



**Devolution of HR Responsibilities to Line Managers
– Keys to Successful Implementation within the IPA**

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I hereby certify that the information contained in this (my submission) is information pertaining to research I conducted for this dissertation. All information other than my own contribution will be fully referenced and listed in the relevant bibliography section to the rear of the report.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of my class mates and tutors over the past four years of studying for the honours degree at the NCI, with special thanks to Fabian Armendariz for his structured approach to writing the final year dissertation which gave us the discipline to be able to complete the dissertation and for all his assistance and advice during the process.

I would also like to thank the library staff at both the NCI and the IPA for their invaluable assistance during the research for the dissertation.

Most importantly I would like to express my appreciation to my work colleagues, my family and friends for all their help, support and patience during these challenging four years of study at the NCI.

Introduction

Devolvement is important for the development of strategic human resource management (HRM); in general terms it has been identified by many authors (such as Beer et al and Schuler) as one of two key elements, along with integration of HRM into the corporate framework, for developing strategic HRM within business circles. Since Albert Reynolds as then Taoiseach began the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) in 1994 a strategic approach to HRM has also been high on the public service agenda. A major part of the move towards strategic HRM in the public sector is the devolution of some day-to-day HR activities to Line Managers, ideally in conjunction with the roll out of PMDS. Although reform of HRM has been progressing at a slower pace than some of the proposed reforms under the initiative visible reform has taken place.

As the Institute of Public Administration (IPA) sees its role as a standard setter and training organisation within the public service arena it is vital that it attempts to take a leading role in all aspects of the modernisation agenda. This leading role has been taken on with great success in most areas of SMI and Delivering Better Government (DBG), however, it would be fair to say that one area in which the IPA has been slow to change is the modernisation of its HRM activities and especially devolving certain aspects of the HRM function to line managers/supervisors.

This dissertation will attempt to gauge opinion amongst IPA staff, Line Managers, Senior Managers, HR and Union representatives regarding devolving certain day to day HR duties to Line Managers and also look at the viability of devolving HRM within the IPA. It is proposed to use semi-structured interviews and questionnaires to gather primary research data. Any major concerns will be outlined and discussed within the dissertation and any suggestions will be considered for recommendation.

The results of research on how other organisations both nationally and internationally have tackled devolution of HR will be examined to determine the potential advantages and disadvantages devolution could hold for the IPA. The viability of devolution of HR duties to line managers and conclusions and recommendations for the keys to successful implementation of the devolution process within the IPA will also be put forward.

Chapter 1 – Literature Review

The discussion and research into devolvement of HR to line managers came into prominence in the mid 1980's. Much of the discussion surrounded the direction that personnel management was taking with many theorists promoting a strategic HRM agenda whilst others were dismissive of HRM asking what the major difference was between personnel management and HRM, Legge for example asks "*why the language of HRM has gained the currency it appears to have.....after all there is little real difference between normative HRM and personnel management models*" (Legge, 1989:40, cited in Human Resource Management in Europe, Brewster & Larsen 1992). One of the most influential models shaping the direction which personnel management or HRM would take going forward was the Harvard Model developed by Beer et al in 1984. This model was one of the first to promote integration of HR into the corporate framework and a devolvement of some HR duties to line managers as being key aspects of strategic HRM.

An article that was referenced on a regular basis during research was Lengnick-Hall, Lengnick-Hall's article on Strategic Human Resources Management (1988). This article sought to "*present a means for integrating human resource management into the overall effort to match strategy and structure*" Lengnick-Hall, Lengnick-Hall (1988:454). The article proposed that firms looking for a competitive advantage in the market should look to their human resources and the HR function needed to step up to the mark by providing a significant contribution to the strategic objectives of the firm. They set out the reasons why it was desirable to integrate HRM into the corporate framework but also explained that HR practitioners must not get caught up in their own little HR bubble, they need to formulate strategies and plans but also to convince senior management that there was value to be gained by implementing these initiatives "*great care may be taken in designing a statistical model of manpower planning, whereas little thought is given to gaining managerial acceptance of the model's output*" Lengnick-Hall, Lengnick-Hall (1988:457).

Another key element in the article is that attention should be drawn to the fact that, business strategy and HR strategy are "*areas that have developed independent of one another (at least in the academic arena)*" Lengnick-Hall, Lengnick-Hall (1988:467), therefore researchers and innovators in each field generally had a limited knowledge of the other so gaining integration

between the disciplines was made more difficult. This article highlighted the advantages and disadvantages of integrating HRM within the strategic management process and also sought to highlight that HR needed to become more pro-active within organisations.

Freedman (1990) examined the changing role of top human resource executives and the new business demands they were facing on top of their old responsibilities of administration, employee welfare etc. She theorised that *“line managers might begin to assume some aspects of HR Functions as part of a complete management role.....the “old” functional speciality (personnel management) is fading as management of HR becomes an aspect of general management”* Freedman (1990:13).

Brewster et al set out the methodology behind the Price Waterhouse Cranfield Project (PWCP) on European trends in HRM. *“The PWCP was set up in 1989 as a direct response to the absence of comparable European data....in light of the approaching single European market”* Brewster et al (1991). One of its main objectives was to investigate if there had been a shift in personnel thinking towards strategic HRM within Europe. *“The PWCP survey is seeking to establish the involvement of personnel departments in corporate strategy formation”* Brewster et al (1991). They saw integration of HR with the corporate objectives as a main indicator of a shift to strategic HRM.

Brewster and Larsen 1992 also examined European data on HRM and were seeking to find out how much each country surveyed had shifted from personnel management to strategic HRM by examining the extent of integration of HRM into business strategy and the degree of devolvement to line managers. *“Devolvement is driven by both organizational and effectiveness criteria. Organizationally, it is now widely believed that responsibilities should be located at appropriate places within the organization and that means increasingly, with line managers rather than specialist functions”* Brewster (1992:413). They came to the conclusion that Europe needed to develop their own models for strategic HRM as many of the American models do not fit in with European organisations culture.

Budhwar and Sparrow (1997) examined the new open market India to see whether integration of HRM into business objectives and devolution of HR duties to line management had begun to occur in much the same way it had in Europe around the time the EU was about to become a single open market. This was one of the first research projects on strategic HRM outside

westernised economies. They found that *"issues of whether and when to integrate HRM into the corporate strategy and whether and by how much to devolve responsibility for HRM to line managers have become of central significance.....an increase in the degree of responsibility for HRM being devolved to line managers is taking place. We fear that if a strategy of devolvement is not also associated with closer integration of HRM into the business planning process, this may create a situation of chaos in Indian organisation"* Budhwar (1997).

Budhwar examined how HRM had developed in Britain in recent years and also looked at five of the main strategic HRM models to see if they produced results in six British industries. This article did not shed much light on devolvement but did highlight importance of the Harvard Model (Beer et al 1984) and the 5-P's Model (Schuler, 1992). The main finding of Budhwar's research was *"that the sample firms are practicing a relatively low level of devolvement in comparison to the integration function. If the HRM function is to become more strategic, then the level of practice of both these concepts has to increase"* Budhwar (2000)

Renwick and MacNeil looked at devolution from a line manager's perspective examining how it affected their career path and work loads as well as how well they were supported by HR professionals when carrying out devolved duties. They found that many line managers were reluctant to take on HR responsibilities as they saw it as restricting their careers but also that many HR professionals were reluctant to give up visible and measurable duties and often did not fully support line managers in cases where they were given HR responsibilities. *"HR need to support and advise the line to do HR work, and this support and advice does not necessarily occur in all cases"* Renwick (2002).

From a public service perspective, development of a new approach to HRM within the public service was part of a process of Strategic Management in Government Departments initiated by the Strategic Management Initiative (SMI) in 1994 and Delivering Better Government (DBG) in 1996 aimed at providing a better service to citizens and using available resources to best effect.

One of the key themes in DBG was that changes in the way services are delivered must be supported by a modernisation in the approach to human resource management (HRM) in the

public service. Personnel management in the public service at the time was mainly administrative in nature therefore DBG set out some key recommendations to achieve a more strategic approach to HRM and the management and development of people. These included; personnel units re-orienting their focus to take a more strategic/developmental approach to HRM, a process of devolution of day to day personnel duties to line managers and the development of a HRM strategy linked to overall departmental and organisational objectives.

Subsequently a central, cross-departmental HRM working group was established to develop proposals for overall reform of HRM in the public service. This working group developed proposals in relation to areas such as Performance Management and Development Systems (PMDS), recruitment and selection.

The HRM working group envisaged personnel units re-orienting their focus to take a more strategic/developmental approach to HRM, a process of devolution of day to day personnel duties to line managers and the development of a HRM strategy linked to overall departmental and organisational objectives as recommended by DBG within a process of devolution of personnel policy decision making from the centre to line departments. The implementation of PMDS was also seen as *“a critical first step in the strengthening of the line management process”* (HRM Working Group discussion paper 1997).

The OECD strategic review and reform report (1999) highlighted a number of broad terms and concerns raised by member countries, which could be a useful barometer to measure the IPA against during the devolution process.

They found that devolution of HRM to managers is made problematic by the fact that many managers do not regard HRM as an important part of their work knowing as they do that frequently it is neither rewarded nor valued institutionally. As a consequence there is a need to provide the necessary supports for managers if they are to assume responsibility for HRM matters, including training, guidance, accountability and information. Moreover the need for devolution of other responsibilities including financial management is seen as critical to the successful devolution of HRM responsibilities.

Unlike previous attempts at reforming the public service, DBG was prepared by a senior group of Civil Servants, and implementation of its policies was also entrusted to various groups of Civil Servants such as the HRM working group mentioned above. As a

consequence, there was greater acceptance and a sense of ownership within the Public Service for its policies.

During the 2002 evaluation of SMI/DBG by the Irish Government it was realised that fundamental human resource management changes had not been developed as speedily as other elements of the SMI/DBG agenda.

The evaluation learned that there seemed to be a *“perception amongst Senior Managers that they had insufficient direct control or influence over HR matters”* (2002 Evaluation SMI/DBG). It was also found that there was a *“strong sense that the public service had been under-managed. The distinction between under and non-performance was unclear, manpower-planning systems were under developed at departmental levels and some inflexibility remained around grades, pay and incentives”* (2002 Evaluation SMI/DBG). On the positive side it was found that there had been a *“broad compliance with the request for departments to produce a HR strategy and PMDS was a significant move forward but expectations surrounding it were very high”* (2002 Evaluation SMI/DBG).

The evaluation concluded by saying that links between business planning and PMDS are essential for a more strategic HR unit and as will be seen throughout this dissertation quality of leadership and support at management level is also critical.

In response to these findings the Government moved modernisation forward by taking a whole of Government approach. Future directions for the HRM area were identified as:

1. Reform of legislative framework.
2. More flexible recruitment procedures
3. Embedding PMDS across the public sector
4. An integrated HRM strategy

It was recommended that organisations and departments must move to culture of managing for results with commitment and support of Senior Management; a change of staff values, attitudes and expectations; staff involvement through partnership; training and development aligned with strategic objectives and business plans. The 2008 OECD public management review states that *“In terms of delegation of authority and responsibility, the implementation*

and overall impact of the DBG strategy will depend on the capability and commitment of senior and line managers. Traditionally, as they have developed through generalist ranks, however, existing managers have lacked experience in active human resource management. One can safely assume that they were not prepared for the new dimension to their management roles proposed in DBG” (OECD, 2008).

HRM reforms have put in place two major tools to assist line managers to better direct staff performance. Firstly, the new management structure enables them (and expects them) to link the objectives and strategy of the organisation to the jobs and tasks done by the people in their organisation, whether as individuals or as part of a team. Secondly, it enables them (and expects them) to develop and implement PMDS which is adapted to the business needs of their organisation, and to use it for a structured dialogue about performance and development with each of their employees. In order to do this, they also need to link their human resource management activities to their business plans.

PMDS

For most public servants PMDS was the first step for both Line Managers and staff in having serious dialogue about their roles and prospects. The public sector has been considered by many as being poor at management/staff feedback. PMDS can help address this but *“it carries with it an implied assumption that managers possess the capacity and willingness to manage the consequences of such feedback”* (Guidance document – DGB/SMI, 2001). The 2008 OECD public management review argues that PMDS reviews are supposed to have an impact on decisions in relation to probation, increments, higher scale posts and promotion. While the design of PMDS has not been delegated, PMDS reviews are a delegated process and thus imply a higher degree of managerial involvement in individual staff careers. In future it will be important that managers enjoy appropriate levels of devolved discretion to follow-up on actions agreed during performance reviews with staff.

While initially PMDS represents a system of performance management, ultimately policies on recruitment, induction, promotion, nature of work, training, career development and reward must be based on a consistent approach to HRM supported by PMDS.

It is highly appropriate that development of PMDS happens concurrently with the devolution of personnel issues to Line Managers and devising of HR strategies. Ultimately PMDS should act as a vehicle for the delivery of a wide range of personnel policies. Its central role should be reflected in HR strategies. *“PMDS is a valuable tool in linking individuals and teams into delivering standards of performance, which help secure deliverables indicated in business plans”* (Civil service Conference on SMI, April 2002).

A lot of emphasis has been placed on the role of PMDS in the devolution process within the public service throughout the research material for this dissertation, the 2002 report by the PA consulting group considers that *“PMDS has been a significant achievement and clearly points to it as one of the most important achievements in HRM, which otherwise has been slower to reform than other components of government modernisation strategies”* (Cited in OECD Public management review 2008). Whilst it is true that PMDS has a crucial role to play in the devolution of HR duties, its role is no more important than that of the staff, Line Managers, HR unit, unions or Senior Management. In fact PMDS should be seen as more of a lever for change; it can put the whole devolution process in perspective for all involved if implemented correctly. Armstrong (1998) argues that if authority involves the exercise of personal influence arising from the knowledge or position, then the devolution of expertise must be another dimension of devolution. The devolution of expertise entails devolving not only the tasks but the skills and knowledge to perform these tasks.

National/International Experiences

Before the IPA decides to devolve its HR duties to Line Managers it must examine how other organisations both nationally and internationally have handled the process, learning from their failures and successes. As no two organisations are the same it would be unwise to attempt to replicate another organisation or departments model of devolution to the letter but some elements of their models could be put into use or adapted to suit the IPA's organisational structure and culture. Due to time and word restrictions for the purposes of this dissertation one national organisation (the Irish Courts Service) and one international (the UK Civil Service) were researched. As they both have similar structures to the IPA the manner in which devolution of HR duties was implemented contained some valuable lessons.

Devolution in the Irish Courts Service

The Courts Service, being a relatively new entity (just over 9 years old at the time of this project) had the advantage of being able to start from a blank sheet in terms of developing its structure and policies in many areas, including HRM. This allowed for the establishment of a Human Resources structure that had a more strategic focus from the outset, as opposed to having to re-orient the function in this direction, which is the case in many public service departments and offices including the IPA. This aided them in implementing a number of initiatives, including the establishment of a regional Partnership structure. This structure has also proved useful in terms of introducing change management initiatives such as the devolution of HR functions to line divisions/regional offices.

The HR Directorate adopted a very methodical, transparent and comprehensive approach to the devolution project, which they divided into the following stages;

1. **Team meetings:** meetings were held involving Senior Management and staff to plan and organise the project, this ensured participation by staff and that discussions took place to agree the tasks to be devolved.
2. **Work plan:** The actions required to achieve devolution were agreed and scheduled with responsibilities for specific tasks assigned to individual officers on that schedule
3. **Procedures Manual:** This was a key tool to assist the devolution process. The procedures manual contains step-by-step instructions on task procedures and “trouble shooting”.
4. **Staff Handbook:** This was prepared as a guide for all staff and covers much more than the devolved functions. It is regarded however as another tool to assist the devolution process. The handbook covers all areas from recruitment through to retirement. It was prepared by assigning responsibility for the preparation of information on individual areas to specific members of staff.

5. Regional Managers Presentation: This presentation was made to all regional managers in 2002, before devolution of HR functions commenced. Managers were introduced to the procedures manual and staff handbook. They were advised of the cultural impact of devolution and the responsibility that now rested with them in relation to specific HR functions. They were requested to advise staff in their region that devolution would commence with effect from November 2002.

6. Regional Office Training: Regional staff received one day's intensive training to introduce them to the HR practices being devolved and to give practical examples on the processing of it.

7. Records Management: Relevant files and an information pack were dispatched to regional offices. Spreadsheets were prepared to provide information on increment and probation (Key dates, etc) and a database was prepared for recording and maintaining sick leave records.

8. Helpdesk: The HR Directorate, with the support of the IT Unit, established a helpdesk, which was to be used as a source of information for staff using the staff handbook and for the regional staff when experiencing a difficulty with processing HR functions.

Outcome:

The devolution of functions is complete and has been very successful. Feedback was positive and the majority of enquiries to the helpdesk were seeking information and assistance rather than complaining about the fact that they now have to deal with an additional block of work. The Human Resource Directorate will evaluate the effectiveness of the new arrangements, with a view to identifying any deficiencies with the system and to introducing subsequently any further measures considered necessary to maintain or improve the system.

The Courts Service is also developing a Managers' Handbook to assist them in dealing with the wide range of responsibilities and duties they are expected to perform. The Handbook will include, but will not be confined to all the HR functions, which have been devolved to them.

No additional staffing resources were provided to regional managers to deal with the devolved functions. They were absorbed into the general management regime in those offices. The HR Directorate gave a high priority to the project however and assigned staff resources to the project to manage it, to deliver the necessary training and to provide the ongoing through the helpdesk.

Conclusions:

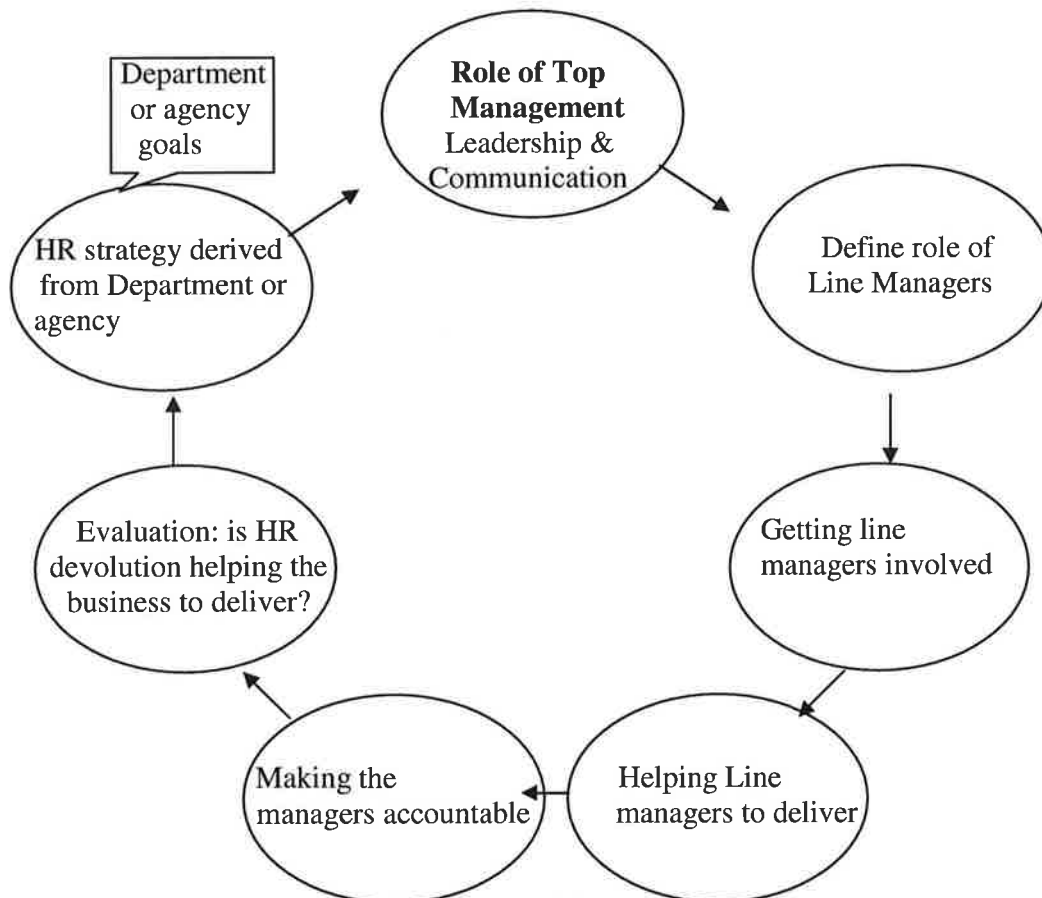
1. The Courts Service strategy was to decide on what was to be devolved and then focus on putting in place the arrangements and supports to ensure that this was achieved as one package, rather than incrementally. Now that devolution of this substantial range of HR functions has been achieved, it will be possible to devolve further functions in the future.
2. The process was carefully planned in advance, with clear stages identified, tasks allocated and deadlines set.
3. All of the major stakeholders (HR section, Regional Management and Staff) were fully consulted throughout the process, thereby ensuring a greater likelihood of buy in by all involved.
4. The level of support that is provided during and after devolution is important, both as an indication of Senior Management's commitment to the process and to ensure that the transition occurs smoothly. The importance of providing comprehensive information/guidance as well as an easily accessible source backup/expertise/assistance (helpdesk) was also critical to its success.
5. The relative ease with which the devolution was achieved in this new organisation is in contrast with the difficulties being experienced with trying to introduce devolution of HR into more established structures.
6. Additional staffing resources were not required in order for devolution to succeed. The essential requirements were that the process was properly planned, that comprehensive training and support was provided, that Senior Management were fully committed to it and that local management and staff were involved at all stages in the project. There was also an acceptance of the logic of managing these issues at a local rather than a central level.

Reform in the UK

Reform of HRM in the UK public sector took place in the context of significantly wider developments in the UK administration. Nonetheless some useful frameworks (See figure 1) and approaches were developed in relation to specific issues that are relevant to this dissertation. A cabinet office consortium project, which focussed on the devolution of HR development to line managers, took place in 1993. That report and a subsequent evaluation which took place one year after the project highlight two lessons about the respective roles which top management, line managers and personnel sections should play in the devolution process.

1. Overall there is a need for an integrated approach; actions undertaken by line management must be linked both to an overall HR strategy and the business planning and implementation process.
2. There should be good communications and visible action by top management to emphasise the importance of delegating HR development responsibilities

Figure 1: Framework for HRM Devolution: (cabinet office '93 cited in CPMR 16)



The personnel section in the UK Cabinet Office saw itself as providing two key services. The first service was that of developing a HR strategy, which is linked to the organisations goals and which set the boundaries within which line managers could act. Secondly there was a need to move to a new relationship with line managers in which the manager is a customer and the personnel section facilitates the process of delegation through the provision of support and professional advice, as opposed to determining the process.

The cabinet office continues to develop and encourage best practice at line department level for example they regularly hold and facilitate work shops for personnel officers and managers which are set up to consider HRM issues of common interest. Cabinet office also continues to play a role in monitoring and ensuring best practice in training and development for example through the setting of targets in relation to **investors in people accreditation** by departments and agencies. Pay and grading are dealt with by the treasury office through annual settlements with departments and agencies on running costs.

Some departments and agencies have achieved significantly more progress than others in developing a strategic approach to HRM. There is also acknowledgement in the white paper; Modernising Government (1999) that *“further change is necessary to ensure that initiative is rewarded and inflexible practices in pay and conditions are dismantled while at the same time ensuring that the corporate identity of the civil service is strengthened”*. A number of mechanisms have been put in place to achieve such changes, for example the cabinet office has set out a range of corporate action plans on better cross-departmental mobility, performance management, development of staff and equality.

Another key element of the ongoing modernisation process is the setting up of a “nerve centre” of the reformed organisation – the centre for management and policy studies (CMPS) whose task will be *“to create a new generation of civil servants who have the skills, training and values required to meet the changing requirements of the civil service”* (Modernising Government 1999). This will be achieved through a number of mechanisms including the delivery of courses and initiatives on “mastering change” leadership and the roll out of 360-degree feedback and personal development plans to all civil servants.

The central DFP sees its role as one of providing guidance and specialist expertise to personnel sections in line departments. In turn, the line department’s personnel sections

provide guidance to personnel sections in the Next Steps Agencies under their remit. Some areas of HRM have been decentralised to agency level. Training is primarily handled at agency level and agencies are actively encouraged to attain Investors in People (IIP) accreditations.

Relevance of National/International experience to the IPA

Much of the criticisms levelled at the Irish reform programme centre on the limited degree of devolution that will take place in relation to key areas such as pay and grading, this could easily be the case in the IPA as well. But the UK experience suggests the decentralisation of Pay and Grading will not in itself result in a more strategic approach to HR at line department level. The new approach adopted at cabinet office level is to facilitate rather than prescribe best practice in relation to the “soft” or developmental aspects of HRM. This is achieved through a number of interventions such as action research projects. It is also interesting to observe that the ongoing process of modernising in the UK has been strengthened by the commitment of the resources to the centre for management and policy studies. The setting up of a nerve centre for training could also be useful within the IPA. The IPA are at a distinct advantage in the training aspect of HRM as they are able to call on the expertise of their Research and HR Training units both of whom have a proven track record in all aspects of HR training. The HR Training unit currently run CIPD certified courses and The Research unit have written numerous CPMR research papers on the subject of HR.

There are practical arguments for the retention of centralised control over HRM activities such as recruitment. Centralised control ensures consistency of treatment for example in relation to equal opportunities, freedom of information and data protection matters but policies such as pay determination may require a degree of decentralisation to take account of local conditions.

It is also significant to note the extent of the success The Irish Courts Service seemed to have by being methodical and totally transparent in their approach to implementing the devolution process. The staff were involved in all areas of the process, what was to be done, how and when. Senior Management were fully supportive of the process providing the training, back-up and review mechanisms. This led to a sense of ownership within the organisation, making the devolution of HR responsibilities to Line Managers as smooth a transition as possible.

Chapter 2 – Research Methodology

Introduction

Analysis of research data can help to develop management methods relevant to the issues. *“We can define research as something that people undertake in order to find out things in a systematic way, thereby increasing their knowledge”* (Saunders et al 2003:3). Once the data is collected it will be possible to define the problems and set up an effective management system.

The review of the literature has shown that the definition of devolution has almost exclusively been driven by HR specialists/theorists. In this dissertation we include the views of management, union, staff and HR to attempt to gain a more rounded view of the devolution process.

Past research into this subject has mainly been carried out based on quantitative methods such as the price waterhouse cranfield project on European trends (1989) whose main objectives included *“establishing how far there has been a shift in personnel policies towards strategic human resource management”* Brewster et al (1991:37) in ten European countries. The research was based on a postal questionnaire. *“This concentrates on hard data: factual information about policies and practices rather than attitudes”* Brewster et al (1991:37) Brewster and Larsen also conducted a survey on European HRM using quantitative methods i.e. surveying companies with over 200 employees in 10 European countries. Budhwar and Sparrow (1997) examined levels of integration and devolvment to line managers in India based on a questionnaire survey run in over one hundred and thirty organisations.

The quantitative method of researching the subject was used during the dissertation. The results of research on how other organisations both nationally and internationally have tackled devolution of HR was considered to reveal the potential advantages and disadvantages devolution could hold for the IPA as well as examining research conducted in journal articles by the authors mentioned previously in the dissertation. Questionnaires have been used to gauge internal feelings about HR in general and how staff think devolution of HR may impact

on the organisation as a whole and their day to day work i.e. do they think devolution of duties will increase their work load etc.

Primary research for this project was carried out in the following manner, semi-structured interviews were held with IPA management representatives and IPA union representatives. A questionnaire was also sent to 55 members IPA staff members of which 37 were returned completed (see appendix A and B for further details). Results of both the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews are used during the dissertation.

The aim of the primary research was to gain an insight into employees, union members and managers' perception on the work of the HR unit and the probable devolution of HR responsibilities to line managers. Any effective programme of devolution has to start by analysing the reasons for introducing it in order to develop the appropriate policies, and analysis of employee's views on the subject can help to develop a devolution policy which will receive co-operation, buy in and be trusted by staff members.

For the purposes of the primary research for this study, the quantitative method of issuing questionnaires was considered an appropriate data gathering instrument. "*Research design provides the basic direction for carrying out a research project so as to obtain answers to research questions*" (Cooper & Shclinder, 2003). According to Hair et al (2003) "*the researcher should choose a design that will provide relevant information on the research questions and will do the job most efficiently*". Questionnaires are perhaps the most widely used research tool in social sciences and management studies. They are attractive as they require minimal resources and do not cost much but can provide a large sample. It is possible to provide questionnaires to large numbers of people simultaneously, therefore, addressing a large number of issues and questions of concern in a relatively efficient way. Each respondent receives the identical set of questions, which can assist in interpreting information from large numbers of respondents.

Questionnaires are easy to administer confidentially. A guarantee of confidentiality was necessary to ensure IPA participants responded honestly. They are a good means of collecting data as they permit respondents time to consider their responses carefully without any interference. The responses are gathered in a standardised way, so questionnaires are more objective, certainly more so than interviews. Generally it is relatively quick to collect

information from large groups of people by using a questionnaire. According to Weiers (1998) there are specific benefits to utilising questionnaires:

- The cost per questionnaire is relatively low
- Structured information in the questionnaire makes analysing the questionnaires relatively straightforward
- Questionnaires give respondents ample time to formulate accurate responses.

Certain principles outlined in Business Research Methods (Bryman and Bell, 2003) were followed when creating the questionnaire to ensure that;

- Questions are clear and unambiguous
- Questions are short
- Questions avoid jargon or specialist language
- Double-barrelled questions, in which the respondent is asked about two things in one question, are avoided
- ‘Leading’ questions and ‘presuming’ questions that suggest indirectly what the right answer might be are avoided
- Personal questions are avoided unless essential to the research.

It is essential to pilot the draft questionnaire to check that respondents are able to understand all the questions and to ensure that they make sense (see appendix B for pilot Questionnaire). It is also vitally important to ensure that respondents are able to answer questions in the way it was intended and that their replies are meaningful.

Semi-structured interviews

As there are currently ongoing discussions between union and management representatives regarding restructuring the IPA both parties were reluctant to agree to formal taped interviews, however, representatives from both parties were agreeable to semi-structured interviews whereby they received a list of questions (see appendix C) in advance of the interviews and spoke to the researcher based on the questions. Although not the ideal method of research the interviews did provide a useful insight into the position of both sides in relation to the devolution of HR duties to line managers.

Questionnaires

Permission was obtained from the Head of HR to administer the questionnaires and all participants were ensured of their confidentiality. Information was required from employees to obtain an insight into how they view the HR Unit, how they perceive devolution of HR and whether they believe supervisors are capable of taking on devolved HR duties. Information was also needed from managers to get a view of how they perceive devolution of HR and how they think the HR Unit could be improved.

Once permission was granted from the Head of HR the researcher posted 55 questionnaires to employees and management (see appendix A and B for questionnaire information). A cover letter was also included, explaining the purpose of the research to employees and managers and ensuring confidentiality of the participants. The research was conducted over a fourteen day period. Reminders were issued on the eight day requesting participants to complete the questionnaire, if they had not already done so.

Limitations

The author anticipated that participants might not be committed to completing the questionnaires, as some people would feel it was just a paper exercise and a waste of time, leading to a lack of research data to analyse. Fifty five questionnaires were therefore issued. Some participants failed to return the questionnaires which made it difficult to analyse all the information. Twenty “staff surveys” and seventeen “management surveys” were completed. In order to differentiate between staff and management surveys two additional questions were added to the management questionnaire. The analysis of the findings were limited as all participants did not complete the questionnaires, however thirty-seven participants out of a total number of one hundred and twenty staff (30% of staff) across all grades, genders and ages should provide a fair reflection of IPA views.

The main disadvantage associated with questionnaires is the issue of non-response to certain items on the questionnaire. A pilot test was used to overcome this problem. Sample surveys were issued to two employees and two managers to gain feedback. This was very beneficial as the feedback enabled the author to review and change, where appropriate, some of the questions which were viewed as confusing or not to the point. A copy of the pilot

questionnaire (including some of the feedback which was given) and the questionnaire used to collect the primary research can be found in appendix B at the end of the dissertation.

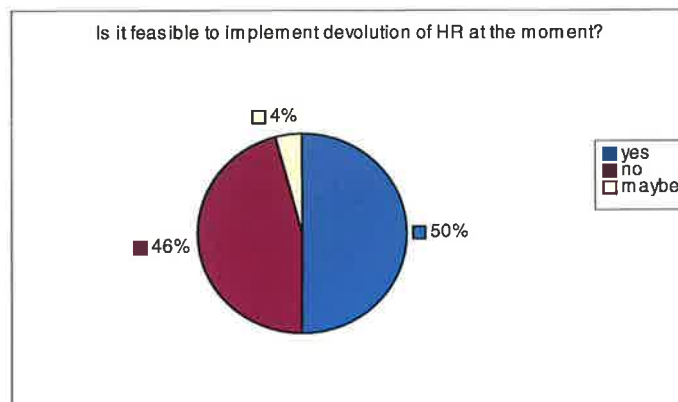
In relation to the semi-structured interviews the main limitations were that the research was restricted to a set of questions which the union and management representatives saw in advance, therefore, they could prepare their answers in advance ruling out any spontaneity. This, however, was also an advantage as the interviews were a true reflection of both union and managements stance regarding devolution of HR duties within the IPA.

Chapter 3 – Analysis of Research

The IPA has undergone some major organisational changes in recent years; the previous Director General implemented a new organisational structure including a major restructuring of the Human Resource unit in 2004. A new corporate plan was also developed, which set the direction the IPA would take from 2005 to 2010. The Director General (DG) retired in September 2009 and the new DG was promoted from within the ranks of the IPA. As with any new head of an organisation he has his own vision for the organisation and has held meetings with staff to outline his views as well as giving staff the opportunity to air their views on the direction the IPA should take. Because of the current economic climate staff members were offered early retirement and voluntary redundancy schemes to reduce the IPA's cost base. This led to overall staffing levels being reduced by 18% and there are plans afoot for some redeployment of staff and restructuring of departments which inevitably means more change.

With this level of re-shuffling taking place it could be the perfect opportunity to make a serious commitment to devolve day-to-day HR responsibilities to line managers although only 50% of staff questioned believed that it is feasible to implement devolution of HR duties at the moment (See table 1 and for full details of the staff questionnaire results see *appendix A*).

Table 1



The Irish Courts service model combined with elements of the UK Civil Service devolution process could be used as a template for this new beginning in the IPA HR Unit. The IPA could follow their lead by:

1. taking a methodical and comprehensive approach to devolution
2. planning the process in advance with clear stages identified, tasks allocated and deadlines set
3. planning and implementation involving all staff from the start
4. creating a strategic culture where Senior Management lead the way
5. managers taking ownership of the devolution process
6. committing the required support, training and resources to Line Managers to successfully take on their new roles
7. the HR Unit taking on a role of providing support and advice to Line Managers
8. putting in place proper review and accountability mechanisms

Before any such commitment can take place however, the HR Unit needs to be in a strong position with qualified personnel in place who have the expertise to play an advisory and supporting role to line managers in their new roles. In the staff questionnaire 87% of the people questioned said there were **not enough** HR staff in the IPA (see table 2), 73% of Line Managers said they **would** consult with HR regarding devolved HR duties (see table 3) but 71% of people questioned believe HR **do not** have the expertise to advise Line Managers at the moment (see table 4). This would lead you to believe that significant steps must be taken by the HR Unit to up-skill and gain the knowledge and trust of managers and staff alike.

Table 2

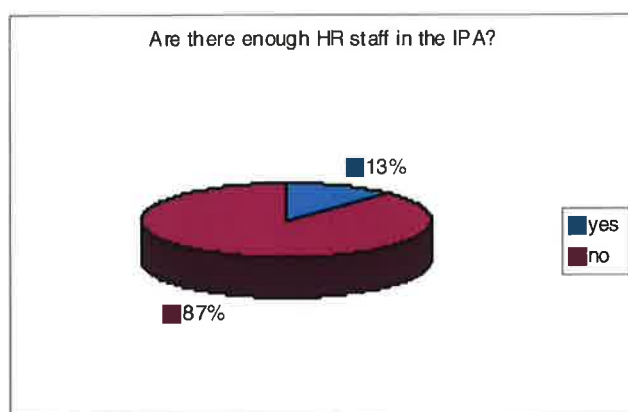


Table 3

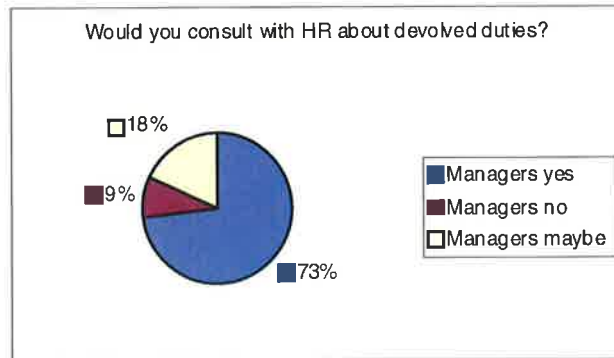
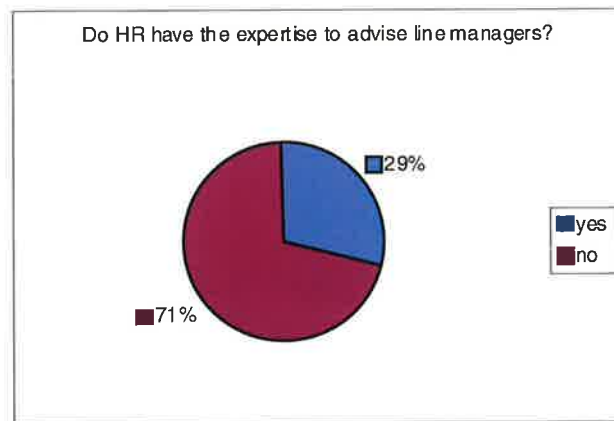


Table 4



Marchington and Wilkinson (1997) Identify 3 core skills required by a HR Unit to visibly demonstrate their contribution to the organisation:

1. They should be capable of formulating HRM policies and a procedural framework to ensure adherence to corporate policy at all levels of responsibility e.g. they must be familiar with a wide range of HRM techniques including HR planning, selection techniques, employee development and performance management systems.
2. They should provide expert advice and guidance on HRM matters (e.g. employment law, equal opportunities and appraisal) to line managers.
3. They should be able to undertake responsibility for the line managers in relation to their responsibilities for HRM.

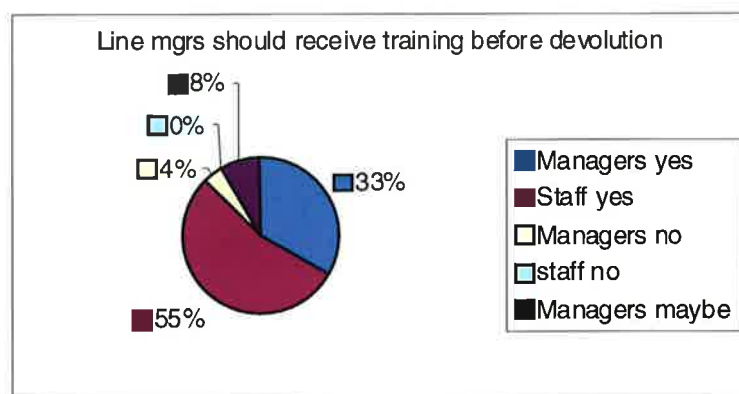
The HR section must see itself as providing two key services to the organisation. The first service is that of developing a HR strategy which is linked to the organisations goals and which sets the boundaries within which Line Managers can act. Secondly there is a need to move to a new relationship with Line Managers in which the manager is a customer and the

HR section facilitates the process of delegation through the provision of support and professional advice, as opposed to determining the process.

Senior Management needs to raise the profile of the HR unit within the IPA. They can achieve this by visibly demonstrating their belief and support in the HR unit, e.g. by committing additional resources to the development of HR strategy and the building up of HR skill levels. There is also a need for the head of HR to be afforded a genuine role in the formulation of key business decisions.

Ulrich 1998 suggests the most challenging task for Senior Managers in driving forward a “new mandate for HR” is to improve the quality of the HR staff and unless the requisite expertise exists HR can’t expand its role, nor can it earn what it too often lacks, respect. 88% of IPA staff questioned believed Line Managers **should** receive HR training before devolution takes place (see table 5).

Table 5



Professional associations such as the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) have an important role to play in setting and improving professional standards for personnel specialists. CIPD qualifications are increasingly becoming a compulsory requirement for HRM positions in the Irish public sector and their website and publications provide up to date information on best practice within the field of HRM, therefore, it is important that all members of the HR office have relevant CIPD qualifications and membership with CIPD.

As Line Managers will be taking on new responsibilities it is critical that they are involved in defining their new roles as well as having a major say in setting the agenda, in the questionnaire carried out for this project 58% of Staff surveyed were **not clear** about what devolution of HR responsibilities was (see table 6). Hope-Hailey et al (1997), found that line managers role in HRM activities were rarely included in the objectives set out for them, or assessed as part of the performance appraisal process. In addition, this study found that short term priorities of the organisation to obtain tangible results, coupled with workload pressures, resulted in a tendency by managers to view HR activities as less of a priority. As a result, people management activities were often the first to be “squeezed out” of the line managers’ day-to-day activities. 29% of IPA staff surveyed said HR duties would be placed **very high** on their list of priorities, 46% placed HR duties **high**, 17% placed HR duties **low** and 8% placed HR duties **very low** on their list of priorities (see table 7). This shows that IPA staff do see the value that HR can bring to the organisation.

Table 6

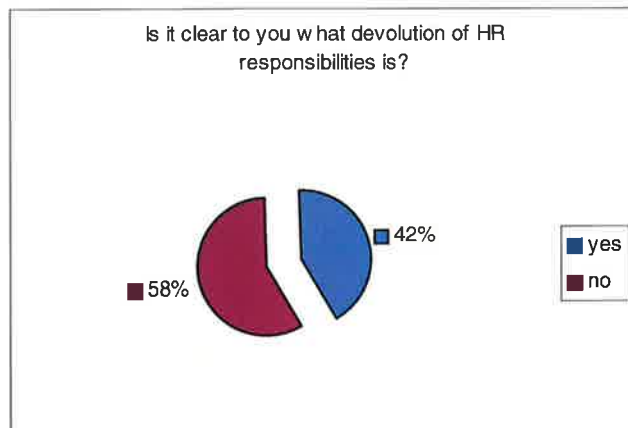
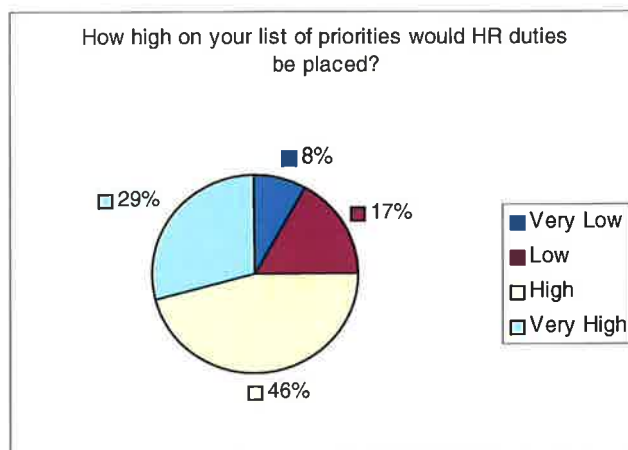
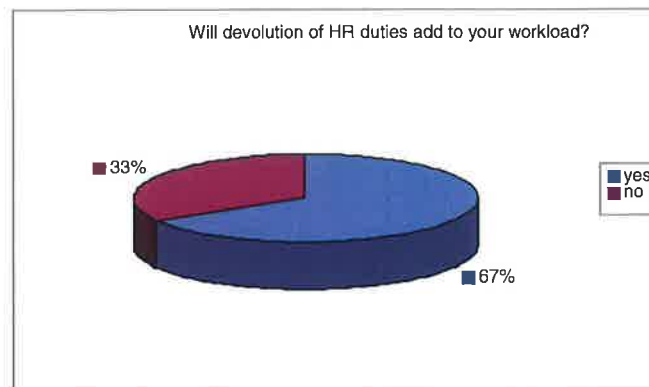


Table 7



Similarly, Marchington and Wilkinson (1997) Suggest many line managers feel they are already suffering from work overload and thus will not place a high priority on HRM activities; 67% of IPA staff surveyed believe that devolution of HR duties **will** add to their workload (see table 8).

Table 8



There is a lack of willingness from managers to take on HR responsibilities as many managers see HR issues as a burden preventing them from getting on with the business plan rather than a strategic aid to get the best out of their staff and further the corporate aims of their organisations. A large part of this is because line managers and senior managers do not understand HR processes they are being asked to undertake or the value they will add to both their department and the overall business. This shows that not enough is being done by HR managers to develop training programmes and transfer knowledge to line managers. Training of managers is required in most organisations to aid the process of devolution of HR functions and show it in a more favourable light. There is a school of thought that believes that perhaps some HR professionals are as reluctant to give up the visible functions where results are easily measured such as monitoring attendance, sick leave, disciplinary matters etc as the line managers are reluctant to take on these duties *“on the part of HR Managers, there appears to be a desire to keep hold of at least some of their operational responsibilities.... successful execution of operational responsibilities is see as important for credibility needed to exercise influence at a strategic level* (Currie and Proctor, 2001:54, cited in Renwick and MacNeil 2002:5). *“A fear of reduced influence or even redundancy seems to be apparent in HR Manager’s minds if they devolve too much HR work to the line and the line complete it successfully”* (Renwick and MacNeil, (2002:5).

In the journal articles reviewed it was apparent that devolution and integration of HRM into the overall corporate function are key to developing strategic HRM. Even where the mission statement of the organisation places an emphasis on staff development and management (as is the case in the IPA), line managers may pick up contrary signals from Senior Management about the ordering of priorities and will focus on the achievement of targets, which are more measurable and valued than HRM activities.

Another key issue, which must be considered in the devolution of HRM, is the development of the skills required by line managers. Boyle (1997) suggests that if devolution of responsibilities is to take place and operate effectively, line managers must be equipped to take on the people management aspect of their job. The development of such skills represents a particular challenge in the public sector, where managers see themselves as specialists, rather than as managers of people. 82% of Line Managers questioned said they **would** welcome further training in the HR area (see table 9). In addition to people management skills managers also require practical and professional support if they are to take on responsibility for HRM, for example lack of knowledge by Line Managers of procedures relating to disciplinary or equal opportunity matters may lead to legal or industrial relations problems. Only 45% of IPA Managers surveyed said they **had** received training in HR related fields (see table 10). When asked what areas they would welcome further training in the results were as follows; 21% said HR management, 21% said IR, 21% said conflict management, 5% said all areas and surprisingly 32% said none (see table 11).

Table 9



Table 10

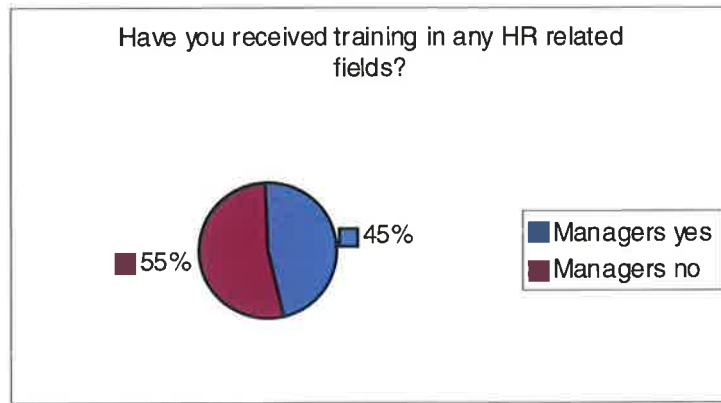
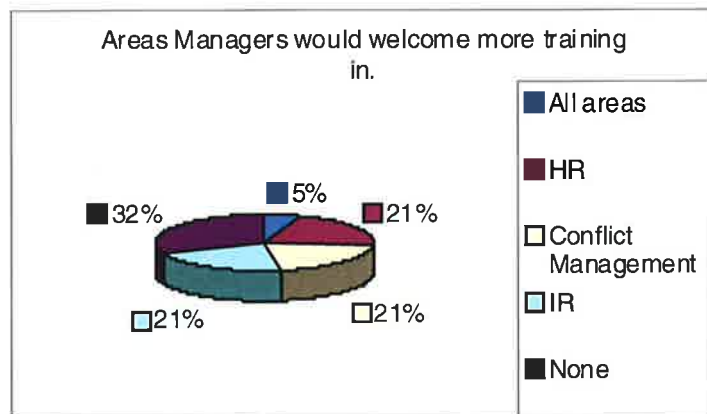


Table 11



The following analysis by Sile Flemming (2000) suggests that there are three key elements required for the devolution of HRM to line managers:

1. Training and development of managers to equip them with appropriate skills and knowledge to deal with HRM issues.
2. The provision of incentives for managers to take on responsibilities for HRM issues, for example through the incorporation and measurement of such activities into the performance appraisal/performance management and business planning process.
3. An ethos where Senior Management visibly values HRM activities. They must be prepared both to reward and value line managers who place a priority on people management activities and to invest the necessary resources to ensure line managers are equipped and empowered to take on HRM responsibilities.

Research by Bevan & Hayday (cited in McGovern et al, 1997) indicate that managers might be reluctant to take on HRM responsibilities, which they do not perceive to be a legitimate part of their job, particularly if they are not adequately consulted about the devolution of such responsibilities.

There is also the need to build in review and accountability mechanisms, for example through the inclusion of relevant “hard” and “Soft” performance measures in the performance management process and evaluation tools. This might be achieved through the use of annual attitude surveys to track performance and measure employee and managements’ perspectives and experience. PMDS will be a useful tool in achieving this within the IPA. In the questionnaire staff were asked for their main concerns regarding devolution of HR to Line Managers; 37% said lack of consistency, 18% said increased workload/time constraints, 18% had concerns about how seriously line managers would take the process and 7% each said lack of Line managers expertise, conflict of interests and a feeling HR could be biased in favour of management (See table 12). Managers asked the same question identified no clear HR strategy at 29% and training also at 29% as their main concerns, increased workload and a lack of clarity about what is going to be delegated both at 14% were the next concerns and finally both at 7% were Line Managers not being prepared for devolution and will staff buy in to the process (See Table 13).

Table 12

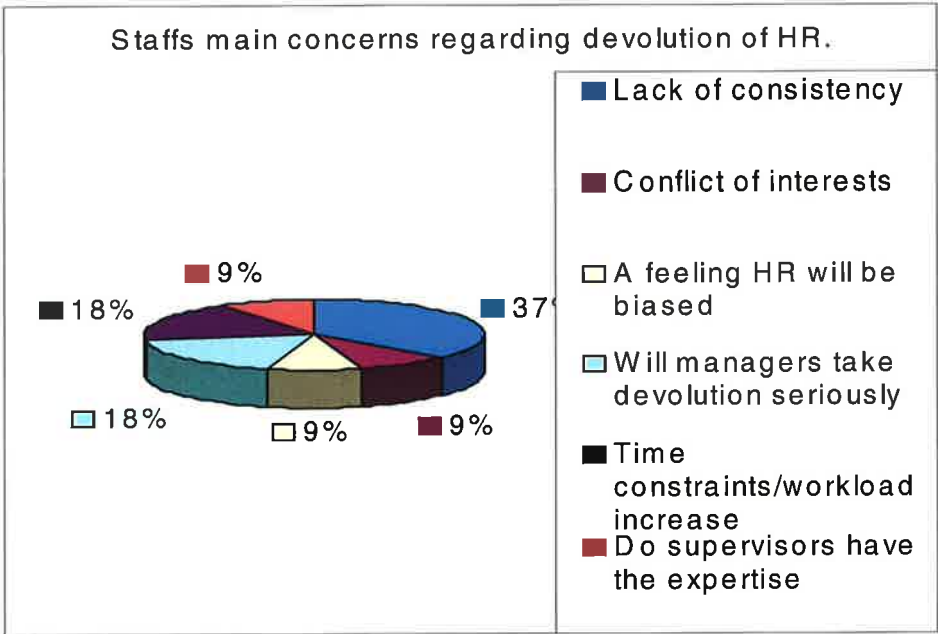
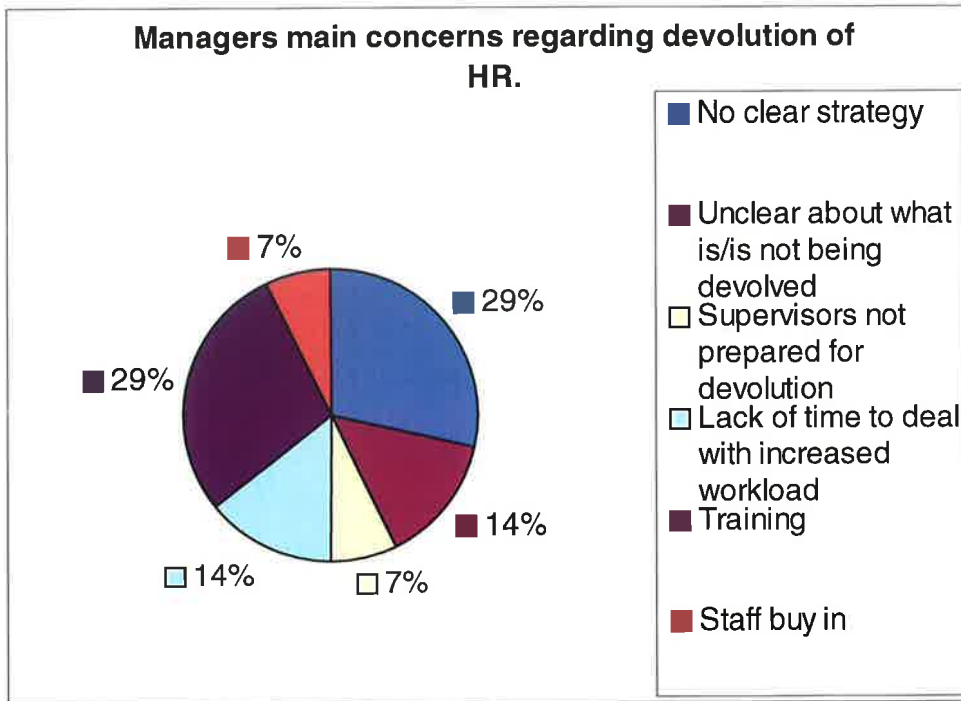


Table 13



In the UK one of the key elements of the modernisation process was the setting up of a nerve centre, the CMPS, who was set the task of creating a new generation of civil servants with the competencies required to meet the requirements of the new strategic public service. This should be easy to achieve in the IPA given the expertise at its disposal both in HR training and in research and eventually the HR department.

The 1996 OECD report highlighted a number of broad terms and concerns raised by member countries, which could be useful to the IPA during the devolution process.

1. HRM reforms are more effective when they are mandatory rather than relying on departments and agencies to develop their own HRM initiatives.
2. A key concern centres on the need to strike a balance between devolution and consistency. Devolution is generally deemed to be necessary for the development of a strategic HRM. The majority of OECD countries surveyed retain a basic common core of conditions across their public sectors in order to preserve a “corporate civil service philosophy”.

3. The devolution of HRM to public service managers is made problematic by the fact that many managers do not regard HRM as an important part of their work knowing as they do that frequently it is neither rewarded nor valued institutionally. As a consequence there is a need to provide the necessary supports for managers if they are to assume responsibility for HRM matters, including training, guidance, accountability and information. Moreover the need for devolution of other responsibilities including financial management is seen as critical to the successful devolution of HRM responsibilities.
4. A significant concern voiced by top management and central departments was the lack of clarity in re-thinking the role of the centre in a decentralised HRM environment. Typical concerns focussed on the degree of control, which should be exercised by the centre in a decentralised environment in the interests of ensuring appropriate performance and accountability by line departments.

Union Opinion

During semi-structured interviews with IPA union representatives (see appendix c) as part of the research for this dissertation, IPA union officials seemed quite supportive of the devolution process within the IPA.

The union is aware of the proposed devolution process within the IPA and has been consulted about it. The role they will play is mainly overseeing that all their members' needs/concerns are addressed. The Union believes that the devolution process will lead to line managers having more involvement in the IPA's recruitment policy, training & development policy, induction courses and disciplinary matters.

The Unions main concerns were that there would be lack of fairness and transparency. They see devolution as being beneficial if implemented correctly along with PMDS and management must take both seriously. They view the HR unit as a vital part of the IPA but think Senior Management under values it. Union representatives interviewed believe that the HR Unit does need to be up-skilled to be able to provide advice and direction to staff as well as taking a more strategic approach to HR.

Union representatives believe the HR unit is involved in design and implementation of new policies/initiatives. The union officials interviewed stated that it has been agreed that all line managers will receive training relating to their new roles. The majority of union representatives do not think all managers will take their HR responsibilities seriously. They also do not think that Line Managers are happy to take on these devolved responsibilities or that they are aware or prepared for what is being devolved. The union feel that the majority of Managers did not take PMDS seriously enough first time around and must take the second roll out seriously if devolution of HR duties is to be a success.

The union representatives have expressed that the HR function should have the same status as the finance function to be taken seriously by the SMG and the Board of Directors.

Keys to Successful Implementation

“A key theme through many HRM models is integration which lies at the heart of HRM” (Guest 1987). Guest identified 3 levels of integration.

1. Integration of HRM policies with business strategy.
2. Integration of a set of complementary HRM policies.
3. Integration of HRM into Line Management function.

This is elaborated on further by Guest and Hoque (1994) who argue that *“the key is strategic integration, what this means is that personnel strategy must fit the business strategy, the personnel policies must be fully integrated with each other and the values of line managers must be sufficiently integrated or aligned with the personnel philosophy to ensure that they will implement the personnel policy and practice”*. Where this can be achieved there is growing evidence that a distinctive set of HR practices results in superior performance.

Linking HRM with business strategy may be particularly problematic in the public sector in which *“the strategy making process is complicated by a range of factors including conflicting objectives, multiple stakeholders, short term political pressures and existing structures and processes”* (Mintzberg 1996).

In order to develop an integrated set of policies it is necessary to critically assess the structure and responsibilities for HRM at central level. *“In this way it can be decided what policies should remain centralised and what can and should be decentralised to line departmental level. Furthermore if HRM strategies are to support business strategies different HRM strategies may be required within different line departments where a centre line structure exists”* (Tyson 1995).

Another Key to successful implementation of devolution of HR responsibilities to Line Management is embedding PMDS in the organisational structure of the IPA. As highlighted earlier in this study PMDS is a crucial lever in the devolution of HR duties, as Line Managers would be expected to take ownership of the PMDS process. This would allow a gentle introduction to HRM and people management issues overseen by the HR unit who would as in the devolution process play an advisory and supporting role. If embedded in the organisational structure PMDS would allow for a constant review of staff and management opinion regarding their role in the IPA, their training needs and also their managers' performance if 360 degree feedback is introduced.

PMDS would aid the HR unit in their audit of the section and in the integration of a HRM plan linked to the overall organisational business plan. It would also be easier to identify and link the organisations personnel needs with individual personal development plans within the IPA.

The research for this dissertation highlighted the lack of support PMDS received in the IPA on its first roll out, however, since then HR has reviewed the methods and training used first time around as well as seeking staff opinion on the first roll out of PMDS through a questionnaire sent to all staff.

There are plans afoot to attempt a second roll out of PMDS. For PMDS to be successful on this occasion it must be seen to be taken seriously at management level, Line Managers must have the power to follow up on issues brought to their attention in discussions with staff and must also give staff feedback on staff concerns, suggestions and requests.

Chapter 4 – Conclusions and Recommendations

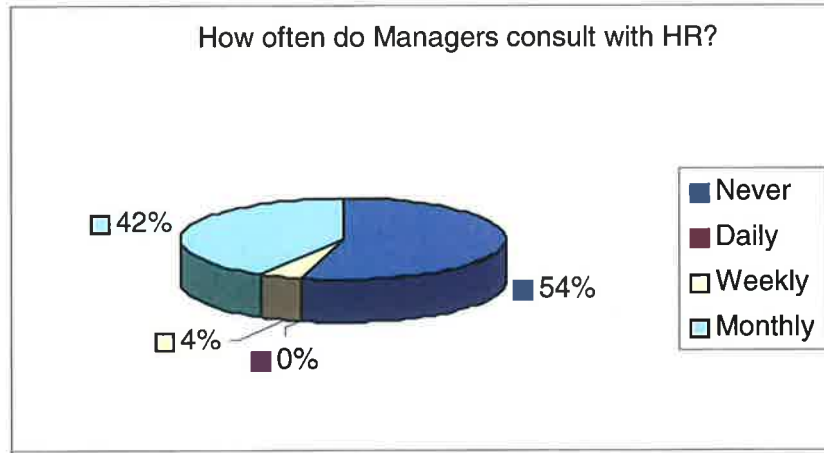
Conclusions

There is no evidence of real integration between the HR business strategy and the overall business strategy; there is no link between staff training/personal development and departmental/organisational needs. These all need to be addressed before devolution can be contemplated. There is a need to develop a system of strategic HR that will seamlessly marry business objectives and professional needs of individuals in the organisation. The IPA must be very clear about the knowledge and skills they need to develop for the future and how this will be done. A competency review is scheduled to be performed by external consultants and it is anticipated that the review will identify gaps, training needs, future needs, examine grading & pay structures as well as promotion procedures.

There is a need for training of line managers in relation to the devolution of HR. This must be addressed by dedicating resources and by ongoing monitoring and review. The Institute is in the business of training others in HR, this demands that it sets an example of best practice in its own workplace.

As the IPA is in a transitional period due to the current financial climate and the appointment of the new DG, there is a responsibility on Senior Management to provide strong, clear and positive leadership especially in relation to the direction in which they see HR taking. From semi-structured interviews conducted with union and management for this dissertation it is plain to see that devolution is going to take place within the next two years and has to some extent already occurred with the flexi system (though which line managers monitor their staffs attendance), partnership, more regular union/mgt meetings etc. Before devolution can take place however, we need a strong, influential HR department, which has the trust and support of all employees in the organisation. At present this is not evident, as borne out by the questionnaire results. 54% of managers said that they never consult with HR (see table 14)

Table 14



The success of the second roll out of PMDS, with the introduction of upward feedback and linking increments to the process, is also crucial to devolution of HR duties to Line Managers. If implemented successfully it would show a genuine commitment from management to involve themselves with staff issues. This would set the foundations for devolving some HR duties to Line Managers.

Recommendations

During the process of devolution for it to be effective firstly there is a need for clarification regarding what is to be devolved and how. A distinction should be made between “Hard” HR issues such as IR and Disciplinary matters and “Soft” HR issues such as staff training and development. It is also important to involve line managers in the process of determining what should be devolved as opposed to enforcing devolution. Gaining buy in and the trust of both managers and staff is a crucial element to ensuring the successful implementation of devolution. *“HRM policies are and indeed should be influenced by the interests of various stakeholders: shareholders, management, employees, unions, community and government. Unless these policies are influenced by all stakeholders, the enterprise will fail to meet the needs of these stakeholders in the long run and it will fail as an institution”* (Beer et al, 1984). Such involvement could be facilitated through the use of project groups and the framework for delegation used by the UK cabinet office or the methodical model that proved so successful for the Irish Courts Service. It must be made clear to Line Managers that devolution of HR duties is their responsibility; this was achieved in the Irish Courts Service through Regional Managers Presentations. This presentation was made to all regional

managers in 2002, before devolution of HR functions commenced. Managers were advised of the cultural impact of devolution and the responsibility that now rested with **them** in relation to specific HR functions, a similar exercise could be performed by the heads of each section within the IPA.

Secondly, the reluctance of many line managers to be people managers is an issue that will not be addressed by performance management alone. Within the existing system people management skills are not always sufficiently valued and rewarded. If the creation of a culture of effective management, in which there is genuine and continuous coaching, feedback and staff recognition, is to become a reality, the right message must be conveyed as to what skills are valued in managers. For this message to be credible there must be visible support from top management in the allocation of resources to training and development and to the allocation of financial resources to line managers to enable them to take on genuine responsibility for staff development. *“Devolution is the reallocation of personnel tasks or activities, and the related decision-making power, financial power and expertise power required to carry out these tasks, from other agents to line managers”* (Pereira et al 2006).

Although there is a dedicated training and development budget (set at 4% of the annual salary budget) there needs to be a more strategic link between staff development and the business needs of each unit and the organisation as a whole. *“A second reason for the poor fit between business strategy and HRM policies lies in the human resource function itself. That function often develops activities and programmes that are not relevant to line management’s needs”* (Beer et al, 1984). After the proposed competency review is completed there should be more clarity regarding what skills the staff and the organisation need for the current market and looking into the future. HR can then put in place a strategic plan to ensure that the unit business plans feed into the organisational business plan which should identify to the unit managers which areas staff members need training in, which in turn should be discussed during the PMDS and finally will allow HR to prioritise the training needs in line with the budgetary restrictions. *“From the organizational standpoint, any HRM system should be integrated so as to attract and hold the right mix of people and to establish the type of working relationship between these people that will carry out the organization’s strategic plan, once that plan has taken into account any relevant human resource constraints and opportunities. In other words, HRM policies need to fit the business strategy”* (Beer et al, 1984).

There must also be strict guidelines set by the HR Unit in areas such as Disciplinary Matters, Bullying and Harassment and Equal Opportunities all of which are touchy subjects where consistency and objectivity are essential across the board.

As stated earlier the IPA has a distinct advantage when it comes to HR training given that we have both the in-house training expertise in the CIPD sanctioned HR training unit as well as our Research unit and the in-house training facilities such as classrooms, access to a library and computers. These resources have not been utilised to their full effect by Senior Management and must not be overlooked if devolution is to be a success.

The IPA HR unit currently appears ill equipped to perform its role in the devolution process. This is borne out in the questionnaire results (see appendix A), which reveal that the majority of both staff and managers believe there are not enough staff in the HR unit and that HR does not have the expertise to advise or support Line Managers should devolution take place. This needs to be addressed before devolution is even contemplated.

HR staff must be encouraged to gain HR qualifications and continually update their HR knowledge base to allow them to gain the trust of their colleagues and enable them to provide effective support and advice to line managers/supervisors on HR matters. 100% of managers said HR should be involved in the design of new IPA policies and also in the implementation of new IPA policies (see table 15 & 16).

Table 15

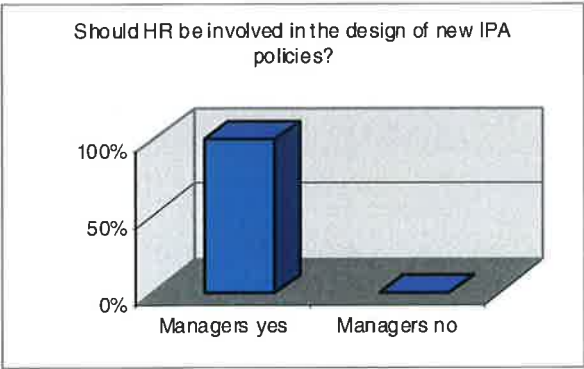
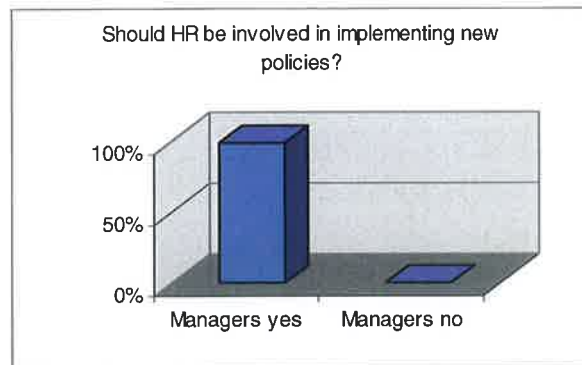


Table 16



The proposed audit by external consultants of both the HR unit and the organisation as a whole is also essential to the devolution process as it would clarify what would be feasible to devolve to Line Managers and what resources could be dedicated to the devolution process. It would also enable the HR unit to develop a HR strategy linked to the business needs of the IPA and to identify the areas of the IPA where personnel are needed and then create personal development plans which are linked to the organisational needs for individuals who have requested training in their PMDS discussions. A framework for developing a HR strategy is set out below:

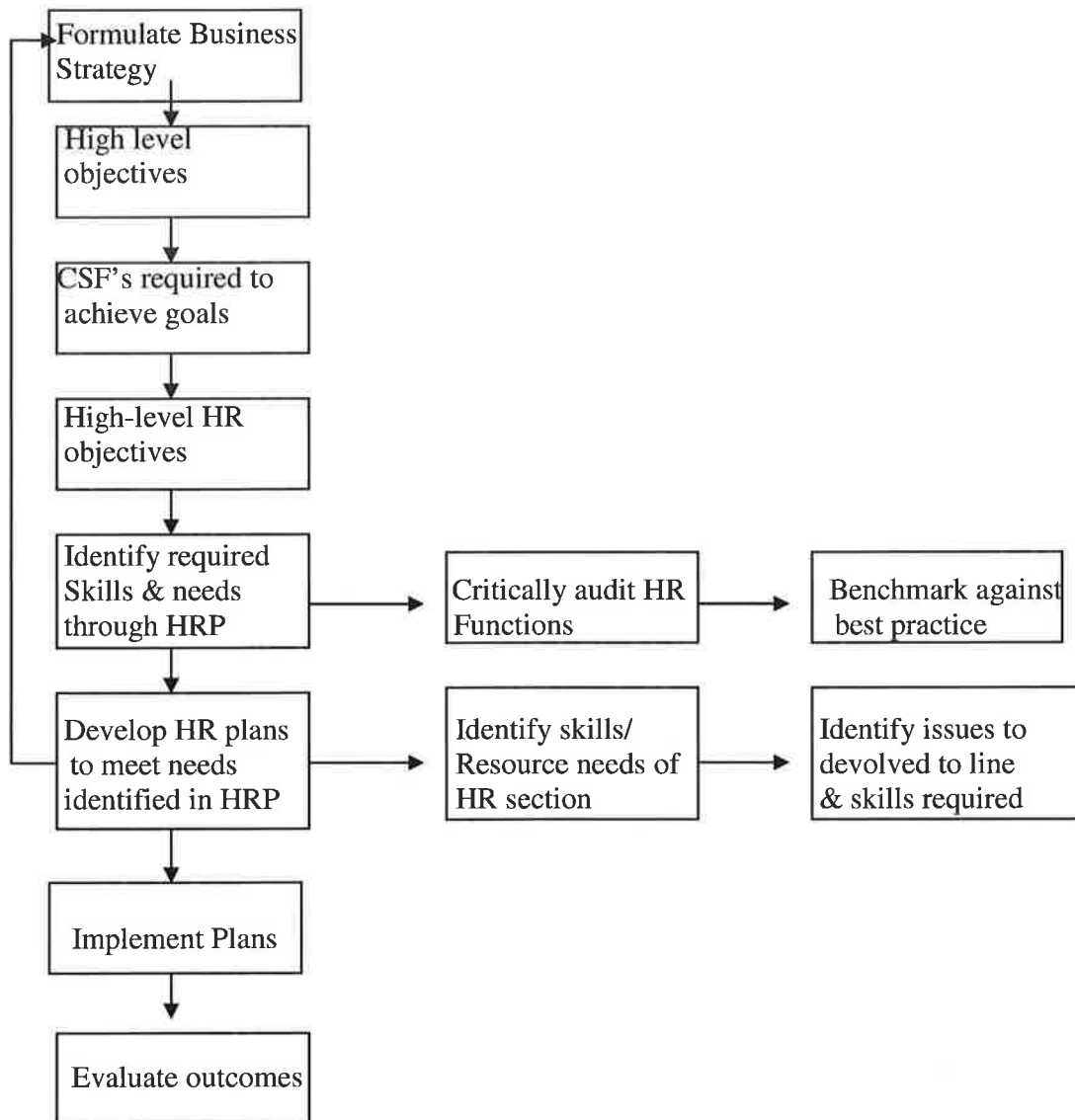
A framework for change at line Management/Department level;

An effectively developed HR strategy links individual HR policies to each other but also links such policies with overall business plans. This process also allows for identifying and changing the respective roles and responsibilities of the HR unit and line managers.

The framework in figure 2, which draws on elements of the UK cabinet office model, is set out in order to illustrate:

- The central role which development of a HR strategy can play in addressing many of the concerns that were raised.
- The process involved in moving from personnel management to HRM.
- The key stages involved in this framework require some collaboration.

Figure 2 – Process of developing a HR strategy



As a prerequisite to the successful devolution of HRM to Line Managers there is a need to enhance working relationships between the HR, Managers and Staff “*analysis has examined the ways in which human resources developments might enable managers and supervisors to widen their responsibilities and become more accountable to senior managers. However, it appears that on the basis of this evidence at least, these opportunities will not always be taken up, largely because of inadequate support from human resources techniques. Managers and supervisors need to be trained, encouraged, and motivated if they are to take on fully their new responsibilities and accountabilities*” (Storey, 1989).

The transparency of the model used by the Irish Courts Service would be ideal in achieving this. Meetings were held at every stage with every member of staff, detailing what was to be devolved, when this devolution would take place and outlining exactly what role they would play at every stage of the process. This was backed up by innovative thinking such as the creation of detailed manuals as a guide and the creation of a helpdesk, which would nip any teething problems in the bud. Another element crucial to the success of The Irish Courts Service devolution process was the visible support and active leading role Senior Management showed throughout the transition.

Line Managers must also be given the authority to act on disciplinary, performance matters etc. This must however be overseen by the HR unit who should put in place strict guidelines to ensure consistency of application on such matters across the various departments in the IPA.

Finally there is a need to build in review and accountability mechanisms, for example through the inclusion of relevant “hard” and “Soft” performance measures in the performance management process and evaluation tools. This would only be achieved through the successful embedding of PMDS in the IPA’s organisational structure leading to annual attitude surveys to track performance and measure employee and managements’ perspectives and experience. The HR Unit must regulate the whole devolution process. Regular meetings and consultation must take place between Line Managers and the HR Unit guaranteeing consistency of application of HR policies across the board.

Cost Benefit Analysis

In order to ensure that a planned devolution of HR duties is viable a cost benefit analysis of the project was carried out following seven steps as outlined in Economic and Financial Evaluation, Mulreany, (1999).

Step 1 Define Objectives

The overall objective is to make the IPA a more strategic, efficient, productive and adaptable organisation. Linked to the overall objective is the view that as the IPA is a training body whose main business comes from within the public service it should be seen to be practicing what it preaches.

HR objectives would be that by devolving certain HR duties to line managers allowing HR to devote more time to develop their expertise to allow them to support and advice managers and staff during and after the devolution process, become leaders within the strategic planning process, improve the recruitment and selection process and to develop a HR strategy linked to the overall business goals of the organisation. The objectives for managers/supervisors would be that they are provided with training and support to be able to perform devolved HR duties. It is expected that managers will become more familiar with the day to day running of their units and the strengths and weaknesses of their staff members as they will have more involvement with their staff.

The objectives for staff would be that they become more motivated, productive and efficient due to a combination of better recruitment and selection, managements better knowledge of their staff members and the work carried out in their units and more strategically planned training and development. Other objectives would be to embed PMDS which will improve communication/transparency between staff and managers and focus training and development to suit the unit and overall business needs. Obtain external consultants to perform a competency review of the organisation.

Step 2 Identify Alternatives

Alternatives to the outlined recommendations include;

- Do nothing – if the institute carried on as it is going at present it would be enormously risky for the survival of the IPA because the Institute would risk loosing ground and business to its competitors and also due to the fact that the recession is having a sizable impact on the training side of the institutes business therefore the IPA needs to adapt to deal with these difficulties and doing nothing is not a viable option.
- Do the minimum – this would involve devolving the HR duties without consultation, without training for management or HR and no competency review. In essence devolution of HR duties would have to be learned on the job by the managers, and the fall out would have to be dealt with by HR and senior management. This once again is not a viable option due to the points made in alternative number one plus the fact that doing the minimum would cause great confusion, mistrust, unrest at the same time productivity and effectiveness would be impacted upon as there would be no clear

direction and inevitably mistakes would be made due to lack of knowledge and support.

- The deluxe option – in this option an external firm would be employed to oversee, implement and assess the whole devolution process. No internal training expertise or facilities would be availed of and staff would be afforded time off work to attend meetings, focus groups and training instead of holding these events at lunch time. This option would be ideal but is unrealistic due to the cost that would be incurred and the business lost due to staff taking time off work.

Step 3 Identify Constraints

The main constraints to devolution within the IPA would be budgetary limitations, time – as in the time it takes to plan, discuss, train staff and implement the devolution process and the time staff are not in work due to attending focus groups/meetings or trainers from within the IPA actually running courses for IPA staff members which would involve them taking time out of their schedule to research, compile and deliver the courses, staff buy in and trust and finally the knowledge/expertise of both line managers/supervisors and HR needs to be updated.

Step 4 Estimating the Costs and Benefits

Costs

1. An external competency review – approximately €35,000
2. Time that line managers/supervisors, HR and staff spend at training, meetings etc. If staff attend training during lunch time thus not disrupting the business of the institute the projected cost of supplying sandwiches estimated at €5,000 based on 20 two hour lunchtime sessions and €250 per session.
3. Cost of training line managers/supervisors, HR and staff is projected to come to €7,000 based on the average hourly wage of the trainers (€40) and approximately 175 hours of preparation time for the 20 training sessions.
4. Subscriptions for HR Staff to IBEC and CIPD costing €700 based on current rates.
5. Review and accountability mechanisms – No further cost foreseen if the review and accountability mechanisms are incorporated into the current PMDS system.
6. Cost of heating, electricity, gas, room rental etc – No cost foreseen if training, meetings etc are held in house during business hours.

Benefits

1. External competency review – Better integration of HR and business strategies, greater knowledge of where gaps and strengths of both the organisation and the workforce lie to enable future strategic planning. It will allow for better use of staff's knowledge and skills across the institutes departments making the IPA more adaptable to change. Staff will be more motivated, productive and efficient due to better planning and design of training and development. Productivity and efficiency are projected to improve by at least 10% over a 3 year period increasing revenue on average by €50,000 each year.
2. Time that line managers/supervisors, HR and staff spend at training, meetings etc and Cost of training line managers/supervisors, HR and staff – line managers/supervisors will be more knowledgeable about the day to day running of each unit, the strengths and weaknesses of their staff members and where things need to be improved. Time will be created for HR to become a more strategically focused unit and to improve their expertise and knowledge of HRM to enable them to advise and support management in the roll out of the devolution process to become in effect a “nerve centre” similar to the Courts Service model. There will be more effective recruitment and selection which in turn will reduce turnover and increase the IPA's expertise and knowledge base. There will be a better planned training and development process focused on the business and individual unit requirements. More efficient recruitment and selection plus lower turnover rates are expected to reduce recruitment costs by 20%. This coupled with the savings on time taken up by interviewing; administration, advertising in newspapers etc are expected to produce savings of €50,000 – €60,000 per year.
3. Subscriptions for HR Staff to IBEC and CIPD – HR will need to keep up to date with best practice in HRM and company/labour law. It is difficult to estimate the value of the improving knowledge in point 3 of costs and the review and accountability mechanisms in point 4 at the current time as there is no measurable market value to compare them with. The value these points create will have to be analysed at a later date.
4. Review and accountability mechanisms – This will assist in improving communication between staff and management, constant updating and review of the process to ensure it succeeds and continual career development and planning for staff.

Step 5 Adjusting the Value of Costs and Benefits

There is a difference between the present value of money and its value this time next year or the year after. For example if the interest rate is 10% the present value of €110 next year would be €100. Therefore to calculate whether a project is viable or not you must test how your figures will hold up over a period of time. For this project the Net Present Value method has been used over a five year period at an interest rate of 11.5% in step 6 and in step 7 the project has been tested further by raising the interest rate to 15% in the final two years.

Step 6 Calculating the Decision Criteria

NPV was calculated over a 5 year period at 11.5% interest.

Year 0	-€47,000	1			= -€47,000
Year 1	€110,000	1/1.115	= 0.8968	= €110,000 x 0.8968	= €98,648
Year 2	€110,000	1/1.115 ²	= 0.8043	= €110,000 x 0.8043	= €88,473
Year 3	€110,000	1/1.115 ³	= 0.721	= €110,000 x 0.721	= €79,310
Year 4	€110,000	1/1.115 ⁴	= 0.646	= €110,000 x 0.646	= €71,060

Adding all the totals you reach an NPV figure of €290,491 meaning that the project is viable.

Step 7 Sensitivity Analysis

For the sensitivity analysis the interest rate was increased to 15% for the final two years of the project. Years 0-3 remain the same as above.

Year 0	-€47,000	1			= -€47,000
Year 1	€110,000	1/1.115	= 0.8968	= €110,000 x 0.8968	= €98,648
Year 2	€110,000	1/1.115 ²	= 0.8043	= €110,000 x 0.8043	= €88,473
Year 3	€110,000	1/1.115 ³	x 1.15 = 0.6994	= €110,000 x 0.6994	= €76,890
Year 4	€110,000	1/1.115 ⁴	x 1.15 ² = 0.6082	= €110,000 x 0.6082	= €66,902

Adding all the totals you reach and NPV figure of €283,913 meaning that once again the project is viable.

Concluding Comments

Before embarking on a process of devolution of day-to-day HR duties to Line Managers the IPA should consider making a number of serious adjustments. Firstly the HR Unit needs to gain more credibility from senior management and line managers by updating their knowledge and up-skilling in order to fulfil their role in the devolution process. Secondly PMDS must be embedded in the organisational structure to allow the appropriate training and development linked in to the overall business and HR strategies to be provided to both staff and line managers and finally Senior Management need to ensure Line Managers and staff are content with devolution taking place and that they are informed about the process at every stage, it is vital as shown by the Irish Courts Service research that Management show strong leadership and fully support the devolution process. It is this writer's belief that the IPA is not ready at the moment to successfully implement devolution of HR responsibilities to Line Managers but given the current climate of organisational change taking place in the IPA it is the ideal time to lay the foundations for successful devolution in the near future.

Personal Reflections

During the course of writing this dissertation I have drawn on almost every aspect of each module and skills session attended during the four years of the course from organisational behaviour, culture, motivation, leadership, strategic HR, labour law, research methods, industrial relations, strategic management, people resourcing and staff morale, right through to change management, reward management, statistics and finance. The dissertation has been a hugely important learning curve for me in terms of both writing and researching a structured piece of literature. It has shown me that researching your subject matter and gathering relevant primary research data are the most important and time consuming element of the dissertation. I have learned that it is ok to seek the input and assistance of colleagues and classmates experiences and knowledge alongside the literature at my disposal. It has also taught me how to focus on a number of key areas instead of taking too broad an approach and finally it has taught me the importance of having structure both in terms of the dissertation itself but also in terms of how I dedicate my time to writing the dissertation.

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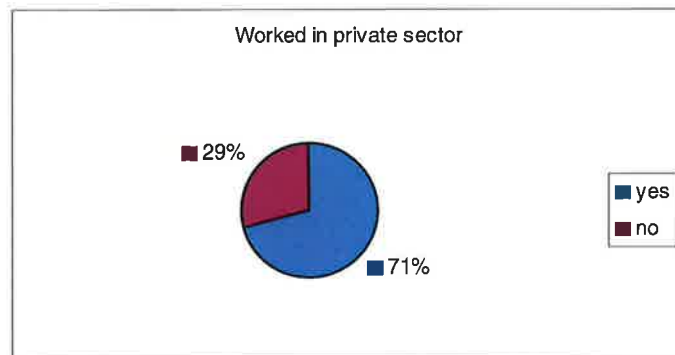
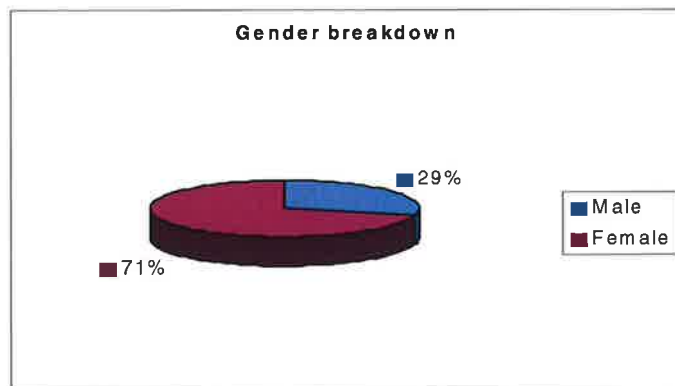
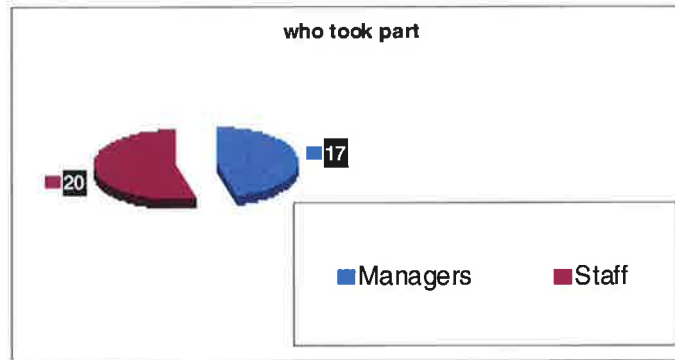
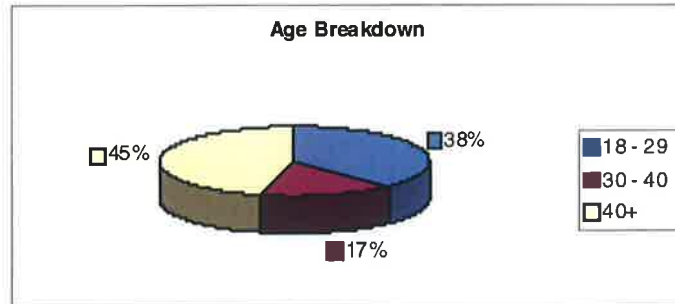
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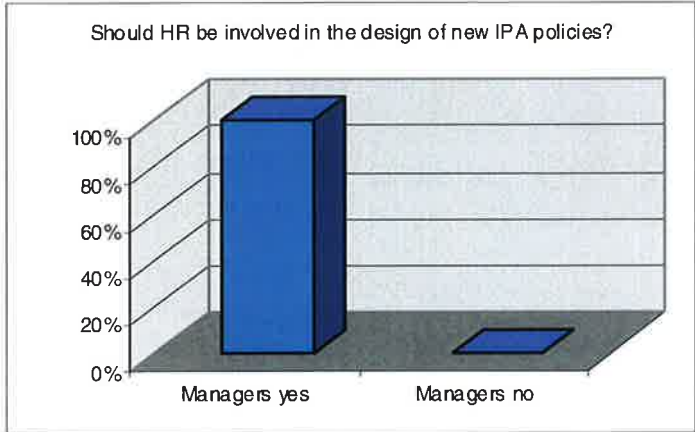
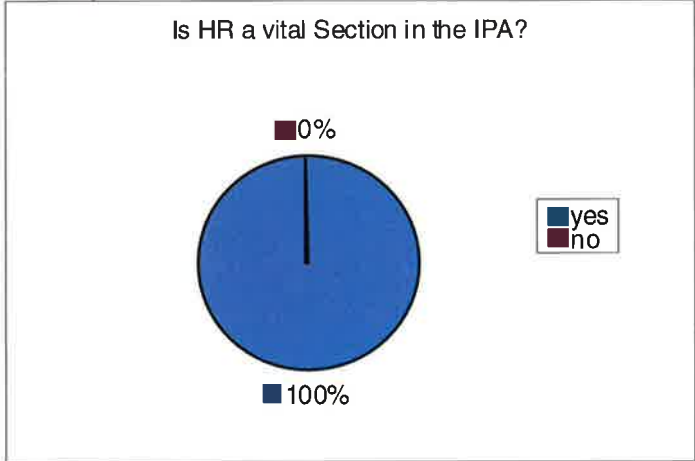
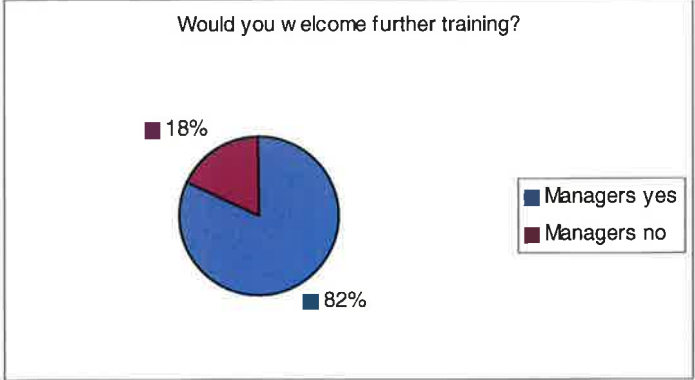
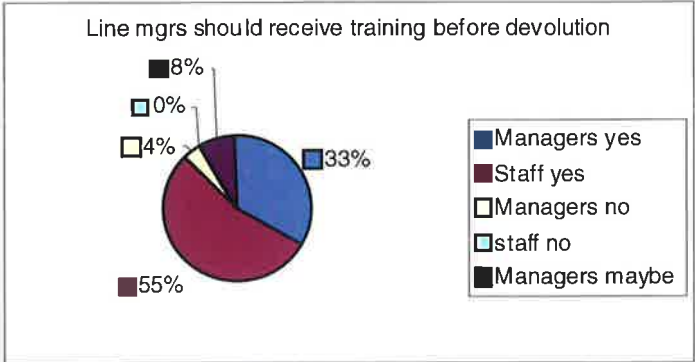
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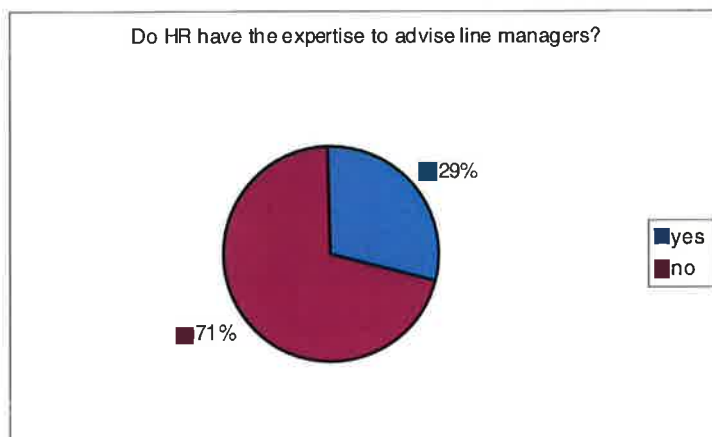
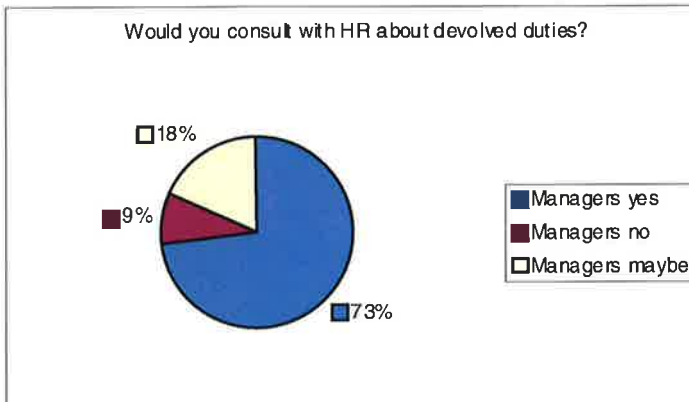
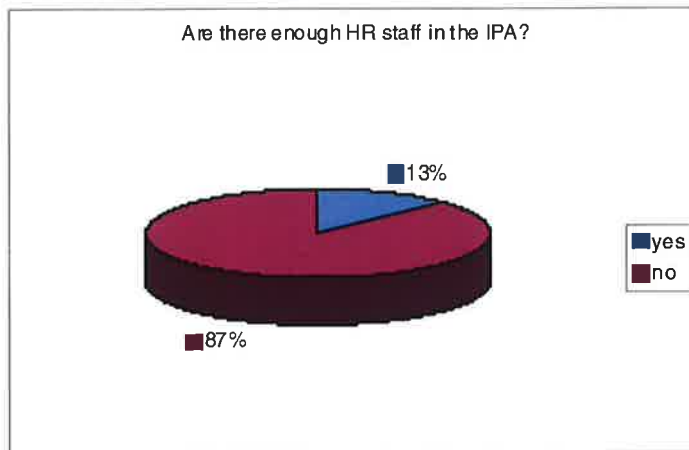
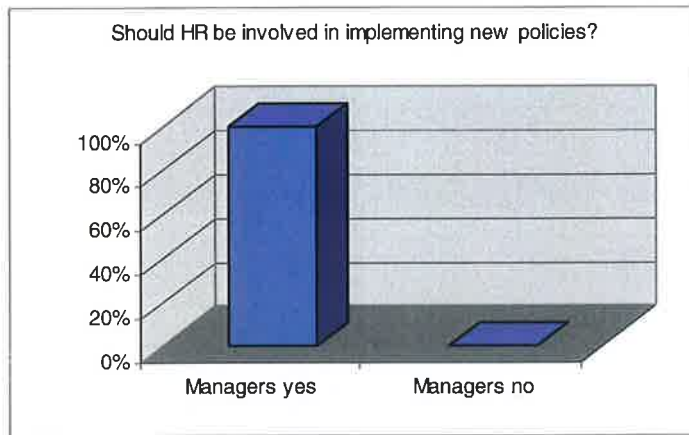
Appendices

Appendix A

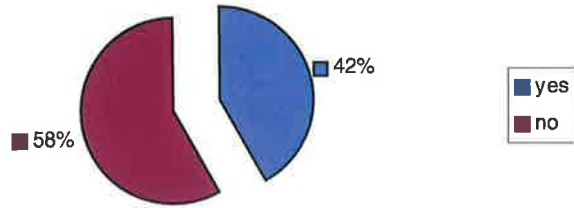
IPA Staff/Supervisors Questionnaire results



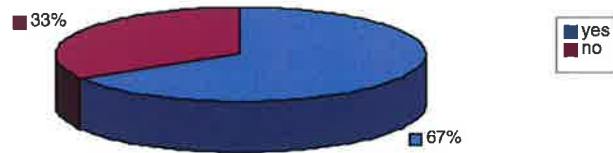




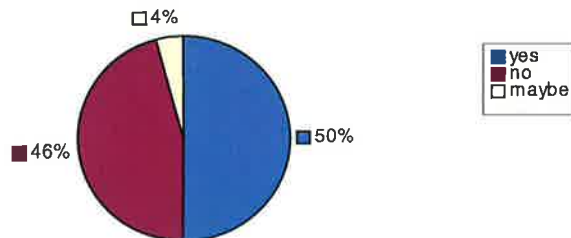
Is it clear to you what devolution of HR responsibilities is?



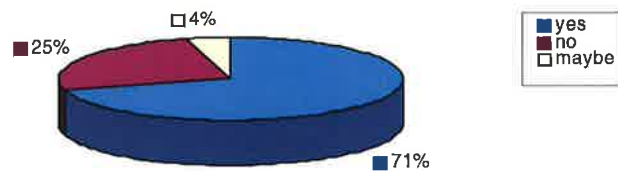
Will devolution of HR duties add to your workload?

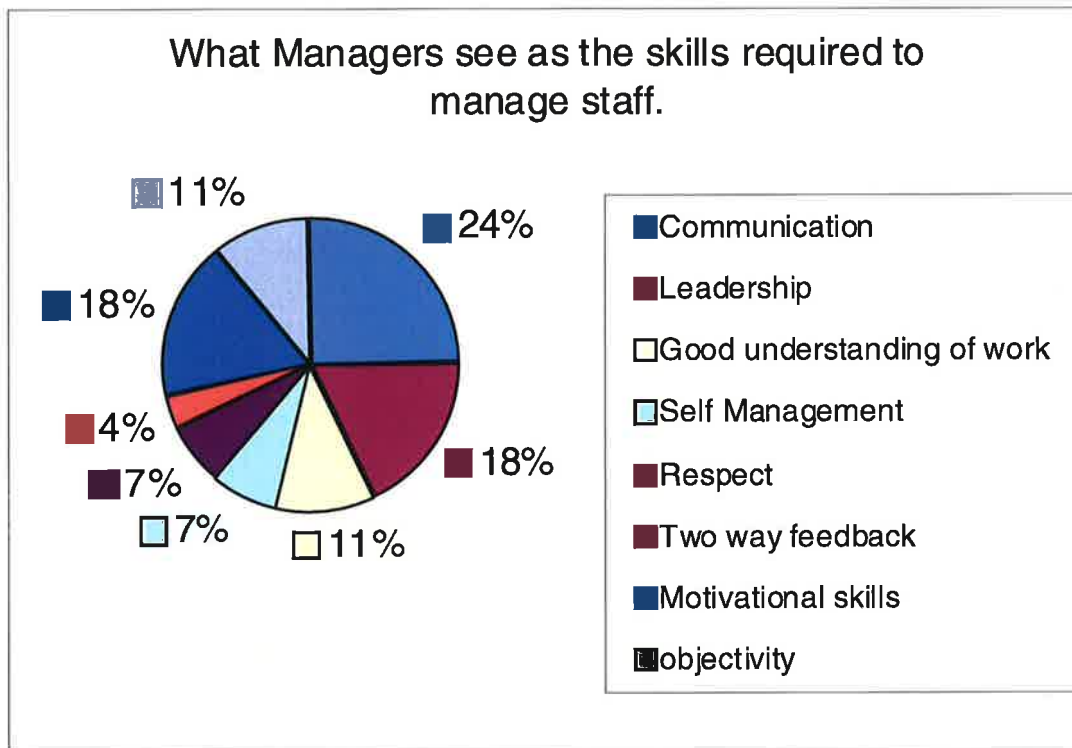
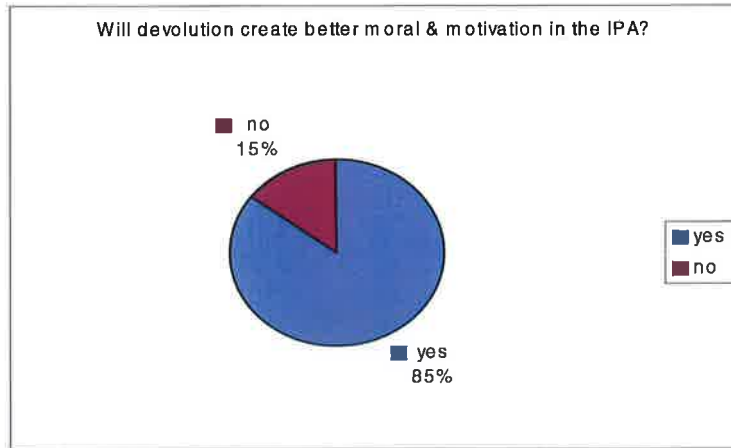


Is it feasible to implement devolution of HR at the moment?

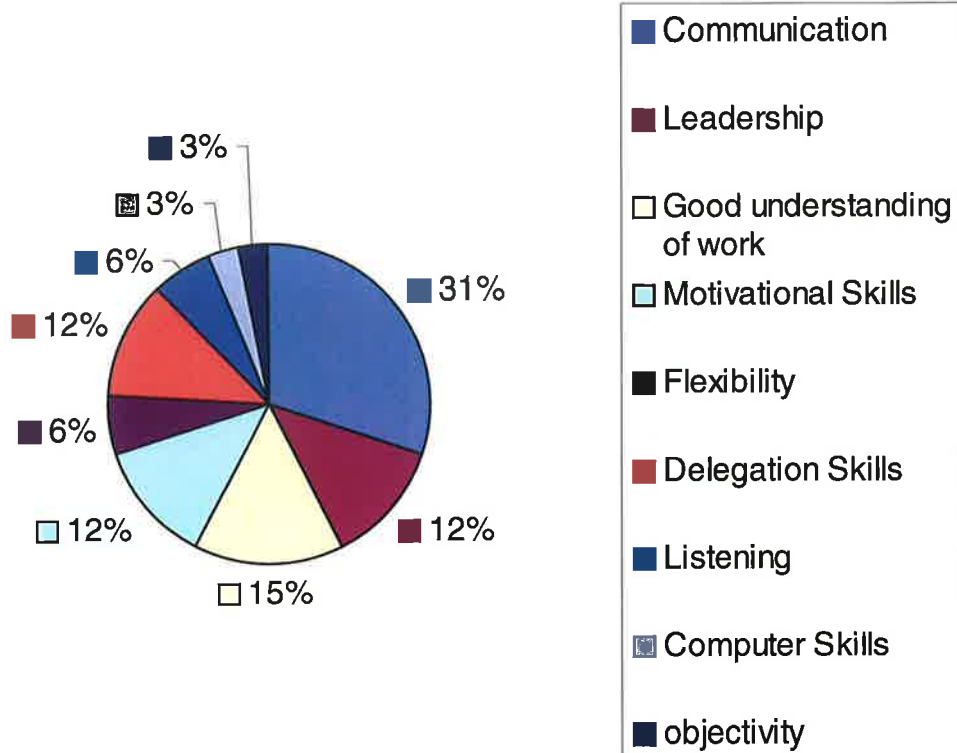


Will devolution be beneficial to the future of the IPA?

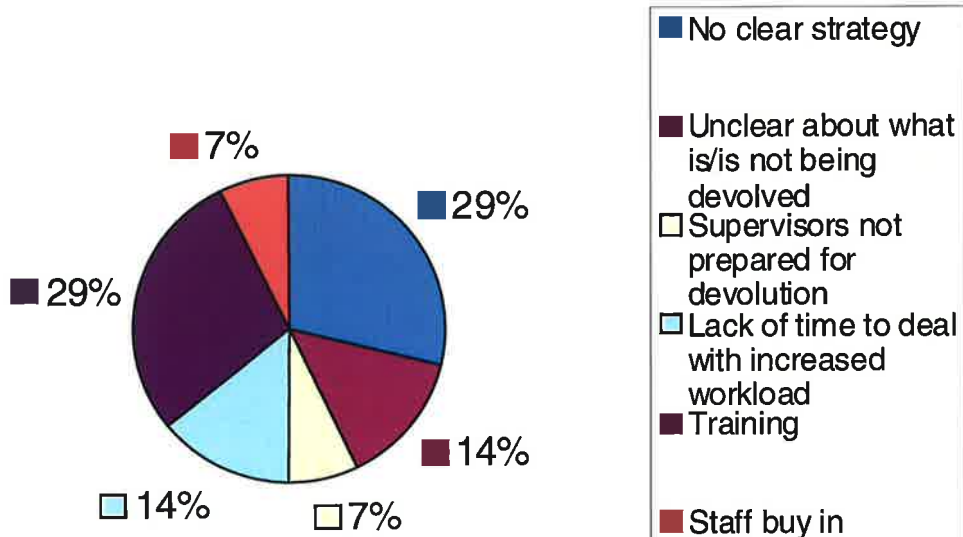




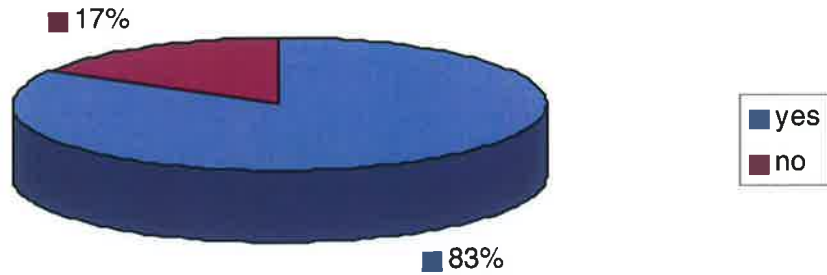
What staff see as the skill required to manage staff.



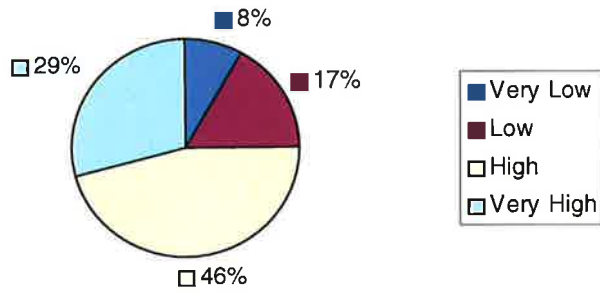
Managers main concerns regarding devolution of HR.



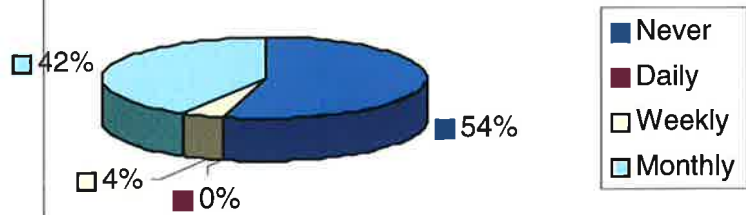
Should HR concentrate on being more strategic?

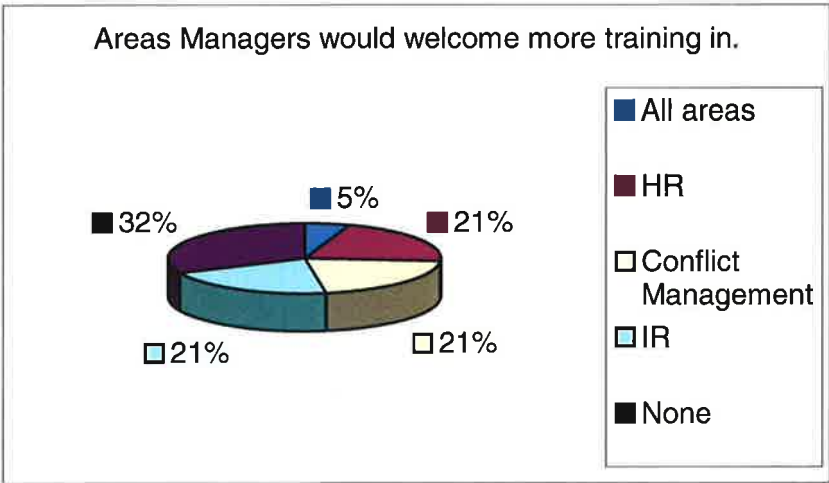
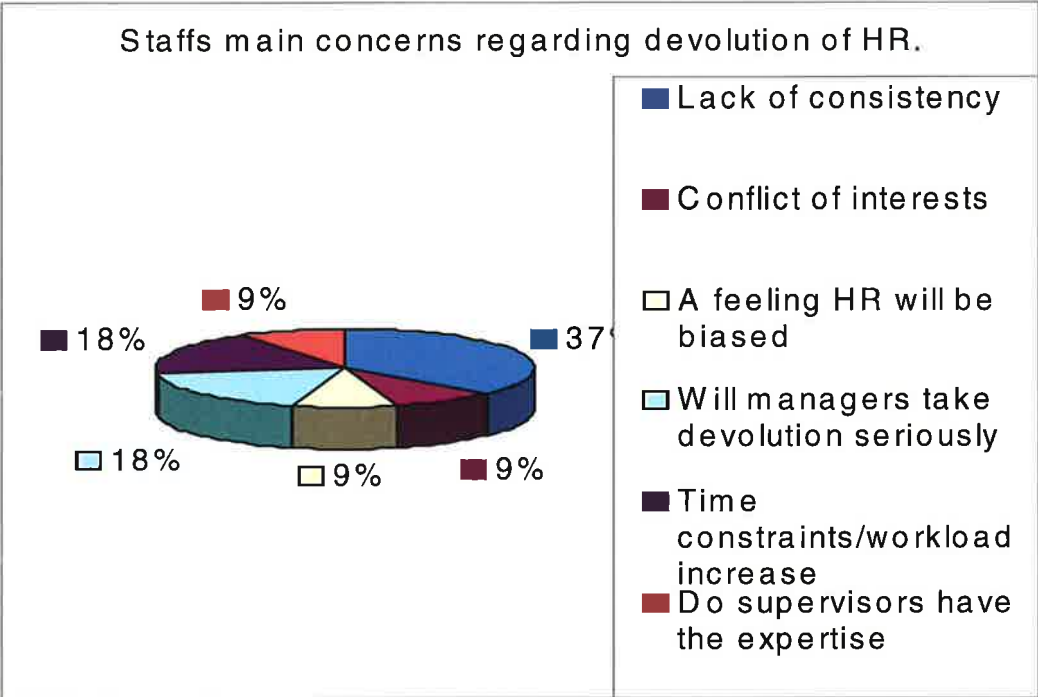
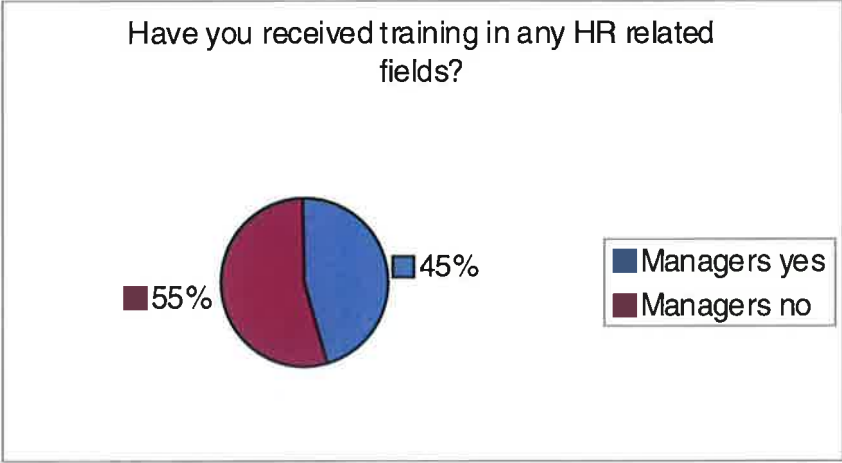


How high on your list of priorities would HR duties be placed?

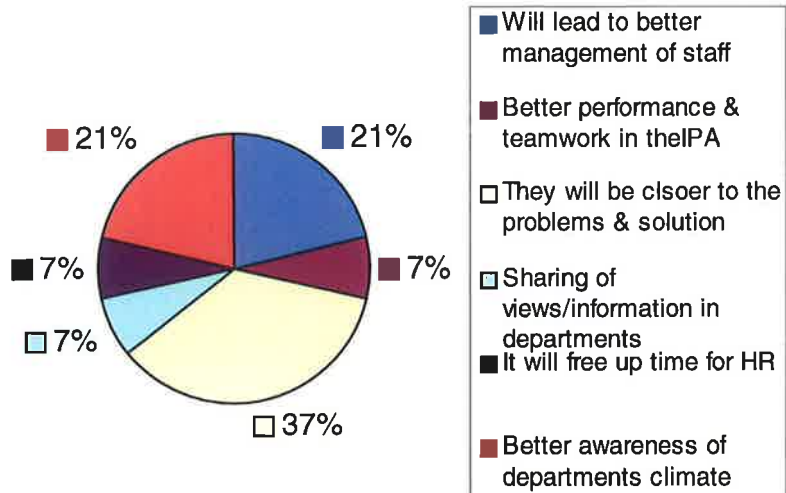


How often do Managers consult with HR?

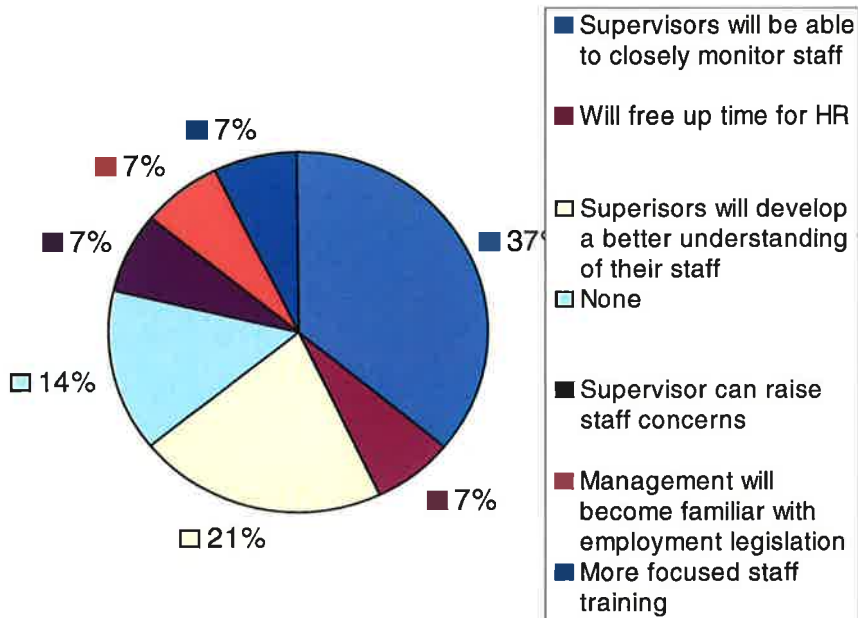




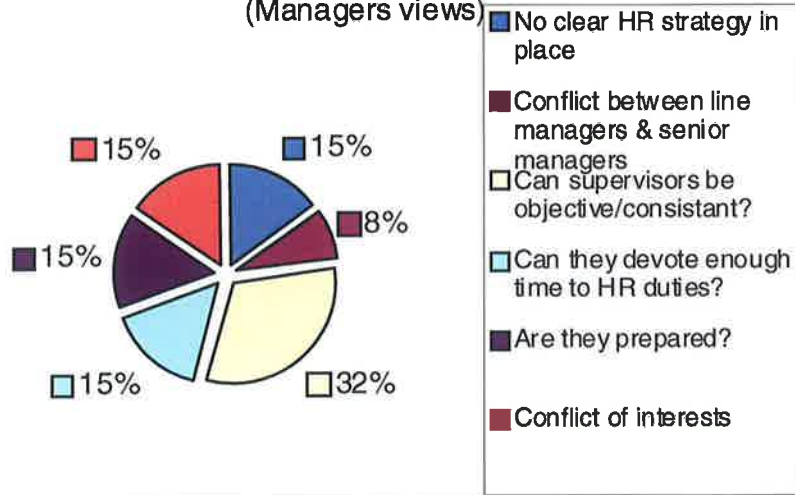
Advantages of devolution of HR (Managers views)



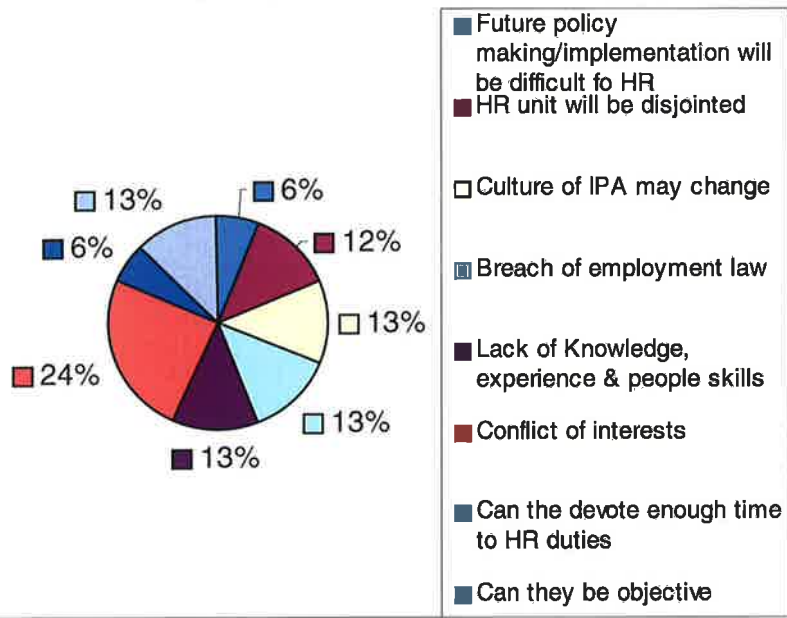
Advantages of devolution of HR (Staff views)



**Disadvantages of devolution of HR
(Managers views)**



Disadvantages of devolution of HR (staff views)



Appendix B – Questionnaires (pilot & final draft)

Pilot Questionnaire

Delegation of HR Responsibilities to Line Managers Questionnaire

As Part of the NCI HRM Degree Programme I am writing a report on the Delegation of HR Responsibilities to line managers/supervisors and will use this questionnaire to conduct some primary research into the topic.

I would appreciate you taking the time to fill in this questionnaire and return it by **xx xxxxxx** to Dualta Walsh.

1. What age are you? (People may not want to give exact age, give options instead)
2. Gender Male Female
3. How many years have you been employed by the IPA? _____
4. Were you employed in the private sector before you joined the IPA? Yes No
(Confusing, Make this into two Separate Questions)
5. What is your job title? _____
6. Are you responsible for the supervision of any staff? Yes No
7. If yes how many staff are you responsible for? _____
8. Have you received any formal Management, HR, Conflict Management of any other relevant personnel training? Yes No
9. If yes in what year did you receive it and what area was the training in?

10. Would you welcome further training in any of the areas mentioned above?
Yes No
11. If yes which area(s) would you prefer training in?

12. Do you believe you would receive the training if you requested it? Yes No

13. Should all line managers/supervisors receive training before the implementation of delegation of responsibilities? Yes No

14. What in your opinion are the skills required to supervise/manage staff effectively? (too vague maybe add please put in order of importance)

15. Is HR a vital component within an organisation? Yes No

16. Should HR be involved in the design and implementation of new policies? Yes No
(Confusing, Make this into two Separate Questions)

17. What are HR's main duties/functions? (to vague ask for their opinion)

18. Is there enough staff to efficiently deal with the above duties/functions within the IPA? Yes No

19. How often do you consult with HR? (too vague)

Never Daily Weekly Monthly

20. Will you consult with HR about HR duties delegated to you? Yes No

21. Do you feel HR have the required expertise to advise line managers/supervisors regarding their new responsibilities? Yes No

22. HR can play a vital role in creating better policy co-ordination between departments within the IPA. Do you agree disagree

23. HR can play a vital role in informing staff of and getting staff to buy into new policies implemented by the IPA. Do you agree disagree

24. What are your main concerns regarding the proposed delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors? _____

25. Do you believe the new HR duties will add to your work load?

(add to your departments workload might be a better question)

Yes No

26. Do you believe it is feasible to implement delegation of responsibilities within the IPA at the moment? Yes No

27. Is delegation of responsibilities such as disciplinary procedures, staff appraisal and staff training to line managers/supervisors beneficial for the future of the IPA? Yes No

28. If no any additional comments on why not?

29. How high on your list of priorities would HR duties come if delegated to you?
Low Average High Very High

30. Should concentrate on playing a more pro-active & strategic role in shaping the direction the IPA will follow in the future rather than an administrative role? (to vague - Do you think HR) Yes No

31. Will line managers/supervisors having more say in staff development and recruitment create more efficient staff and higher morale in each department within the IPA? Yes No

32. What are the advantages of Line managers/supervisors being delegated former HR responsibilities? (to vague ask for their opinion)

33. What are the disadvantages of Line managers/supervisors being delegated former HR responsibilities? (to vague ask for their opinion)

From speaking to the staff piloted it became clear that some of them were unsure what delegation was so a question was added to see how many staff knew what delegation was, it was also suggested that a comments section be added to the end of the questionnaire to allow people to cover any areas which had not been raised or to expand on any thoughts they may have had. There was also some advice to break the questionnaire up into sections to make it easier to manage and that some questions were too vague i.e. if I am looking for opinion ask for staff's opinion etc. There was also unanimous advice from the staff piloted that I should guarantee the confidentiality and anonymity of all staff who participated.

Questionnaire - Final Draft

Delegation of HR Responsibilities to Line Managers Questionnaire

Introduction

As Part of the NCI HRM Degree Programme I am writing a report on the Delegation of HR Responsibilities to line managers/supervisors and will use this questionnaire to conduct some primary research into the topic.

I would appreciate you taking the time to fill in this questionnaire and return it by **23 January** to Dualta Walsh alternatively you can leave the completed questionnaire at reception where there will be an envelope assigned for the questionnaires.

All answers and comments given on this form will be held in the strictest confidence and there will be no need for you to supply your name.

SECTION A

1. Age: 18 – 29 30 – 40 41 +
2. Gender Male Female
3. How many years have you been employed by the IPA? _____
4. Were you working before you joined the IPA? Yes No
5. Have you ever been employed in the private sector? Yes No
6. What is your job title? _____
7. Are you responsible for the supervision of any staff? Yes No
8. If yes how many staff are you responsible for? _____

SECTION B

1. Have you received any formal Management, HR, Conflict Management of any other relevant personnel training? Yes No
2. If yes in what year did you receive it and what area was the training in?

3. Would you welcome further training in any of the areas mentioned above? Yes No

4. If yes which area(s) would you prefer training in?

5. Do you believe you would receive the training if you requested it? Yes No

6. Should all line managers/supervisors receive training before the implementation of delegation of responsibilities? Yes No

7. What in your opinion are the skills required to supervise/manage staff effectively? (please put in order of importance)

- 1.

- 2.

- 3.

- 4.

SECTION C

1. Is HR a vital component within an organisation? Yes No

2. Should HR be involved in the design of new policies? Yes No

3. Should HR be involved in implementing new policies? Yes No

4. What in your opinion are HR's main duties/functions?

5. Is there enough staff to efficiently deal with the above duties/functions within the IPA? Yes No

6. How often do you consult with HR? (On management issues)
Never Daily Weekly Monthly

7. Will you consult with HR about HR duties delegated to you? Yes No

8. Do you feel HR have the required expertise to advise line managers/supervisors regarding their new responsibilities? Yes No

9. HR can play a vital role in creating better policy co-ordination between departments within the IPA. Do you agree disagree

10. HR can play a vital role in informing staff of and getting staff to buy into new policies implemented by the IPA. Do you agree disagree

SECTION D

1. Is it clear to you what delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors involves?
Yes No
2. What are your main concerns regarding the proposed delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors?

3. Do you believe the new HR duties will add to your (your departments) work load?
Yes No
4. Do you believe it is feasible to implement delegation of responsibilities within the IPA at the moment?
Yes No
5. Is delegation of responsibilities such as disciplinary procedures, staff appraisal and staff training to line managers/supervisors beneficial for the future of the IPA?
Yes No
6. If no any additional comments on why not? _____
7. How high on your list of priorities would HR duties come if delegated to you?
Low Average High Very High
8. Do you think HR should concentrate on playing a more pro-active & strategic role in shaping the direction the IPA will follow in the future rather than an administrative role?
Yes No
9. Will line managers/supervisors having more say in staff development and recruitment create more efficient staff and higher morale in each department within the IPA?
Yes No

What in your opinion are the advantages of Line managers/supervisors being delegated former HR responsibilities?

10. What in your opinion are the disadvantages of Line managers/supervisors being delegated former HR responsibilities?

11. Please feel free to add any further comments regarding the delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors in the space below.

Appendix C – Draft questions submitted to the Union and HR/Management before semi-structured interviews.

Devolution Process:

1. Were the Union consulted about delegation of HR duties to Line Managers in the IPA?
2. Have any other Public Sector organisations (national or international) been used as a model for the delegation process to your knowledge?
3. What role will staff and the Union play in the process?
4. Do staff and the Union know what exactly is being delegated?
5. What are your main concerns about delegation?
6. What do you see as the benefits?
7. Will Delegation be beneficial to the future of the IPA?
8. What has happened nationally regarding union involvement in the devolution of HR in the public service?

The HR Unit:

1. Do you think that HR is a vital unit within the IPA?
2. Is HR valued/utilised to its full potential by Senior Mgt & Line Managers?
3. Are there enough staff in HR to perform efficiently?
4. Is the HR unit becoming more strategic & professional, planning for the future & playing less of an administrative role?
5. Is HR involved in the design & implementation of new policies/initiatives in the IPA?
6. Does HR receive the required support/resources from Senior Management?
7. Will delegation of HR functions to Line Managers be a success in your opinion?

Training:

1. Should all Line Managers receive training for their new roles?
2. Do you think they will receive any training?
3. Do you think they will receive the support from Senior Management to successfully take on former HR duties?
4. How seriously do you think Line Managers will take the new duties (will they be a priority within the department)?
5. Do you get the impression that Line Managers are happy to take on these new responsibilities (have objections been raised)?
6. Do you think line managers are aware of and prepared for what is being delegated?
7. Has PMDS been a success so far and was it taken seriously?

5. Do you believe you would receive the training if you requested it? Yes No

6. Should all line managers/supervisors receive training before the implementation of delegation of responsibilities? Yes No

7. What in your opinion are the skills required to supervise/manage staff effectively? (please put in order of importance)

1. Communication
2. Leadership
3. Motivational skills
4. _____

SECTION C

1. Is HR a vital component within an organisation? Yes No

2. Should HR be involved in the design of new policies? Yes No

3. Should HR be involved in implementing new policies? Yes No

4. What in your opinion are HRs main duties/functions?

Implementing company policy and procedures

5. Is there enough staff to efficiently deal with the above duties/functions within the IPA? Yes No

6. How often do you consult with HR? (On management issues)
Never Daily Weekly Monthly

7. Will you consult with HR about HR duties delegated to you? Yes No

8. Do you feel HR have the required expertise to advise line managers/supervisors regarding their new responsibilities? Yes No

9. HR can play a vital role in creating better policy co-ordination between departments within the IPA. Do you agree disagree

10. HR can play a vital role in informing staff of and getting staff to buy into new policies implemented by the IPA. Do you agree disagree

SECTION D

1. Is it clear to you what delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors involves?
Yes No

2. What are your main concerns regarding the proposed delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors?
I may not have the skills required to perform some of the HR duties delegated

3. Do you believe the new HR duties will add to your (your departments) work load?
Yes No

4. Do you believe it is feasible to implement delegation of responsibilities within the IPA at the moment?
Yes No

5. Is delegation of responsibilities such as disciplinary procedures, staff appraisal and staff training to line managers/supervisors beneficial for the future of the IPA?
Yes No

6. If no any additional comments on why not? _____

7. How high on your list of priorities would HR duties come if delegated to you?
Low Average High Very High

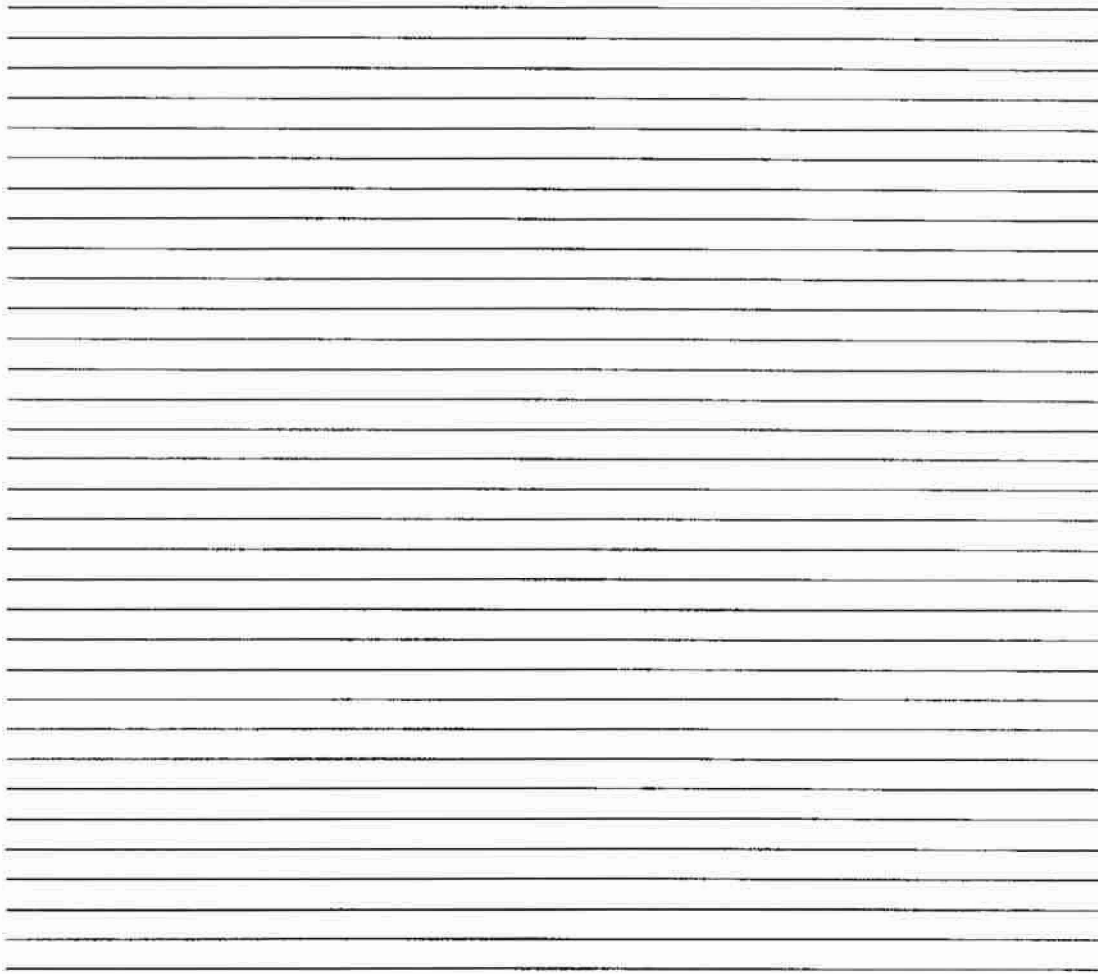
8. Do you think HR should concentrate on playing a more pro-active & strategic role in shaping the direction the IPA will follow in the future rather than an administrative role?
Yes No

9. Will line managers/supervisors having more say in staff development and recruitment create more efficient staff and higher morale in each department within the IPA?
Yes No

10. What in your opinion are the advantages of Line managers/supervisors being delegated former HR responsibilities?
It could improve teamwork within the various departments.

11. What in your opinion are the disadvantages of Line managers/supervisors being delegated former HR responsibilities?
Some managers may not be prepared to take on the duties without some benefit to themselves.

12. Please feel free to add any further comments regarding the delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors in the space below.



Staff Questionnaire

Delegation of Responsibilities to Line Managers Questionnaire

Introduction

As Part of the NCI HRM Degree Programme I am writing a report on the Delegation of HR Responsibilities to line managers/supervisors and will use this questionnaire to conduct some primary research into the topic.

I would appreciate you taking the time to fill in this questionnaire and return it by 23 January to Dualta Walsh alternatively you can leave the completed questionnaire at reception where there will be an envelope assigned for the questionnaires.

All answers and comments given on this form will be held in the strictest confidence and there will be no need for you to supply your name.

SECTION A

1. Age 18 - 29 30 - 40 41+
2. Gender Male Female
3. How many years have you been employed by the IPA? 2
4. Were you working before joining the IPA? Yes No
5. Have you ever been employed in the private sector? Yes No
6. Are you responsible for supervision of any staff? Yes No
7. If yes how many staff are you responsible for? 1

SECTION B

1. Have you received any formal Management, HR, Conflict Management or any other relevant personnel training? Yes No
2. If yes in what year did you receive it and what area was the training in?

3. Should all line managers/supervisors receive training before the implementation of delegation of responsibilities? Yes No

4. What in your opinion are the skills required to supervise/manage staff effectively?
(Please put in order of importance)

1. Communication Skills.
2. to be objective
3. Motivation Skills.
4. _____

SECTION C

1. Is HR a vital component within an organisation? Yes No
2. Should HR be involved in the design of new policies? Yes No
3. Should IIR be involved in implementing new policies? Yes No

4. What in your opinion are HRs main duties/functions?

General Wellbeing of All Staff Members, also to interview and hire or fire staff members.

5. Is there enough HR staff to efficiently deal with the above duties/functions within the IPA? Yes No
6. How often do you consult with HR?
Never Daily Weekly Monthly
8. Do you feel HR have the required expertise to advise line managers/supervisors regarding their new responsibilities? Yes No
9. HR can play a vital role in creating better policy co-ordination between departments within the IPA. Do you agree disagree
10. HR can play a vital role in informing staff of and getting staff to buy into new policies implemented by the IPA. Do you agree disagree

SECTION D

1. Is it clear to you what delegation of responsibilities to line managers/ supervisors involves? Yes No
2. What are your main concerns regarding the proposed delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors?

3. Do you believe the line managers/supervisors new duties will add to your departments work load? Yes No

4. Do you believe it is feasible to implement delegation of responsibilities within the IPA at the moment? Yes No

5. Is delegation of responsibilities such as disciplinary procedures, staff appraisal and staff training to line managers/supervisors beneficial for the future of the IPA? Yes No

6. If no any additional comments on why not?

7. How high on your list of priorities would HR duties come if delegated to you? Low Average High Very High

8. Do you think HR should concentrate on playing a more pro-active & strategic role in shaping the direction the IPA will follow in the future rather than an administrative role? Yes No

9. Will Line managers/supervisors having more say in staff development and recruitment create more efficient staff and higher morale in each department within the IPA? Yes No

10. What in your opinion are the advantages of Line managers/supervisors being delegated former HR responsibilities? *they know there staff better and are more aware of there needs + abilities*

11. What in your opinion are the disadvantages of Line managers/supervisors being delegated former HR responsibilities? *because of the close relationships between staff members it could be difficult to discipline*

12. Please feel free to add any further comments regarding the delegation of responsibilities to line managers/supervisors in the space below.
