

## A Key resource in an organisation

A word resource needs to be defined in order to bring this topic into perspective. Resource is an economic or productive factor required to accomplish an activity, or as a means to undertake an enterprise and achieve desired outcome (<http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/resource.html>). This definition seems to lean more on the private sector perspective rather than the public sector perspective. That should not pose a problem as the basic principles are normally similar; although applied to different perspectives.

The most basic resources are land, labour, capital and other resources which include among other things, information, knowledge, expertise, management, and time. They are also referred to as 'key resources' in an organisation since they "are main inputs that a company uses to create its value proposition, service its customer segment and deliver the products to the customer" (Anastasia, 2015). Generally, they are physical resources, human resources, intellectual resources, and financial resources and are all crucial for the success of an organisation.

**Physical resources:** Physical resources/assets are tangible resources in the form of equipment, inventory, buildings, manufacturing plants, and distribution networks that enable an organisation to function. Most importantly, the organisation uses physical resources to create its value proposition.

**Financial resources:** The financial resource includes cash, lines of credit, and the ability to have stock option plans for employees. In the public sector perspective, generally reference is made to budgets against which expenditure must be balanced.

**Intellectual resources:** Intellectual resources are non-physical resources like brand, patents, IP (Internet Protocol address or IP address), copyrights, partnerships, customer lists/database, knowledge (customer knowledge, and even people/employee knowledge). Developing intellectual resources takes a great deal of time and expenditure; but once developed, they can offer unique and great advantages to the organisation. For instance, the IP address is the core component on which the networking architecture is built; no network exists without it. It is a logical address that is used to uniquely identify every node in the network and it gives the network node an address so that it can communicate with other nodes or networks, just like mail is sent to friends and relatives (<https://www.techopedia.com/definition/2435/internet-protocol-ip-address>). Hence, it is very crucial in an organisation.

**Human resources:** Human resources refer to employees of an organisation. There is a strongly held belief in organisational settings that people (employees and management) are the most important assets, yet they are the most easily overlooked of all resources; hence, this article.

Human resources is the most important key resource in an organisation as it can put other organisational resources into good use; as such, the motivation of the employees is essential in improving productivity hence results (eResource Scheduler Specialist, 2013). It is therefore imperative that the organisation must invest in its human resources, that is, its employees.

For instance in the Public Service, Regulation 14 of the Public Service Regulations, 2016 provides for among other things; the optimal development of employees and the promotion of sound labour and interpersonal relations. To that end, it is imperative to note that mutual and cordial relationship between the employer and the employee translates into better performance. Further, the Skills Development Act No. 97 of 1998 provides for among other

things, an institutional framework to devise and implement national, sector and workplace strategies to develop and improve the skills of the South African workforce ... and the financing of skills development by means of a levy-grant scheme. Further, the employer annually provides a budget for training and development of employees which is an enabling factor for ensuring that training and development of employees does take place.

The Employee Performance and Development System (EPMDS) was formulated within the framework of, amongst others, the Public Service Regulations and the Skills Development Act. It provides for the Personal Development Plans (PDP) which constitutes mechanisms for monitoring and addressing performance related problems. Appropriate supervisory interventions which is indicated as part of the PDPs is, amongst others, offering personal counselling, formal training/retraining, on-the-job mentoring and coaching (which could also refer to on-the-job training).

The Public Service and service industries particularly require a great deal of creativity and an extensive knowledge pool; therefore, human resources with varied skills and knowledge is vital for efficient, effective and professional service delivery. The Public Service is a highly regulated institution and operates within the ambit of prescripts which include amongst others, the Skills Development Act, the Public Service Regulations, 2016, and the EPMDS.

The prescripts referred to above provides the basis for training and development whilst the allocated budget enables the required training and development of employees to take place for the mutual benefit of employees and the organisation/department.

Generally, the onus is on the individual employee, according to Ameer (2018) to provide their own path to personal and professional development. However, employees need the guidance of their supervisors and/or managers as the provision of training and development, objectively speaking, benefits both the employer and the employee. After all, training and development of employee(s), is an investment strategy that can ensure the future success or efficiency and effectiveness of the organisation/department. Therefore, it must be taken seriously by all stake holders.

***(An opinion from the labour desk  
4<sup>th</sup> Quarter employee relations article for 2018/19 Financial Year)  
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