem’ of an organisation – i.e. the dynamics that are there whether you want them to be or not. They just are. The other way you can picture it is as a 4x4 trail – it is just there, with all the laws of physics that go with it, the variations that go with it (the mud, the rocks, the dips and the hills). **This picture will be broken into parts, presented in an easy to understand way, examined and explained in more detail over five articles.**

**Picture Two** depicts how human resources management as a field fits in (e.g. as the field of nature conservation that strives to understand ecosystems or as the land rover that is going to tackle the 4x4 course). It also shows where the human resources department fits in (as the nature conservationist as a person, or the driver of the land rover). This picture **will also be explained in an easy to understand way and broken down into elements over a series of articles.** These elements will be explained in the context of the ‘ecosystem’ or ‘4x4 course’ context. For example, what gear your land-rover should be in, how to put it in that gear, and why that gear should be chosen for that particular part of the course. And how the gear alone is not enough; you also need to consider speed, revs, weight distribution and so on..... (and what if you aren’t in a land rover but are in a golf!).

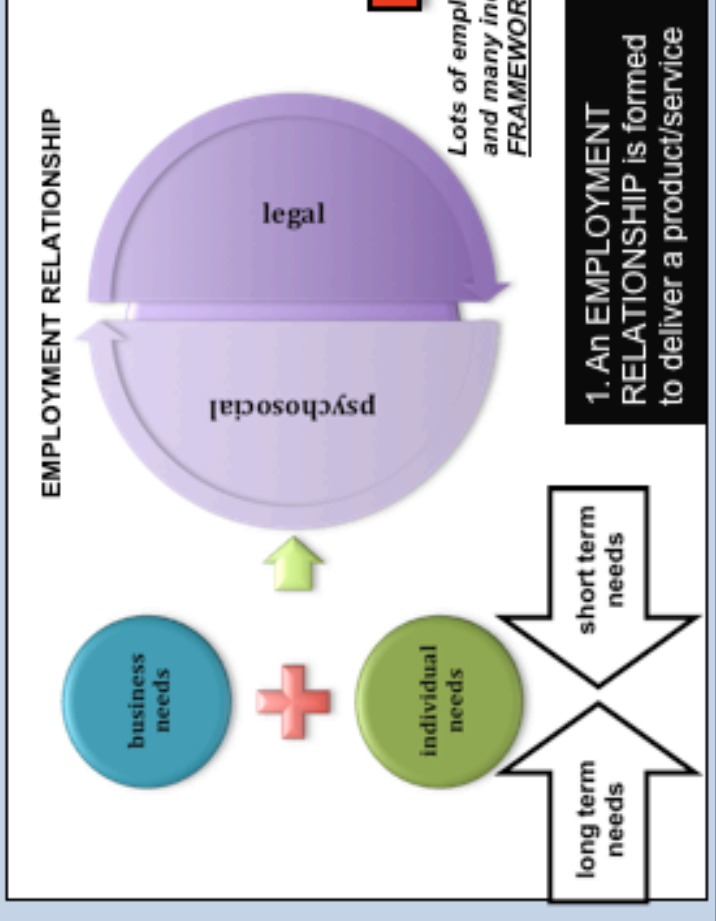
Each article will provide real life examples, some from the tourism industry, some from other industries. We will show what tends to work and what doesn’t, and how to critically think about approaches for yourself. They will be put together by an HR practitioner who has a) coal face experience at the top-end of the hospitality and tourism industry b) formal post-graduate qualification in the field of human resources management and c) using hard information sourced from credible academic texts and studies.

At the moment human resources management might possibly sound like your mother, full of mindless irritating rules, saying “you can’t eat that sweet” or “you should always eat the crusts on your bread”. These articles aim to explain the motivation underlying these comments. The equivalent being “what I’m actually saying is ‘learn good eating habits so that one day you don’t get obese, have high blood pressure, develop diabetes...’” and so on. As a child it might have sounded irritating, as an adult you now know that she was right and probably try to instill some of these attitudes in your own children.

However, these articles are also here to show you that some of those HR things that you hate and think are stupid ARE stupid and SHOULD be thrown in the trash. The equivalent of the olden day motherly advice of “put butter on burn wounds!” which, at the time, was the best advice that she knew, but has since been disproven as an effective burn treatment.

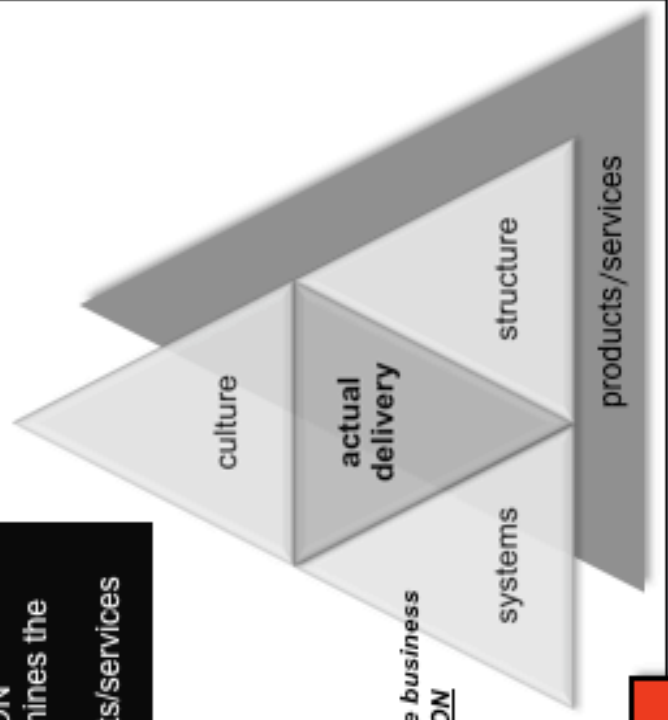
Human Resources Management could be equated to knowing how to best lead a healthy lifestyle – it is everyone’s right to know, not just a Doctor or a nutritionist. It is a way of thinking, a way of life, and it makes a proven difference.

Human resources management is an awful phrase. Next time you have 5 minutes look up the following phrases instead; ‘change management’; ‘performance management’; ‘human resources information systems’; ‘learning & development’; ‘organisational behaviour’; ‘strategic human resources management’ and start getting excited about what knowledge of this field can do for you.

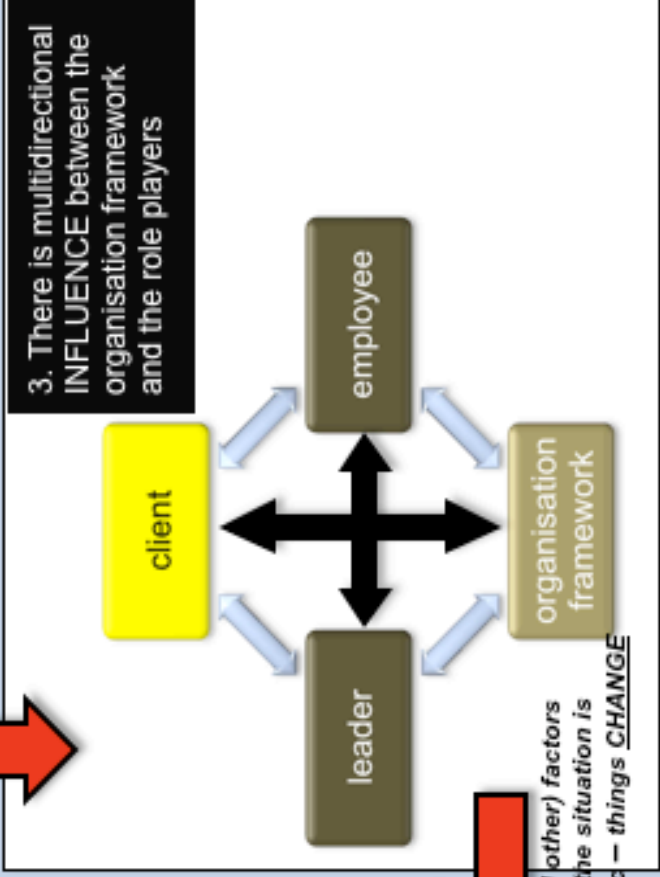


Lots of employment relationships between one business and many individual leads to an **ORGANISATION FRAMEWORK** developing

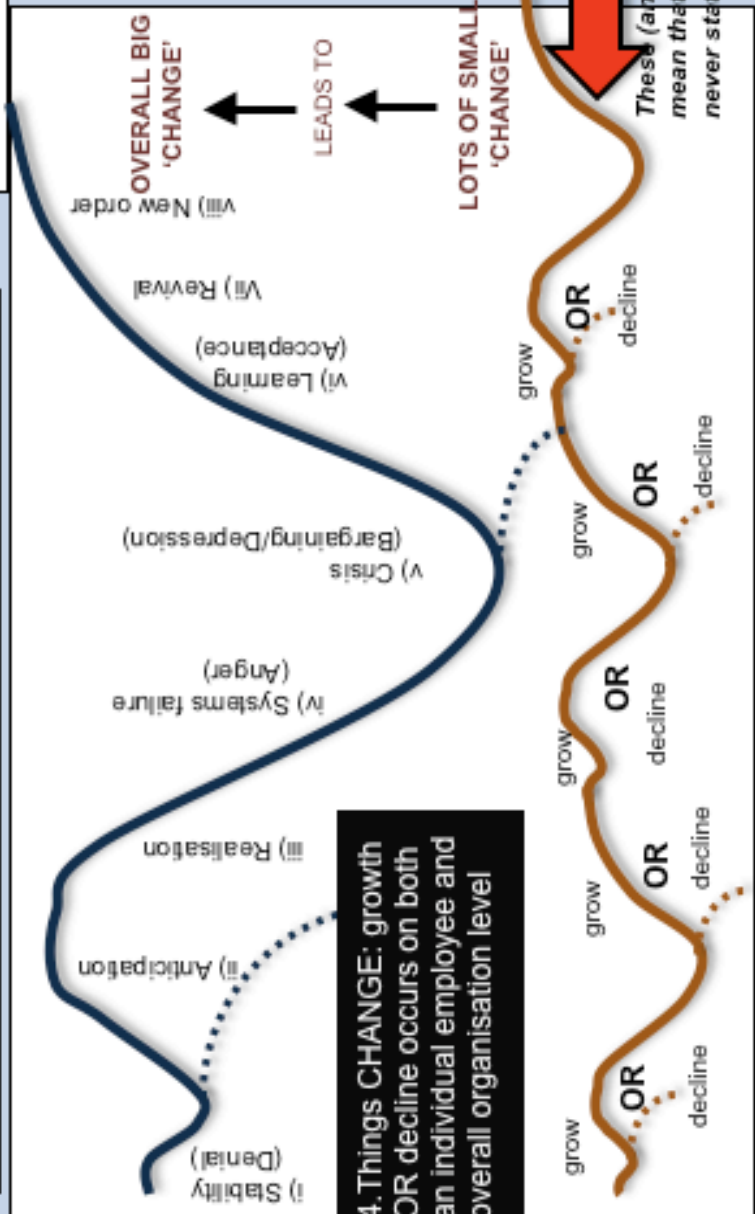
**2. The ORGANISATION FRAMEWORK** determines the actual delivery of the organisation's products/services



Within this framework operate several **ROLE PLAYERS**



These (and other) factors mean that the situation is never static — things **CHANGE**



**PICTURE TWO: HRM AS THE ‘NATURE CONSERVATION’ FIELD AND THE HR DEPARTMENT AS THE ‘NATURE CONSERVATIONIST’**

HR department monitors HR activities carried out by other departments. Also develops HR tools to assist other departments in their HR activities.

