

Executive overview

With the content elements now in place, we turn our attention to the important aspect of managing people, the style dimension of the job. As with the first two chapters you will see from the book overview the overriding nature of this aspect of the task. Increasingly companies are recognizing the key task of managing people and are placing appropriate emphasis on this element of the job, particularly in operations. This chapter highlights many important features in this task and the following aspects are covered in detail:

The opening section highlights the size and nature of changes in the workplace and illustrates these by dimensions such as the increasingly competitive nature of markets, the growing use of temporary staff, employee attitudes to work and their commitment to organizational goals, the higher technical content of jobs, the pace of change, particularly regarding shorter service or product life cycles, the growing dimension of government employment legislation and the relative insecurity of employment.

General definitions used in describing the job of work are then provided. These include job content that establishes the scope and depth of work, job satisfaction and motivation and how these differ, and job performance and the role of management in creating an environment where the ingredients of skill and attitude can coexist to enhance performance.

The next section outlines *traditional* approaches to work design. This, in turn, is split into three sections – first, organizational design which includes the use of specialists, hierarchical structures, and the tendency to control from a distance. The second section looks at role design including work patterns and the specialization and contribution of staff. The final section looks at job design including enlargement, rotation, enrichment and work schedules. Each dimension is discussed and how it impacts the current work structures is explained.

The chapter then moves on to *new* approaches to work design and covers the sectional breakdown used earlier – organizational, role and job redesign. The detailed aspects covered here include the learning organization, what it involves and what it can deliver; developing a change-oriented organization and the cultural and behavioural shifts involved; the changing role of managers in terms of creating conditions where people want responsibility, will learn and hence manage themselves such that they maximize their contribution to an organization as well as their own learning; and the trend towards flatter organizations is introduced and the changes it brings to organizational design are discussed.

The aspect of role redesign covers the dimensions of employee involvement and empowerment and the different forms it can take. Job redesign is discussed in terms of current job profile and the move towards increasing the scope of work to include elements of planning, doing and evaluating.

The role of training and development in bringing about these changes is then highlighted.

The move towards flexitime and job-sharing arrangements is introduced and examples of the schemes used in organizations are explained.

Other people-related issues including recruitment, staff retention, the growing use of temporary staff, staff appraisals and managing operations overseas are then discussed.

The final area is that of ergonomics, and the workplace, environmental and behavioural factors are introduced.