



Co-operative Education Report:

**Optimising Employee Experience: Insights and Strategies from the Human Resources
Department at Highland Group**

Written By

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Siam University

Title: Optimising Employee Experience: Insights and Strategies from the Human Resources Department

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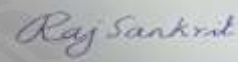
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Credits: 5

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ABSTRACT

This internship report comprehensively analyses my 16-week cooperative education program in the Human Resources Department at Highland Group, a renowned liquor manufacturing and trading company. The report outlines the various insights gained, strategies developed, and initiatives undertaken to optimise employee experience during this period. Throughout the internship, I was actively involved in projects aimed at enhancing employee engagement, onboarding, induction, orientation, training and development, diversity and inclusion, and performance management. Through hands-on experience and collaboration with HR professionals, I gained valuable insights into the complexities and challenges faced in managing a dynamic workforce. The creation of a new employee onboarding program to speed up the integration process, the introduction of a wellness campaign to enhance staff well-being, and the execution of diversity training seminars to encourage inclusivity are some of the internship's major highlights. These programs were created to provide a productive and happy work environment that values employee happiness. Through this internship, I have gained practical knowledge, honed my skills in HR management, and developed a deeper understanding of the importance of employee experience in organisational success. The experience at Highland Group has not only enriched my professional growth but has also

equipped me with valuable insights and strategies that can contribute to the company's ongoing commitment to a vibrant and engaged workforce.

Keywords: Employee Experience, HR Management, Diversity and Inclusion



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I sincerely thank all of the people and institutions that were instrumental in influencing my internship experience and making this report possible to finish. I've gained priceless insights into the human resources industry from my internship, enabling me to use my academic knowledge in a real-world situation. During this time, I was able to improve both personally and professionally because of the support and advice I got.

First and foremost, I would like to express my gratitude to Siam University for allowing me to participate in the cooperative education program. I've gained practical experience and vital abilities in the field of human resources thanks to this program. I also appreciate Highland Group for allowing me to intern in their HR division. Having this exposure to employee relations and HR management in a corporate setting has been incredibly beneficial.

In addition, I would like to thank Mr. Raj Sankrit for serving as my academic advisor. His advice and assistance have enabled me to overcome obstacles and expand my comprehension of HR principles. I owe a special thank you to Mr. Sagar Thapa, my intern supervisor at Highland Group, whose knowledge and guidance have greatly advanced my career development.

To conclude, I express my gratitude to Dr. Maruj Limpawattana, Siam University's Assistant President and Director of Co-operative Education, for his invaluable assistance in organizing and executing the program. My sincere gratitude is extended to my family, friends, mentors, and instructors for their constant support and encouragement during this journey. Their combined efforts helped shape my internship experience and have been crucial in my professional development in the human resource field.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Company's Profile

The Highland Group of Industries is a conglomerate of the Beverage manufacturing industries and a trading unit which are named and classified as below in table . The Highland Group itself is a sister concern of ICTC Group of Companies. ICTC was established in 1993 with a strong and longstanding business in diverse sectors ranging from Infrastructure, Real estate, Insurance, Hospitality, Energy and Consumer goods.

The Highland group has established itself as one of the largest and most highly successful liquor manufacturing and distribution operations in Nepal's history. Their 3 manufacturing plants, located in strategic parts of the country, produce some of the largest-selling alcohol brands while their distribution arm handles and ensures swift coverage of all of the brands in the modern Nepali marketplace.

The group gives special emphasis on producing the highest quality products while ensuring occupational health, and safety management in addition to being environmentally conscious of their operations. All of the three factories are ISO 22000:2005 Food Safety Management System certified Company.

Name of the Company	Type of the Company	Location
Highland Distillery Private Limited	Manufacturing Industry	Kathmandu, Nepal.
Avanish Distillery Private Limited	Manufacturing Industry	Abu Khairani, Nepal.
United Liquors Private Limited	Manufacturing Industry	Chitwan, Nepal.
Prime International Private Limited	Trading Company	Kathmandu, Nepal.

Table 1: Entities of Highland Group

1.1.1 Company Mission

The Highland Group's mission is to capture more than 75% of the market share and become the market leader in the beverage sector by 2026 A.D.

1.1.2 Company Vision

The Highland Group's vision is to establish itself as the happiest place to work while being successful in having a portfolio of alcoholic products.

1.1.3 Strategies of the Company

The Highland Group has placed its strategies in its core values. The values have been prepared for all the important stakeholders of the organisations. Their strategies fall in the values they're providing to their stakeholders. I've listed the strategies for each group below:

A. Team Member Facing Values

- I. I am Cared, Trusted & Respected.
- II. I Feel Safe
- III. I am treated fairly
- IV. I am Confident
- V. I am Comfortable
- VI. I am Recognized & Rewarded

B. Customer Facing Values

- I. They provide the best quality product
- II. Their quality of product is consistent
- III. They come up with the most innovative products and packaging
- IV. It's amazing how they blend their brand image with fun experience
- V. I would like to encourage their brands because it's a good company

1.2 Organisational Structure

The Highland Group follows a matrix structure where the designated group managers lead the functional departments.

1.2.1 Diagram of the organisational structure

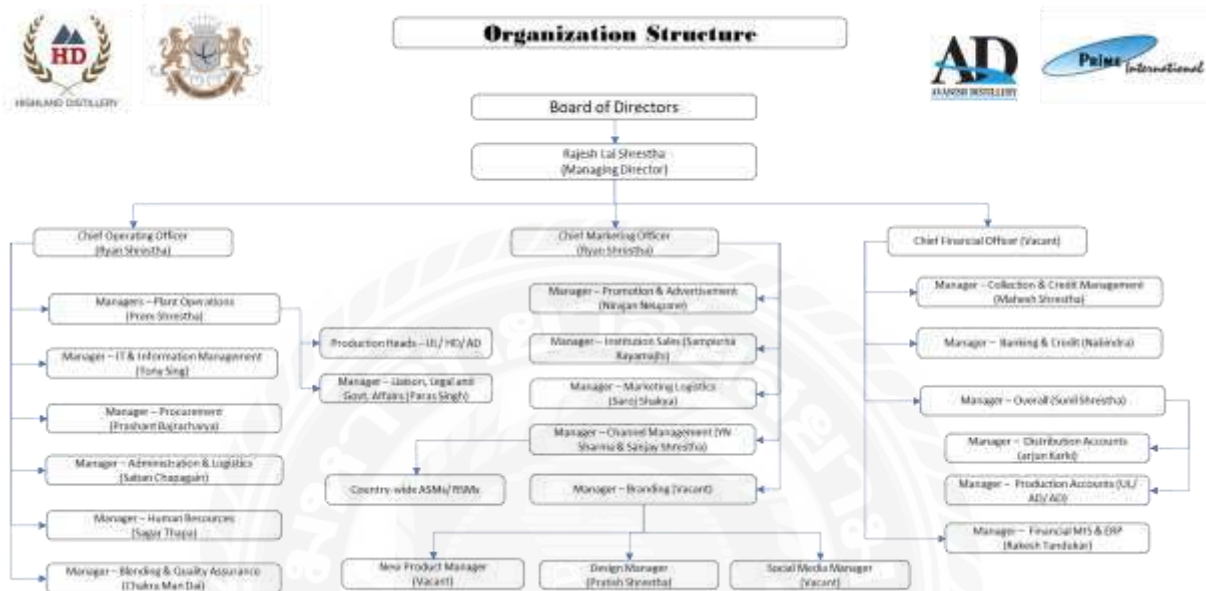


Figure 1: Organisational Structure of Highland Group

1.2.2 Job Position

I was assigned as a Human resources Internee preliminarily where my major focus areas were :-

- I. Preparing employment contracts
- II. Handling employee documents
- III. Filing employment documents for audit purposes
- IV. Maintaining the records in the HRIS (Human resource information system)

After working as an Internee for 1 month of time, I was recruited for the position of Employee experience Assistant, and I was assigned to the following:-

- I. Ensure employee onboarding experience after the recruitment
- II. Be the point person for the organisational policies and processes

- III. Conduct the induction program for the newly joined employees
- IV. Coordinate with functional department heads to kick-start the new joiners' productive cycle.

1.2.3 Job Position in the company's organisational structure

My job position was placed into the operational function, within the Human resource department. The Human resource department was further classified into four major sub-functions named -

- I. Talent Acquisition
- II. Human resource Operation
- III. Learning & development
- IV. Employee Experience

I was specifically assigned to the Employee Experience Sub-function where the following Key responsible areas were assigned to me:-

- I. Managing the Onboarding experience of the newly hired employees
- II. Overseeing Employee satisfaction regarding rewards & recognition
- III. Implementing Health & safety practices and Initiatives
- IV. Organising Cultural activities and Initiatives

1.3 Intention and motivation to choose the company

The Highland group has a significant history in the liquor sector of Nepal. The group was able to lead the market for more than 15 years by covering 90% of the total market share. The group has been able to maintain the market share by 50% in the present days and has been coming up with a wide range of products for different market segments with a modern approach to becoming the market leader once again. The group has been investing in research and development while creating a friendly and nurturing working environment in our country.

Below are the reasons for my intention and motivation to choose The Highland group as a part of my Co-op studies:

- A. This group has been providing employment opportunities to more than 500 people in a regular contract while 50% of the workforce are women. Working amongst such a huge workforce would definitely give me the practical knowledge of working with different personalities in the professional ecosystem.
- B. This group has been investing in new modern methodologies such as the agile concept, servant leadership approaches through which I can equip myself better to establish myself in the Nepalese market.

1.4 Strategic Analysis of the Company

SWOT analysis is a strategic planning tool used to identify and assess the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Below is the SWOT analysis of the company:-

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<p>1. Experienced & loyal employees: 75% of the leadership positions are held by employees who have been with the company for more than 15 years.</p> <p>2. Financial Condition The company holds up a good reserve amount due to which the company can re-invest in their marketing strategies.</p> <p>3. Working Culture The environment is very friendly and encourages self-nourishment. There are ample learning initiatives provided by the HR department.</p>	<p>1. Change adaptation Given the company's high retention rate and the continued presence of employees from the Baby Boomer generation, it has proven challenging to facilitate their adaptation to new working methodologies and technologies.</p> <p>2. Leadership Transition Most of the leadership position holders are on the verge of retirement, so the company must focus on succession planning.</p> <p>3. Dependency upon the existing distribution partners The company has not been able to revamp its distribution network and has continued to work with the existing partners it has had since the past 30 years, most of which are identified as</p>

	problematic in the present date.
OPPORTUNITY	THREATS
<p>1. Unexplored product segment The company has been investing in whiskey & vodka only and there could be a possibility of business expansion if it was to invest in the other product segments such as beer, Gin, Brandy, Rum, etc.</p> <p>2. Monopolistic approach There are approximately 130+ registered distilleries in Nepal and only 7 distilleries have been able to produce a mainstream brand that has been able to cover the entire Nepal. The company can have an advantage over newly entered and small distilleries by luring their quality manpower, and providing attractive schemes and discounts.</p>	<p>1. Existing competitors There are two major competitors for the company: Jawalakhel Group of Industries and Yeti Distillery. Both of them are equally fierce and resourceful.</p> <p>2. Government Policies for Alcoholic Products Due to the nature of business, the government has mandated a heavy excise duty on the import and production of alcoholic products which ultimately has impacted the pricing of the product.</p> <p>3. Economic Crisis Nepal is facing an economic crisis which has caused numerous effects on the Nepalese market. Financial institutions have collapsed, many industries have downsized with layoffs, and people are being unable to pay back their credit. In such conditions, the company is struggling to collect the market outstanding.</p>

Table 2: SWOT Analysis of Highland Group

1.5 Objectives of this Co-op study:

I am planning to run my own business in the future for which I will have to gather a wide range of experience regarding working culture, problem solving, decision making, Analysis, and project execution. So, to start with I am thankful for this Co-op study which provided me the opportunity to work in an established organization that has a good history and has a large workforce. I remember the quote by Simon Sinek - “ If you don’t understand people, You don’t understand business”. I selected this organization to understand the different personalities in the workspace, how these teams come together to resolve the problem, how they plan, and how they resolve conflicts with each other.

This Co-op study will help me to understand real-world business, where people from different backgrounds come together to achieve the organizational mission. As I am learning here, I’ve realized that the best asset an organization can have is its people and how the organization should take care of its team members. The Employee welfare policies and health and safety standards are a few initiatives that I’ve learned.

CHAPTER 2: CO-OP STUDY ACTIVITIES

2.1 Job Description

As the Employee experience assistant, I was assigned as the primary point of contact and provided critical support to candidates, hiring managers, and internal HR and business stakeholders to provide a world-class onboarding experience for newly hired employees. I was responsible for ensuring the timely execution and completion of a seamless workflow for each new employee. My other major responsibilities included supporting employees and management through onboarding, performance management, payroll, grievances, and exit processes. I was also asked to advise the Group Human Resource Manager regarding best practices to maximise employee efficiency throughout the employee life cycle.

Besides, I was also responsible for developing and leading the HR and culture activities, procedures, policies and systems in line with Possible's values, HR By-laws, and Labor Law of the Government of Nepal. In my role, I had to be the primary ambassador and advocate for Possible's mission, vision, values and also drive an inclusive culture.

2.2 Job Responsibilities and Work Duties

In such a short span of time, I was able to take part and contribute to the Human resource department in various aspects. A few of my major responsibilities are listed and explained below:

2.2.1 Employee Onboarding

- Welcoming newly hired employees and executing the engagement plan throughout the onboarding journey; managing the end-to-end onboarding process, ensuring a great experience for new employees and a smooth start into their roles.
- Preparing and distributing onboarding welcome gifts.
- Communicating the employee handbooks that explain company operations.

- Crafting and sending communication with information about the company, onboarding agenda, equipment handover, dress code, parking options, perks and similar items.
- Ensuring new hires have technical assistance to properly set up their hardware/software and distribute manuals, passwords, and guidelines, as needed.
- Coordinating onboarding presentations and product demos.
- Auditing data and setting up employee profiles in internal HR systems; assisting with the coordination, preparation, and distribution of employee documentation.
- Aligning new employees with managers and their teams and communicating involvement procedures to all stakeholders.
- Serving as the primary point of contact for hiring managers and newly hired employees.
- Providing reporting and project updates to team lead and/or senior management.
- Acting as a subject matter expert and making recommendations on how to improve process efficiency.
- Ensuring compliance with all processes and maintaining a high level of confidentiality at all times.

2.2.2 Handling Employee Grievances

In my role, I was also assigned to hear the grievances of the employees and for which I was given the policy document to read and follow. Below attached is the table of contents from the Grievance handling policy at Highland Group.

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Overview	2
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Step 2: Submit Grievance	3
Step 3: Wait For Follow-up (within 1 business day)	3
Step 4: Assessment and Actions (within 5 business days)	3
Step 5: Closing of the Grievance (within 8 business days)	4
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Grievances For Different Types of Workers	5
Examples	5
Examples of Grievances	5
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Revision History	6

Figure 2: Sample of Grievance Handling Policy

2.2.3 Employee Offboarding

In my role, I had to ascertain departmental dependencies and accountabilities in order to successfully offboard the employees after their resignation was triggered. I also had to ensure the success of the employee offboarding process as well as the development of processes and procedures required to support employee offboarding initiatives. Below is the sample offboarding template that I developed during my time at the Highland Group.

Activity	Responsibility	Due Date
Handling the Resignation		
Submit the Letter of Resignation to the Supervisor and HR Department	Employee	At least 30 days prior to the last date
Communicate about the resignation		
Update Admin/Finance department about the resignation	HR Department	Upon receiving the resignation letter
Knowledge Transfer to the replacement	Supervisor/ Employee	Within last 7 days
Recover Company Equipment and Assets.		
Laptop, Mobile Set, Keys/Vehicle, Computer Equipments	Admin Department	Within last 7 days
Exit Interview with the HR Department	HR Department	
Get clearance from all Stakeholders		
NOC Letter from the department head,	Head of Department	Within 3rd Week
NOC letter from Market (IF APPLICABLE)	Sales Supervisor	
NOC Letter from R.store/ Admin/ Finance (Wherever Applicable)	HR	
Final Payment		
Final Salary Deposit	HR Department	Within one month of resignation
Provident Fund Release Letter	HR Department	
Gratuity Release	HR Department/ Accounts Department	
Social Security Fund (SSF) Account Termination	HR Department	After clearance of all of the above

Table 3: Offboarding Checklist at Highland Group

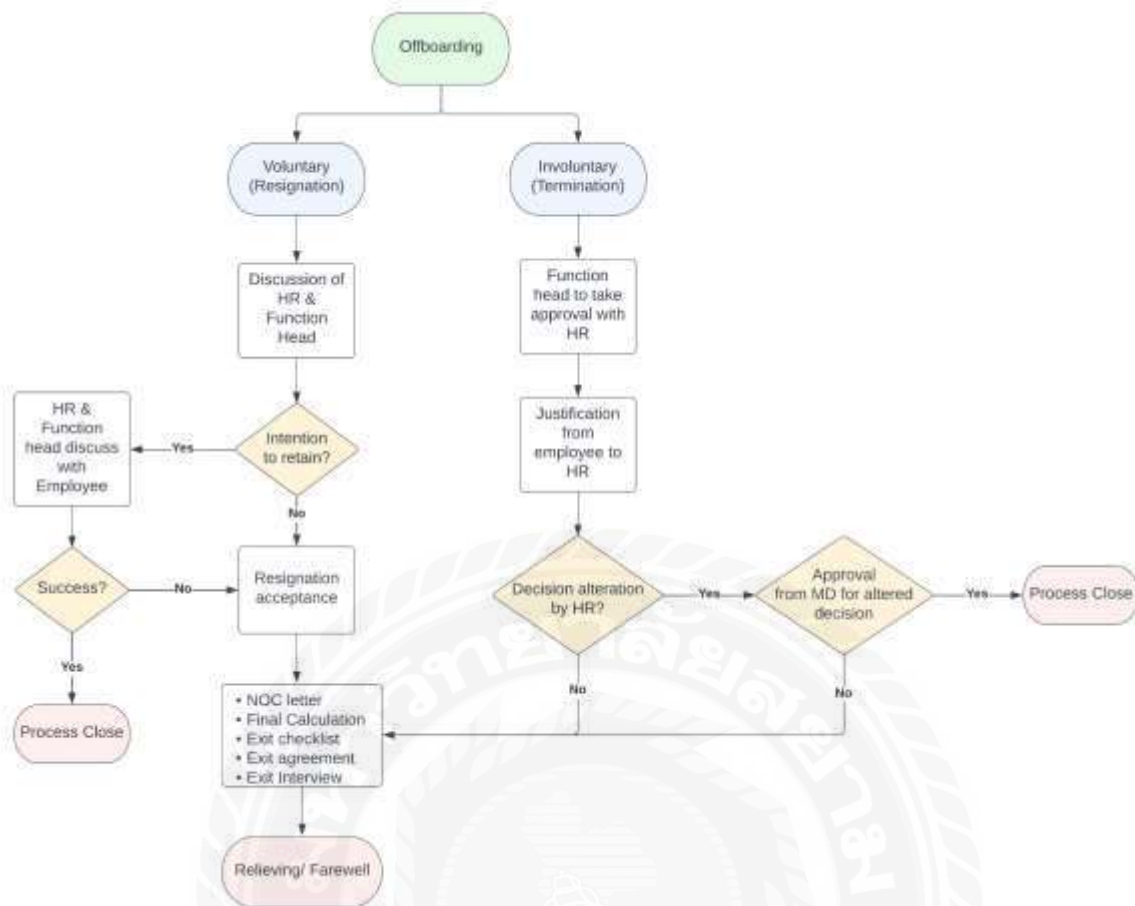


Figure 3: Offboarding flow diagram

2.2.4 Record Employee information in the HRIS

Once the employee was hired, I had to log in to the HRIS and update the database. The HRIS consisted of personal information, Family information, Contractual agreement details, Reward details and Emergency contact details. Since the payroll generation was also done through the HRIS, the official details such as PAN no., Bank Account Number, Other employment details also had to be updated. The snippet of the HRIS is shown in the following page.

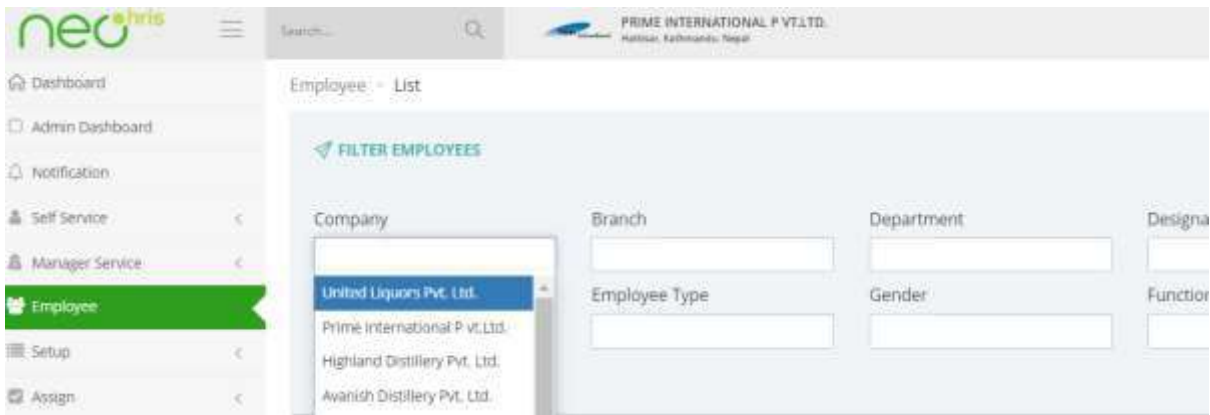


Figure 4: A snippet of the HRIS System at the Highland Group

2.2.4 Monitor attendance/leave of the regular staff and factory labours

The attendance of the employees is recorded in the HRIS app. I had to regularly monitor the attendance and leave of the employees and report to the management if any discrepancies were identified.

Shree Krishna Mahajan	Prime International Pvt.Ltd.	470	N/A	470	09:52:00 AM - 06:36:00 PM	09:56:00 AM - 08:40:00 PM	07:37:00 AM - 06:24:00 PM	09:51:00 AM - 08:40:00 PM	07:19:00 AM - 07:26:00 PM	09:51:00 AM - 07:28:00 PM	
Krishna Sharan Mahajan	Prime International Pvt.Ltd.	543	N/A	543	07:46:00 AM - 07:26:00 PM	09:16:00 AM - 08:31:00 PM	06:58:00 PM - 06:58:00 PM	09:23:00 AM - 06:27:00 PM	09:10:00 AM - 09:40:00 PM	09:31:00 AM - 08:25:00 PM	09:28:00 AM - 08:05:00 PM
Raj Kumar K.C.	United Liquors Pvt. Ltd.	207	N/A	207	09:48:00 AM - 07:39:00 PM	09:42:00 AM - 07:12:00 PM	12:21:00 PM - 05:36:00 PM	09:53:00 AM - 07:11:00 PM	09:50:00 AM - 07:20:00 PM	09:49:00 AM - 07:18:00 PM	09:49:00 AM - 07:39:00 PM
Pushotam Chauhan	United Liquors Pvt. Ltd.	307	N/A	307	10:03:00 AM - 07:00:00 PM	10:09:00 AM - 08:37:00 PM	10:54:00 AM - 07:12:00 PM	09:09:00 AM - 06:36:00 PM	09:09:00 AM - 09:28:00 PM	09:27:00 AM - 07:11:00 PM	09:08:00 AM - 06:42:00 PM

Figure 5: A snippet of the attendance and leave system

2.2.5 Record Overtime information for the payroll generation

I had to email the Factory operations team on the 25th of every month to follow up on the overtime information of the factory labourers. The overtime information was sent by the Factory operations team at the end of the month which was to be verified from the system and then passed on to the payroll generation team.

2.2.6 Record Employee information to the Social Security fund

After the employee has been hired, a Social Security fund account had to be created as per the Nepal Government's policy. I collected the required information through the HRIS system and updated it into the SSF portal and got the unique ID for every new employee.

2.3 Activities in coordinating with co-workers

During my tenure at the Highland Group, I found most of the Human resources activities inter related within the department and as well as with other departments as well. The vacancies were identified with the proper coordination and discussion with the other department heads. I was involved in the discussion to prepare the necessary induction and onboarding documents. Once the vacancy was identified, posted, sourced and during the interview process, I had to coordinate with the respective functional heads to schedule the interview and handle the candidate experience. If the candidate is hired, then my job is to inform the payroll handling team, Administration team, Accounts team, IT team and all other team members to let them know the joining date and prepare all the necessities beforehand.

After the employee has been hired, my job is to make sure the employee is feeling comfortable and his questions are being answered. I regularly checked in with the respective function head to ensure the new employee experience in the organisation is good. I had to work with the performance management team to keep record of the data of the new employee to check if the employee needs an improvement plan or any feedback is required.

2.4 Job Process Diagram

Below are the flowcharts as well as the description of my work process for the various tasks assigned to me.

2.4.1 Onboarding the newly hired employee

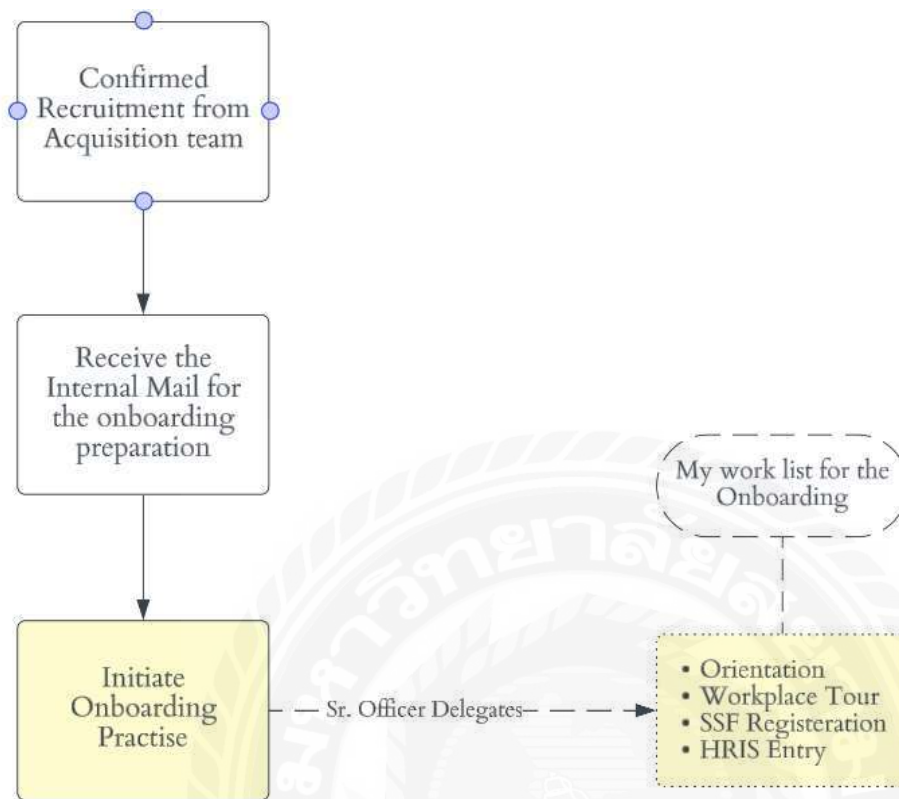


Figure 6: Job Process Diagram

After the hiring has been confirmed by the Talent Acquisition team we get the internal email to get prepared for the Onboarding of that particular employee. Since we had segregated the task I would have to take up on the Documentation part where I reach out to the employees and ask for the documents, record that information in the HRIS system, and also register the employee into the Social Security Fund. There were documentation available for the steps and procedures to follow while onboarding any new employee. So, I had to get prepared to provide the orientation to the newly hired employee as well.

2.4.2 Handling Employee Grievances

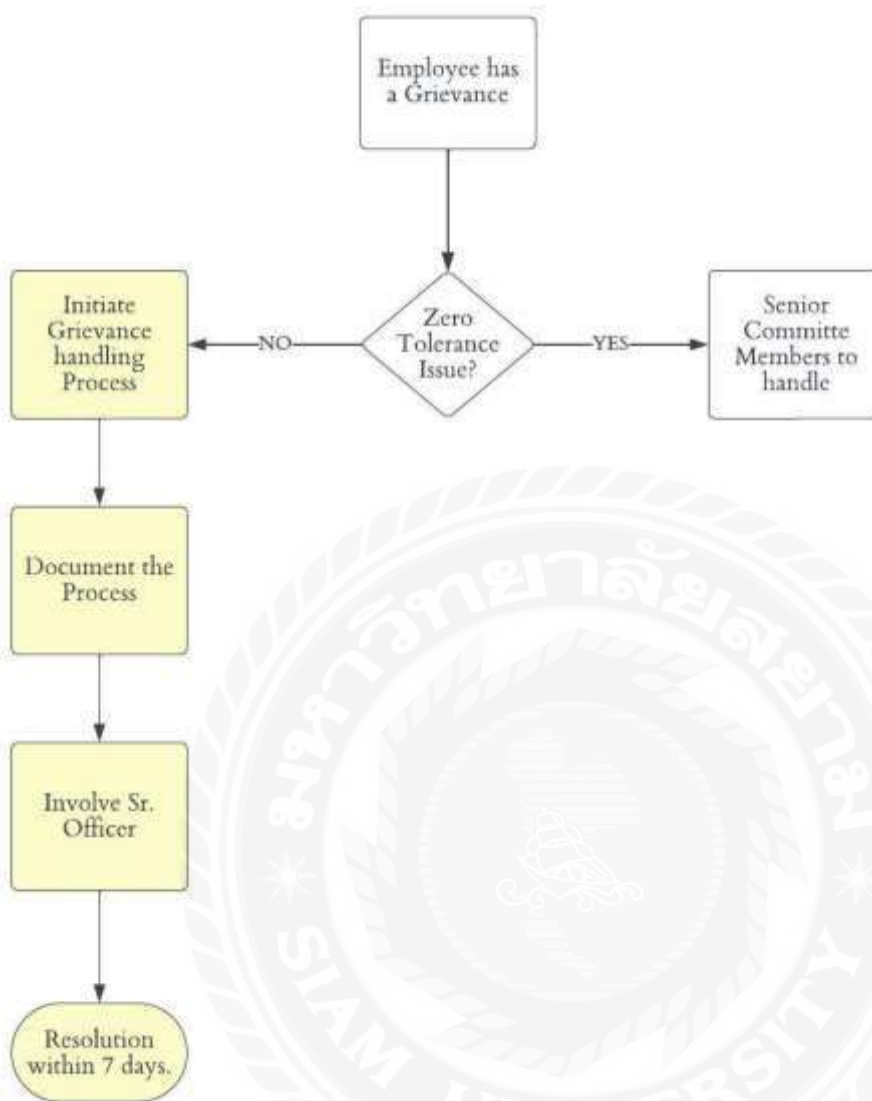


Figure 7: Flowchart of Handling Employee Grievance

In the case of grievances from the employees, It was classified broadly into two categories i.e. whether or not the grievance triggered the Zero tolerance issues or not. If not, then it was further classified into various subcategories such as Compensation, Communication, Leadership, Safety, Security, and so on. I was included in the process from the very initial step to listen to the grievances and document it as per the given format. I had to be accountable for resolving the grievances within 7 business days to enhance the employee experience.

2.4.3 Employee Offboarding

Once the resignation from the employee is received, the offboarding process would be triggered where I had to talk with the departing employee to know the reasons and see if we can retain the employee. If not, then the asset recovery process, handover process, and settlement of the dues would have to be done where I was accountable to supervise and guide all of these. I would also talk with the respective manager to know how this departure would impact his/her department and should be ready to hire someone into his/her place.

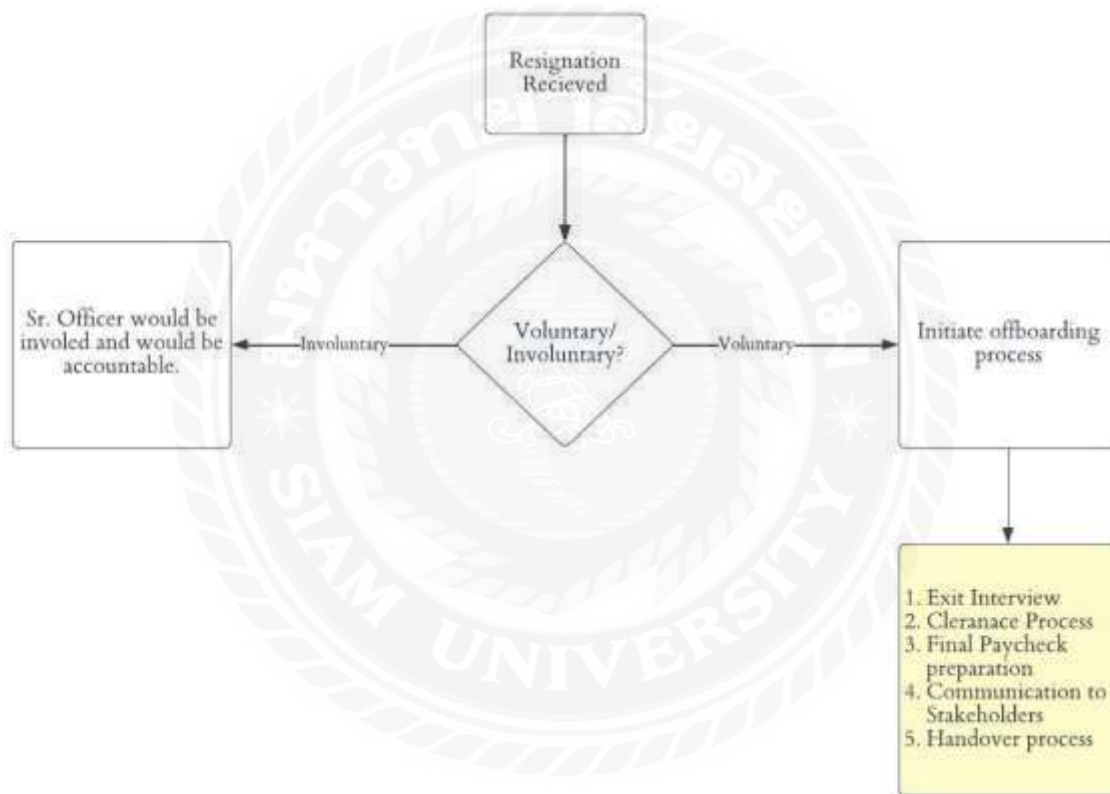


Figure 8: Employee Offboarding Flowchart

CHAPTER 3: LEARNING PROCESS

3.1 Problems and issues of the institution

A few of the problems I faced during my internship period at the Highland Group are enlisted and explained below:

3.1.1 Process documentation

As a new HR intern, I encountered difficulties navigating the company's HR systems and understanding its processes. This included software for recruitment, managing employee data, and understanding the steps involved in onboarding new hires. It was difficult to do duties accurately and efficiently without adequate documentation of the processes and the systems that were currently in use.

3.1.2 Mentor assignment

Without a mentor to connect me with others, I initially struggled to build relationships and establish a strong professional network, which is essential for success in the HR field. I felt lost and unsure about how to navigate the complexities of the HR role within the company. A mentor could have been helpful to acclimate myself to the organisation more quickly, enabling me to contribute effectively to projects and initiatives sooner. Without this support, it took me longer to feel comfortable and confident in my role, delaying my ability to make meaningful contributions to the team.

3.1.3 Not a clear vision for the role

I also faced challenges in understanding my specific roles and responsibilities and how my work contributes to the overall goals of the department. Without a clear vision, I faced challenges to prioritise my tasks and was not able to utilise my skills and unleash my capabilities.

3.1.4 Lack of Clarity in Performance Expectations

Without a clear job description outlining performance expectations, it was challenging for me to gauge whether I'm meeting the company's standards. I don't have specific criteria to measure my progress against, which makes it difficult to assess my own performance and seek feedback from my supervisors.

3.1.5 Fast-Paced Environment

With so much happening all at once, it was challenging for me to prioritise tasks effectively. I often found myself juggling multiple projects and responsibilities simultaneously, which oftentimes led to feelings of overwhelm and indecision. Without clear guidance on what tasks are most urgent or important, it was challenging for me to stay organised and focused.

3.2 Solving the problem

According to the literature review, the possible solutions for the above-mentioned problems could be:

3.2.1 Proper Documentation of HR Systems and Processes

Inadequate documentation of HR systems and processes can lead to confusion and inefficiency among interns. To address this issue, the organisation should develop comprehensive documentation that outlines key HR processes, procedures, and guidelines. This documentation should cover areas such as recruitment, onboarding, performance management, employee relations, and HR compliance. The clear documentation is essential for ensuring consistency, compliance, and transparency in HR practices. By providing interns with detailed guidelines and instructions, they can better understand their responsibilities and perform their tasks effectively. This documentation can also serve as a valuable reference tool for interns as they navigate their roles within the organisation.

3.2.2 Mentor Assignment:

Mentorship plays a crucial role in supporting the professional development of interns. The organisation should implement a mentorship program where each HR intern is paired with an experienced HR professional who can serve as a guide, coach, and resource throughout their internship. Effective mentorship involves establishing trust, setting goals, providing feedback, and fostering a supportive learning environment. Mentors can offer valuable insights, share their experiences, and provide guidance on navigating challenges within the organisation. This mentorship relationship can help interns develop their skills, build confidence, and make meaningful contributions to the HR team

3.2.3 Clarifying the Role:

Without a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, interns may struggle to effectively contribute to the HR department. To address this issue, the organisation should define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of HR interns through a detailed job description and orientation process. The organisation has to recognize the importance of role clarity in maximising employee performance and engagement. A well-defined job description outlines the tasks, duties, and objectives of the internship role, providing interns with a clear roadmap for success. Additionally, an orientation process can help interns familiarise themselves with the organisation's culture, policies, and procedures, setting them up for success from the outset of their internship.

3.2.4 Clarity in Performance Expectations:

Interns require clear performance expectations and feedback to gauge their progress and development. The organisation should establish clear performance metrics and benchmarks for HR interns, providing regular feedback and coaching to support their growth. The organisation should understand that effective performance management involves setting SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals, monitoring progress, and providing

ongoing feedback. By setting clear performance expectations and providing timely feedback, interns can understand where they stand and what areas they need to focus on for improvement. This feedback loop is essential for fostering continuous learning and development among interns.

3.2.5 Addressing the Fast-Paced Organisational Environment:

The fast-paced nature of the organisational environment can be overwhelming for interns. The organisation should implement strategies to help interns adapt to and thrive in this environment, such as time management training and stress management techniques. Time management training can help interns prioritise tasks, manage their workload, and meet deadlines more effectively. Additionally, stress management techniques such as mindfulness, relaxation exercises, and work-life balance strategies can help interns cope with the demands of a fast-paced environment and maintain their well-being.

3.3 Recommendations to the Company

Based on my academic knowledge and different studies through web, I have prepared the following recommendations to the company: -

3.3.1 HR Policy Enhancements:

Regular reviews and updates of HR policies ensure compliance with regulations and clarity for employees. Updated handbooks provide a clear understanding of expectations and benefits. Policies supporting work-life balance, like flexible scheduling, demonstrate Highland Group's commitment to employee well-being and satisfaction.

3.3.2 Performance Management Improvements:

Revamping performance appraisal systems to include regular feedback and goal-setting enhances employee development. Manager training on effective performance management

fosters a culture of continuous improvement. 360-degree feedback assessments provide a holistic view, empowering employees to excel and grow within Highland Group.

3.3.3 Employee Communication Channels:

Enhanced communication channels such as newsletters and town hall meetings keep employees informed and engaged. Open feedback sessions and technology-driven platforms encourage two-way communication, fostering a culture of transparency and collaboration within Highland Group. These channels empower employees to contribute ideas and feedback, enhancing overall organisational effectiveness.

3.3.4 Compliance and Ethics:

Regular audits and ongoing compliance training ensure Highland Group operates ethically and legally. Providing resources for employees to report violations promotes a culture of integrity and accountability. These measures protect the company's reputation and ensure a safe and fair workplace for all employees.

3.4 Learnings during the co-op studies

As a Human Resources intern in the company, I had the opportunity to develop and apply a variety of skills that are essential for success in the field. Below, I will outline the use cases of each skill acquired during my internship:

3.4.1 Communication Skill; Verbal & Non-Verbal:

Verbal Communication: I utilised verbal communication skills during meetings, presentations, and discussions with colleagues and stakeholders. Clear and effective verbal communication helped me convey information, express ideas, and engage with others in a professional manner.

Non-Verbal Communication: Non-verbal cues such as body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice played a crucial role in conveying confidence, empathy, and credibility during interactions with employees and candidates.

3.4.2 Interpersonal Skill:

Interpersonal skills were vital in building and maintaining positive relationships with colleagues, managers, and external stakeholders. I utilised active listening, empathy, and conflict resolution techniques to foster effective communication and collaboration in the workplace.

3.4.3 Interviewing Skill:

I applied my interviewing skills during recruitment processes, conducting structured interviews to assess candidates' qualifications, experience, and cultural fit with the organization. Utilizing effective questioning techniques, active listening, and rapport-building helped me gather valuable insights to make informed hiring decisions.

3.4.4 Documentation Skill:

Documentation skills were essential for maintaining accurate and organized records of employee information, performance evaluations, and HR processes. I proficiently utilized various tools and software to create and manage documentation, ensuring compliance with company policies and legal regulations.

3.4.5 Analytical Skill:

I leveraged analytical skills and Google Spreadsheets to analyze HR data, such as employee turnover rates, recruitment metrics, and training effectiveness. By organizing and analyzing data, I gained valuable insights to identify trends, patterns, and areas for improvement within the HR department.

3.4.6 Listening Skill:

Active listening skills were crucial during one-on-one meetings, employee consultations, and team discussions. By actively listening to concerns, feedback, and suggestions, I demonstrated empathy, built trust, and fostered open communication with employees and colleagues.

3.5 Special Skills and New Knowledge Learned

3.5.1 Soft Skills:

- **Teamwork:** Collaborating with others, contributing ideas, and working effectively in a team environment to achieve common goals and objectives.
- **Adaptability:** Being open to change, able to adjust to new situations or tasks, and remaining flexible in dynamic work environments.
- **Problem-solving:** Identifying issues, analyzing root causes, and developing creative solutions to resolve challenges or improve processes within the HR function.
- **Time Management:** Prioritizing tasks, managing workload efficiently, and meeting deadlines in a fast-paced work environment.

3.5.2 Hard Skills:

- **Data Entry and Analysis:** Entering employee data accurately into HRIS systems and utilizing software to generate reports, analyze metrics, and identify trends.
- **Policy and Procedure Compliance:** Understanding and applying company policies, as well as knowledge of relevant employment laws and regulations to ensure compliance in HR practices.
- **Administrative Tasks:** Performing administrative duties such as maintaining employee records, preparing documentation for onboarding/offboarding, and managing correspondence.
- **Training and Development Support:** Assisting with the coordination of training programs, preparing training materials, and facilitating employee development initiatives.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION

4.1 Summary of highlights of Co-Op studies

The Human Resource department at the Highland Group undertakes a lot of responsibilities including talent acquisition, compensation & benefits, payroll administration, employee welfare activities, employee engagement activities, succession planning, employee related policies, performance management, organisational development and learning & development initiatives. Initially I found myself lost in the ocean of tasks and projects, however as time passed by I was able to take the grasp of the tides and contribute to the department. I started slowly from the documentation works, where my primary task was to compile and document all the employee files as per the organisational standard and then after gaining trust from the department head, I was assigned other projects where I got exposure to taking interviews, planning and executing employee engagement initiatives. Under my leadership, we celebrated International Women's Day, revamped the policies for paternity & maternity leaves.

Being part of the Co-op studies also made me understand where I stand as an individual. I had a clearer picture of my strengths and weaknesses. My strong side mainly involved critical thinking, technical ability, time management, and interpersonal skills. My weaknesses or the areas of improvement included multi-tasking and not being able to set my priorities right. Hence, the Co-op study gave me the opportunity to flaunt my strengths and improve on my weaknesses.

Moreover, the number of employees at the Highland group was more than 700 among which more than 45% were women, and the total workforce was composed with the inclusivity of the people from all corners of the Country. This helped to understand different ethnicities, religions, cultural differences, working methodologies, thought processes, and their communication style. I truly understood that the "One shoe fit all" concept doesn't work here and we need to be very much mindful of the initiatives that we had to plan. These required a

lot of brainstorming, buying in ideas from all the stakeholders, hosting the meetings, and even resolving conflicts a few times. Spending four months at the Highland Group brushed up my soft skills which have made me more confident and ready to become a part of the corporate sector.

4.2 Evaluation of the Work Experience

My experience as a Human Resource Intern was remarkable. As mentioned earlier, my career goal is to be an entrepreneur in this developing country where I will be able to create meaningful work for the people while trying to create a positive impact in society. To start my entrepreneurial journey, I needed exposure to high-performing team members where skilled members from different departments come together to achieve the same mission despite their individual differences. These people worked together with the corporate values of Respect, Trust, and Care.

I understood that the fundamentals of the business were always hovering around the people this organisation had and how it always took a step to create a positive experience for their employees. I can explain my experience while working as a human resource intern at the Highland group as below:

- A. Exposure to Business Operations: During my internship in the HR department, I've had the chance to see how different parts of the company work together. From understanding how teams collaborate to witnessing the decision-making process, I've gained valuable insights into the day-to-day operations of a business, which will definitely come in handy when I start my own venture.
- B. Networking Opportunities: One of the best parts of being an HR intern is getting to interact with people from all levels of the organization. Whether it's chatting with fellow interns, assisting with interviews, or attending company events, I've been able to build

relationships with professionals across various departments. These connections could be invaluable as I embark on my entrepreneurial journey, providing me with mentors, advisors, and potential collaborators.

- C. **Learning about Talent Acquisition:** As part of my internship, I've been involved in the recruitment process, from reviewing resumes to participating in interviews. It's been fascinating to learn how to identify and attract top talent to the company. These skills will be crucial when I start my own business and need to build a team of passionate and capable individuals.
- D. **Understanding Employee Engagement:** Another aspect of my internship has been assisting with employee engagement initiatives. Whether it's organising team-building activities or brainstorming ideas for employee recognition programs, I've learned the importance of creating a positive work environment. These insights will be invaluable as I strive to cultivate a strong company culture in my own venture.
- E. **Exposure to Compliance and Regulations:** Throughout my internship, I've also gained an understanding of the legal side of HR, including compliance with labor laws and company policies. This knowledge will be essential as I navigate the complexities of starting and running a business, ensuring that I stay on the right side of the law and protect my company from potential risks.

4.3 Limitations of the Co-Op Studies

- A. **Learning Curve:** As an intern, I faced a learning curve in understanding the intricacies of Highland Group's HR systems and processes. This initial phase of learning took some time, which impacted the extent of my contributions during the relatively short co-op term.

- B. Entry-Level Tasks: I started with entry-level tasks, which, while important for foundational learning, limited my exposure to more strategic HR functions. This limitation meant that I wasn't able to delve as deeply into certain areas of HR as I had hoped.
- C. Supervision and Mentorship: Due to the workload of HR professionals, I found that one-on-one supervision and mentorship opportunities were somewhat limited. Having more direct guidance would have been beneficial for a more enriching experience.
- D. Project Availability: The availability of substantial projects or initiatives fluctuated during my time. Some periods had fewer projects to engage in, which limited my ability to immerse myself in meaningful work.

4.4 Recommendation for the Company and Co-Op Studies

- A. Before Co-op studies, Siam University may schedule a brief consultation session to help each student choose the right kind of internship or job.
- B. By setting up specific sessions where students may share their knowledge on how to operate in the workplace and discuss their co-op experiences, the Co-op study organizers may be able to close the communication gap.

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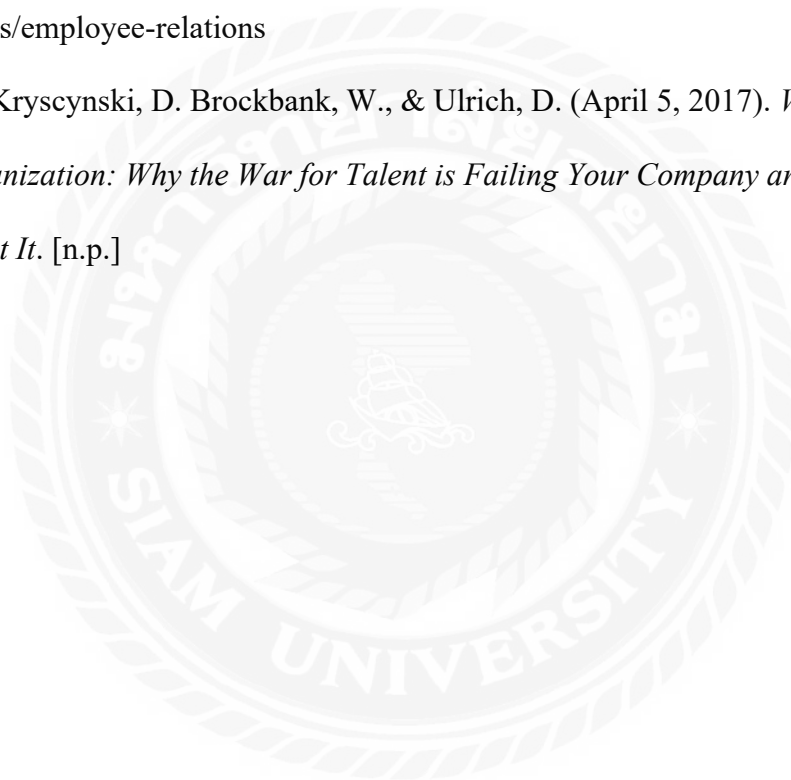
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Annex



Picture 1: Working at my table at Highland Group



Picture 2: My Working Space at Highland Group



Picture 3: My team having a discussion with HR Head



Picture 4: Picture after celebrating International Women's day

EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE FORM		
GRIEVANT INFORMATION		
Name of the employee:		
Job Title:	Employee ID:	
Email Address:	Contact Number:	
DETAIL OF EVENT OF EVENT LEADING TO GRIEVANCE		
<u>Date of the event:</u>	<u>Time of the event:</u>	<u>Location of the event:</u>
Witness, if any:		
STORY OF THE EVENT	VIOLATIONS	
Provide a detail story of the occurrence during the event. Include the names of any additional people involved.	Provide a list of any policies, procedures or guidelines violations you believe have been violated in the event	

Picture 5: Grievance recording form



Picture 6: Holi Celebration with Office Colleague

