

Human Resource Management in Health Care Principles and Practice

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JONES AND BARTLETT PUBLISHERS

Sudbury, Massachusetts

BOSTON TORONTO LONDON SINGAPORE

World Headquarters

Jones and Bartlett Publishers
40 Tall Pine Drive
Sudbury, MA 01776
978-443-5000
info@jbpub.com
www.jbpub.com

Jones and Bartlett Publishers
Canada
6339 Ormindale Way
Mississauga, ON L5V 1J2
CANADA

Jones and Bartlett Publishers
International
Barb House, Barb Mews
London W6 7PA
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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Fallon, L. Fleming.

Human resource management in health care : principles and practice / L. Fleming Fallon Jr. and Charles R. McConnell.

p. ; cm.

Includes index.

ISBN-13: 978-0-7637-3531-9

ISBN-10: 0-7637-3531-0

1. Health facilities—Personnel management. 2. Personnel management. 3. Personnel departments. I. McConnell, Charles R. II. Title.

[DNLN: 1. Health Manpower—organization & administration. 2. Personnel Management—methods. W 76 F196h 2007]

RA971.35.F38 2007

362.1068—dc22

6048

2006037752

Production Credits

Publisher: Michael Brown

Associate Editor: Kyla Goodfellow McNeill and Katey Birtcher

Production Director: Amy Rose

Production Editor: Renée Sekerak

Marketing Manager: Sophie Fleck

Manufacturing Buyer: Amy Bacus

Composition: Paw Print Media

Cover Design: Anne Spencer

Printing and Binding: Malloy, Inc.

Cover Printing: Malloy, Inc.

Printed in the United States of America

11 10 09 08 07 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

DEDICATION

To Marie and Cynthia, two wonderful human resources.

LFF

To Kate, for the years of support and encouragement.

CRM

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P R E F A C E

Under its earlier, more narrowly descriptive names, human resources began to develop an independent identity in business organizations in the 1930s. Its importance has steadily increased over the intervening decades, and as the new millennium gathers momentum, human resources continues to grow in relevance and usefulness.

Non-health businesses, manufacturing foremost among them, were the first to recognize the utility of human resources. Out of necessity, health care provider organizations began to rely increasingly on human resource professionals as legal protections relating to workers proliferated. Owing to characteristics of size and structure, however, some elements of health-related activity have not received the full benefit of modern human resources capabilities. For example, public health as a discipline has been slow to embrace human resources partly as a consequence of relatively small individual work forces and budgets that limit the ability of public health organizations to afford full-time human resources employees. Similarly, various other health-related organizations such as independent laboratories and free-standing clinics and group practices have insufficient staffing to justify full-time human resources professionals.

This book introduces human resources to those who are preparing to work in any area of health care or health service. It is written for practitioners and students in all disciplines related to health, from practicing providers to major medical centers to administrators who engage in health in a broad range of settings. It is written for students, practitioners, and members of boards of health, the citizen supervisors of many public health agencies. To accommodate such a diverse audience, we have endeavored to provide a balanced approach to the subject.

Each chapter is intended to stand alone; chapters are not sequential and can be addressed in any order. Each chapter opens with a case study that introduces the reader to key topics and questions to ponder while reading the material that follows. The case study is concluded at the end of the chapter with expert commentary and suggestions that can be utilized should the reader someday become interested or involved in a similar situation. Each chapter includes learning objectives, discussion points, and listings of resources (books, periodicals, organizations, and Internet sites) that provide supplementary materials.

Our goal was to produce a practical book. Discussions of theory are included to aid understanding of application guidelines, but pure theory runs a far second to practicality in the pages that follow. Many examples

and a number of sample forms and documents are included, drawn from our professional experiences and supplemented with input from other experts.

Thank you for sharing some of your time with us through using this book. We trust that the time is well spent. We freely share credit with others for successes, but we reserve for ourselves responsibility for errors that may have crept into the book.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We owe thanks to several people. Mike Brown believed in this project and had patience when it was most appreciated. Kylah McNeill's gentle but sure hand guided the project. The folks at Jones and Bartlett are gracious at all times; we could not work for a better or more professional team.

We express thanks to the contributors who enriched this book. Their expertise and experiences are greatly appreciated. Lee Forst was willing to take a chance many years ago. Thanks for exemplifying Theory Y.

Finally, thanks to our wives. They gave up the time that allowed this project to be completed.

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