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**Human resource management —  
Vocabulary**

*Management des ressources humaines — Vocabulaire*

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## Foreword

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies (ISO member bodies). The work of preparing International Standards is normally carried out through ISO technical committees. Each member body interested in a subject for which a technical committee has been established has the right to be represented on that committee. International organizations, governmental and non-governmental, in liaison with ISO, also take part in the work. ISO collaborates closely with the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) on all matters of electrotechnical standardization.

The procedures used to develop this document and those intended for its further maintenance are described in the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1. In particular the different approval criteria needed for the different types of ISO documents should be noted. This document was drafted in accordance with the editorial rules of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 2 (see [www.iso.org/directives](http://www.iso.org/directives)).

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For an explanation on the meaning of ISO specific terms and expressions related to conformity assessment, as well as information about ISO's adherence to the World Trade Organization (WTO) principles in the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) see the following URL: [www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html](http://www.iso.org/iso/foreword.html).

The committee responsible for this document is Technical Committee ISO/TC 260, *Human resource management*.

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## Introduction

This document has been developed to help facilitate a common understanding of and maintain consistency in fundamental vocabulary in human resource management standards.

This document is intended to be used by:

- human resource practitioners;
- academic professionals and students;
- developers of related standards;
- stakeholders in organizations, regardless of organizational size and type;
- labour unions, work councils, other employee and employer representatives;
- others interested in the human resource management profession.

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# Human resource management — Vocabulary

## 1 Scope

This document defines terms used in human resource management standards.

## 2 Normative references

There are no normative references in this document.

## 3 Terms related to the organization

### 3.1

#### **governance**

way a whole organization is led, directed, controlled and held accountable

### 3.2

#### **organizational culture**

values, beliefs and practices that influence the conduct and behaviour of people and organizations

### 3.3

#### **organization structure**

hierarchical arrangement of authority, responsibility and accountability in an organization

### 3.4

#### **business model**

organization's approach to operating in its environment

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### 3.5

#### **strategy**

organization's approach to achieving its objectives

### 3.6

#### **business continuity planning**

##### **BCP**

process of mutual *planning* (3.7) by organizations and other *stakeholders* (5.1)

Note 1 to entry: Examples of how business continuity planning is used can include objectives to plan, establish, implement, operate, monitor, review, maintain and continually improve a documented management system to protect against and mitigate the effects of disruptive incidents, prepare for and respond to the same.

### 3.7

#### **planning**

process of thinking about and organizing activities required to achieve a desired outcome

### 3.8

#### **strategic planning**

*planning* (3.7) involving the formulation, development, implementation and evaluation of factors that are relevant to an organization's long-term or overall interests, and the means of achieving its objectives

### 3.9

#### **social responsibility**

responsibility of an organization for the consequences of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behaviour that

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- contributes to sustainable development, including health and the welfare of society;
- takes into account the expectations of *stakeholders* (5.1);
- is in compliance with applicable law and consistent with international norms of behaviour; and
- is integrated throughout the organization and practised in its relationships

[SOURCE: ISO 26000:2010, 2.18, modified — The word “impacts” has been replaced by “consequences”, and the Notes to entry have been removed]

### 3.10 management

process of *planning* (3.7), organizing, directing and controlling the outcomes of people, groups or organizations

### 3.11 performance management

*management* (3.10) of the *performance* (4.12) of people, groups and organizations

### 3.12 management style

approach or method to *management* (3.10)

EXAMPLE Participative management is a management style that encourages and enables people to contribute to decision-making with accountability; authoritarian management is a management style that discourages people to participate in decisions that affect them; country club management is a management style typified by lack of required direction and accountability.

[SOURCE: Blake & Mouton Managerial Grid]

### 3.13 risk effect of uncertainty

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Note 1 to entry: An effect is a deviation from the expected — positive or negative.

Note 2 to entry: Uncertainty is the state, even partial, of deficiency of information related to, understanding or knowledge of, an event, its consequence, or likelihood.

Note 3 to entry: Risk is often characterized by reference to potential “events” (as defined in ISO Guide 73:2009, 3.5.1.3) and “consequences” (as defined in ISO Guide 73:2009, 3.6.1.3), or a combination of these.

Note 4 to entry: Risk is often expressed in terms of a combination of the consequences of an event (including changes in circumstances) and the associated “likelihood” (as defined in ISO Guide 73:2009, 3.6.1.1) of occurrence.

### 3.14 policy

intentions and direction of an organization, as formally expressed by its top management

### 3.15 materiality

measure of the significance of an element to organizational results

### 3.16 feedback

information provided to people, groups or organizations regarding *performance* (4.12) or activities

Note 1 to entry: Feedback obtained during a process can be used to confirm or modify subsequent actions.

### 3.17 benchmarking

comparing attributes, processes or *performance* (4.12) between organizations



## 4 Terms related to human resources and planning

### 4.1

#### human capital

value of the collective knowledge, skills and abilities of an organization's people

### 4.2

#### human resources

##### HR

people working within or contributing to the organization

### 4.3

#### capacity management

process used to manage the *human capital* (4.1) necessary to execute organizational commitments and delivery excellence

Note 1 to entry: The primary goal is to ensure that capacity meets current and near term future organizational requirements in a cost-effective manner. It ties together location, *strategy* (3.5), organizational commitments, labour demand signal, financial constraints and total *workforce* (10.1) (contingent and direct labour). It is the mechanism necessary for effective resource management.

### 4.4

#### capacity plan

view of resource requirements over a defined period that reflects planned numbers of resources by roles and skills

Note 1 to entry: This capacity plan can include consideration of skills development, retraining, redeployment, *recruitment* (11.1) and use of organizational partners and third-party subcontractors.

### 4.5

#### human resource strategy

approach to implementing *policies* (3.14) and practices that affect people, which are aligned with organizational *strategy* (3.5)

EXAMPLE Global integration and local responsiveness, global standardization and local response, such as in *workforce mobility* (12.1), local hiring versus transferring preference, incentive processes.

### 4.6

#### human resource management

##### HRM

*management* (3.10) of people in organizations

Note 1 to entry: Human resource management can include *talent management* (13.2), employee relations and industrial relations, separation, training and development, reward, *compensation* (6.5) and other benefits, *performance management* (3.11), grievance management, *strategies* (3.5), metrics, principles, *policies* (3.14) decisions, operations, practices and methods.

Note 2 to entry: Human resource management optimizes the contribution of people to support organizational and *stakeholder* (5.1) success.

### 4.7

#### organizational values

aspirational or articulated standards, behaviour, principles or concepts that an organization considers important

**4.8**  
**human resource planning**  
**HRP**

process of anticipating, *assessing* (11.11), forecasting, articulating and meeting the organization's need for people

Note 1 to entry: Human resource planning can ensure that a sufficient number of people possessing the required *competence* (5.3) will be available to meet organizational needs.

**4.9**  
**human resource information system**  
**HRIS**

information technology that supports *human resource management* (4.6)

Note 1 to entry: The human resource information system can integrate *compensation* (6.5) and benefits, payroll, recruiting, learning and development, *workforce planning* (10.2), analytics, *performance management* (3.11) and others.

**4.10**  
**people risk**

*risk* (3.13) related to negative outcomes that arise as a consequence of the behaviour and activities of people

**4.11**  
**succession plan**

process for identifying and developing current employees with the potential to fill key positions in the organization

**4.12**  
**performance**

measurable result

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Note 1 to entry: Performance can relate either to quantitative or qualitative findings.

Note 2 to entry: Performance can relate to the *management* (3.10) of activities, processes, products (including services), systems or organizations.

Note 3 to entry: In the context of human resources, performance relates to the execution or accomplishment of work by people, groups or organizations.

**4.13**  
**key performance indicator**  
**KPI**

indicators that are qualitative and quantitative measures that demonstrate critical success factors of the people in an organization

EXAMPLE Revenue; profitability.

Note 1 to entry: Key performance indicators differ depending on organizational goals and are often used as determinants for evaluating *performance* (4.12).

**4.14**  
**contingent worker**

people who are engaged as casual labour, flexible labour, independent contractor, independent professional and consultant

## 5 Terms related to people and organization

### 5.1

#### **interested party stakeholder**

person or organization that can affect, be affected by, or perceive itself to be affected by a decision or activity

EXAMPLE Customers, owners, people in an organization, suppliers, bankers, unions, work councils, partners, or society that may include competitive or pressure groups.

### 5.2

#### **staffing**

process of acquiring, deploying and retaining people

Note 1 to entry: this can be both internal and external.

### 5.3

#### **competence**

ability to apply knowledge and skills to achieve intended results

### 5.4

#### **core competences**

*competences* (5.3) that are essential for an organization's success

### 5.5

#### **competence model**

process of analysing and describing knowledge, skill and ability of people

### 5.6

#### **competence framework**

structure that defines the *competence* (5.3) of people within an organization

### 5.7

#### **leadership competences**

required set of *competences* (5.3) for leaders in *workplace* (5.8) contexts

Note 1 to entry: This can include leadership skills, abilities, characteristics and behaviour.

### 5.8

#### **workplace**

area(s) in which the worker's activities are carried out

[SOURCE: ISO/TR 25901-1:2016, 2.1.8.35]

### 5.9

#### **career**

pattern of work-related experiences that span a person's life

### 5.10

#### **career stage**

distinct phase of a person's *career* (5.9)

Note 1 to entry: Career stages can include entry, establishment, advancement, maintenance, transition and maturity.

### 5.11

#### **employee referral**

potential employee recommended by current employee(s) of the organization

Note 1 to entry: These recommendations can be compensated.