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**INTEGRATED HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANNING,
PART OF THE DEFENSE PLANNING PROCESS**

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Abstract:

The aim of this article is to show the place and role of integrated human resources management in the defense planning process of the Romanian Army. I will focus on presenting some milestones in the defense planning process in the actual security environment from human resources perspectives. Then, I will highlight the important the place and role of integrated human resources management processes in the defense planning process.

Key words: integrated human resources management, defense planning, manpower, personnel.

1. Introduction

Strategic human resources management is a very important capability for all defense organizations and represent a key element for defense planning process. Although each nation manages its defense institutions differently, every nation needs its own overarching concept, along with policies, plans, and programs, to manage its security forces and people in them. Human resources combines with other components of resource management, form the pillars that support policies of defense for each country. The absence or failure of integrated human resources management (IHRM) policies can be determining factors in the evaluation of defense policies, especially then within alliances or partnerships and for that reason we must have a significant interest in adapting and transforming human resources systems to align with best practices.

2. Integrated human resources management (IHRM) system

Integrated human resources management (IHRM) system from a defense planning process perspective represents a general framework which is in charge with providing very well trained human resources for armed forces. Considering this framework, the foundations of IHRM system, is mandatory to have some principles like efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and meritocracy as pillars. Also is important to align short and long term defense goals, with suitable operational requirements for a clear picture to establish the drive line for implementing the various policies and procedures in human resources system. These challenges can establish the quantitative terms of the forces as well as their quality to achieve the strategic objectives of defense.

The transformation of the IHRM system involve modernizing strategic institutions, improving the ability of the military decision-makers to coordinate modern defense forces engaged in cooperative international efforts, developing of leadership at all military levels, growing the professionalism of defense workforces and not least aligning the objectives of the human resources and professional military education with strategic defense goals.

In accordance with National Defense Strategy 2020-2024, any robust defense architecture also requires the provision of prepared and equipped human resources, as an essential part of interoperable capabilities, able to operate coherently together. From this perspective we identified three main defense actions line in conjunction with IHRM, as follows:



***The 15th International Scientific Conference
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- "provide the human resources necessary to public institutions in the national security system as well as their adequate training;

- implement the force structure resulting from the “Strategic Defense Analysis 2020”. This will allow the transition to a multi-annual planning, which will ensure the dynamics of personnel and endowment according to the current and prospective needs of the Ministry of National Defense;

- fulfill the national obligations assumed both within the PESCO (permanent structured cooperation), as well as in the NATO defense planning process, participation in allied missions and operations, in its command structure and forces, in order to contribute to enhancement of the Alliance’s role and capabilities, giving priority to strengthening the Eastern flank in a unitary, coherent and cohesive manner”;¹

For all the organizations responsible for implementing these action line is important to develop action plans to accomplish them. Actual force requirements depend on a host of other factors, including the country 's overall geopolitical environment and the degree of cooperation and support agreed upon with allies. The correlation of the action line with the national security objectives stated in the National Defence Strategy 2020-2024 is necessary in order to provide "human resources, material, financial and informational necessary to maintain and develop the operational capacity of the competent institutions, based on a rigorous process of planning and evaluating the efficiency and effectiveness of their use"².

In accordance with 203th defense planning law from 2015, the main objectives and action lines from National Defence Strategy 2020-2024, was approved by Parliament in the White Book for Defense in the 28th may 2021. Based on analysis of the IHRM implications from the national defense strategy and strategic analysis of defense from 2020, White Book for Defense, contain main pillars in order to have to accomplish the specific requirements for each domain for short term. Developing for this strategic document implies to know the current state of the defense workforce, current institutions, policies, and practices designed to develop a professional defense workforce. From IHRM system point of view we identified some directions for transformations of military personnel. First of them is in the educations domain, which is very important for the next generations of officers and NCO. Some specific requirements which was developed for the short term implies:

- reform of educational programs from curricular concepts perspective;

- ensuring the integrated management of education, in order to maximize the use of all allocated resources;

- implementation of training programs in e-learning system and digitization of military education;

- developing partnership programs with similar educational institutions in the armies of other NATO and EU member states.

Other major directions correlated with IHRM system established in White Book for Defense³ implies developing and implementation capabilities targets in accordance with the framework NATO defense planning process (NDPP) and EU based on integrated management of resources for defense and strategic planning.

¹ National Defence Strategy 2020-2024, available at https://www.presidency.ro/files/userfiles/National_Defence_Strategy_2020_2024.pdf, last viewed 18 october 2021, p.32-33

² Idem 1, p. 42

³White Book for Defense, <https://sgg.gov.ro/1/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/CARTA-ALBA-A-APARARII-.pdf>, last viewed 08 october 2021



*The 15th International Scientific Conference
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Braşov, November 12th-13th 2020



In the context to develop the Military Strategy⁴ which was approved this year, the strategic IHRM model, that means to, “aligned to the goals of the nation’s national security and military strategies” can be design like in figure 1. In other words, the foundation underlying a nation’s HR strategy includes the nation’s security interests and military goals. From these goals come more specific requirements for capabilities, requirements for forces and organizations oriented on providing those capabilities, and competency requirements for the different positions in the units and organizations. This is the essence of the planning function in the construct below. The rest of the processes are then designed to support the achievement of the overall HR goals and to contribute to the ability of other processes to achieve them.

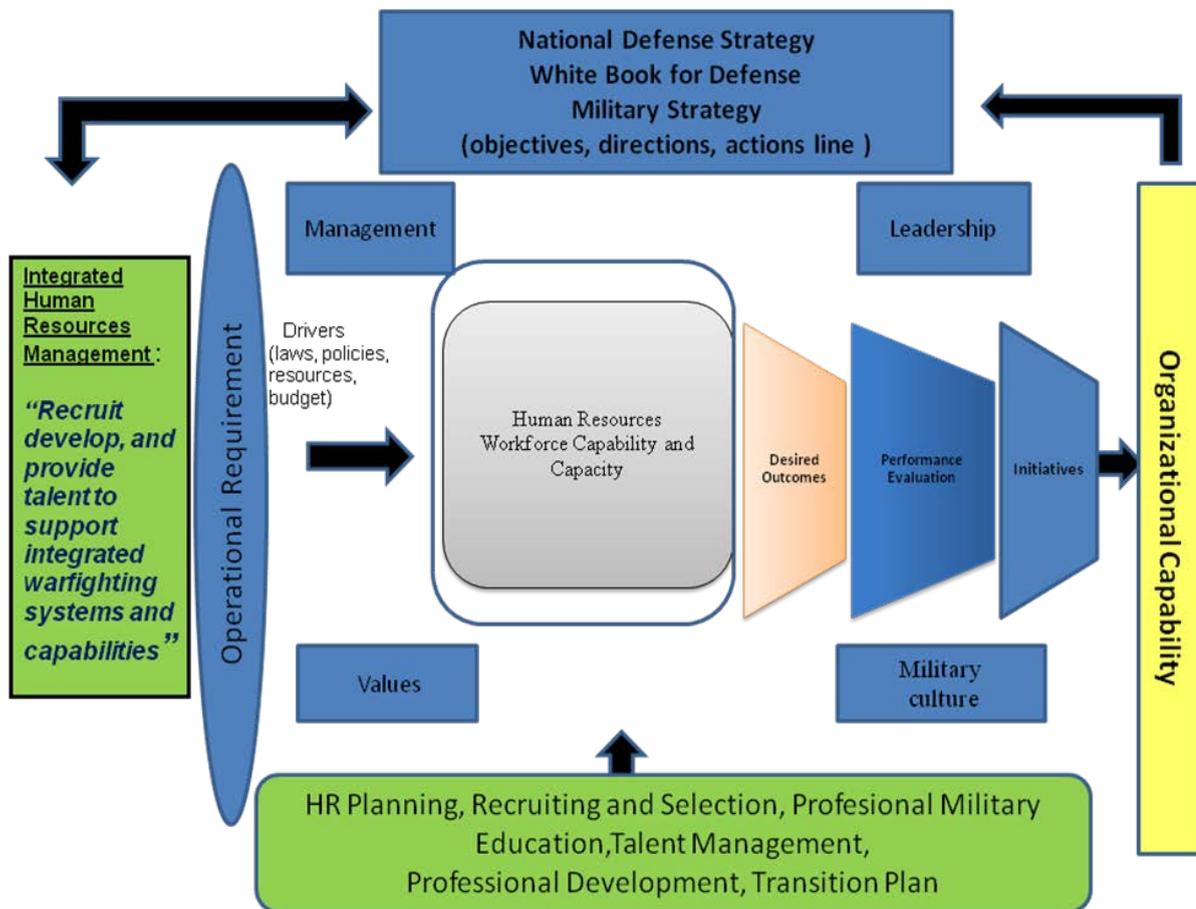


Figure 1. Integrated Human Resources Management model

The strategic IHRM construct which demonstrates the overall strategy and goals, and their influence on the personnel planning process which derives its goals and direction from the national defense strategy, white book for defense and military strategy. The essence of this model, is that all the other major functions (recruitment, professional military education, talent management⁵ and development, and the sub-functions associated with each) derive their goals directly or indirectly

⁴ Military Strategy, https://www.defense.ro/galerie/file/Legislatie/HG_nr._832_2021.pdf, last viewed 18 october 2021

⁵ Richard S. Wellins et al., “Nine Best Practices for Effective Talent Management,” 2009, available at <http://www.ddiworld.com/resources/library/white-papers-monographs/nine-best-practices-of-effective-talent-management>.



The 15th International Scientific Conference
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from the personnel planning goals and operational requirement. All functions contribute individually, and often collectively, to the accomplishment of the overall goals. Although the planning activities drive the others, this is a dynamic model that represents the real Integrated Human Resources Management world in which all the functions are continually adapting to changing circumstances.

Strategic IHRM processes illustrated in Figure 1 are to derive from and support the overall national defense strategy, is easier for drawing from national strategic goals, capability, and force requirements to articulate the workforce requirements that form the foundation for the human resource strategy. The national defense strategy's implications for capabilities turn into more specific requirements for forces, manpower, and skills through functional links between the development of national defense requirements and the delineation of strategic IHRM requirements and goals. Those responsible for strategic IHRM must first translate strategic defense goals into required capabilities for military forces.

The next steps include deriving operational and institutional requirements from national defense and military plans, identifying roles and missions for military forces and supporting institutions, and translating roles and missions into organizational designs both for the military forces and for their supporting institutions. The organizational designs and requirements then utilize a job and position classification system to establish specific manning needs: numbers, skills, and grade levels for military and civilians in operational forces and their supporting institutions. There must also be a process in place for ensuring accessions, retention, career management, and professional development processes are and remain consistent with manning requirements.

In IHRM system, manning requirements — specified in terms of positions, ranks, grades, qualifications, skills, experience levels and professional military education — become the fundamental goal for the IHRM strategy and the means for implementing and assessing its success. This generally involves establishing and articulating strategic IHRM goals, identifying ways and means to accomplish those goals, and articulating the goals, objectives, ways, and means in an overall statement of the IHRM strategy. It is important that the IHRM system take into account both current requirements and the need to sustain the force over time. The latter starts with specifying, establishing, and maintaining a sustainable grade and experience profile for the force, consistent with manning requirements drawn from the force design.

Regardless of the current size and shape of the personnel profile, the establishment of a sustainable one is a key strategic IHRM goal. Once the strategic goals have been articulated, the next steps require translating the strategy into specific policies, procedures, and implementing guidance.

A parallel process involves identifying the financial resources required to support all the IHRM functions, and ensuring programming and budgeting processes suitably account for those requirements. The main cost of this resource requirement comes from compensation, benefit, and pension systems.

One challenge for this IHRM model represent “succession planning” which means the ability to project anticipated vacancies and turn those projections into requirements for replacements. This process is an iterative, replacements coming from within the pool of military forces must themselves be replaced.



*The 15th International Scientific Conference
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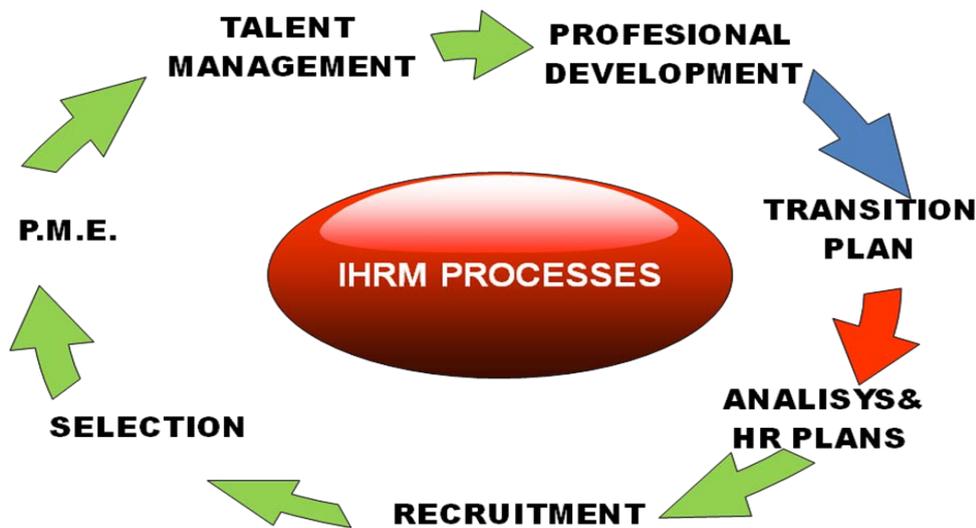


Figure 2 Integrated Human Resources Management processes

After all the strategic objectives and operational requirement were approved by IHRM need to align all requirements in terms of capable military forces planning process and starts the processes like in figure 2. For a reliable projections, the organization can determine how vacancies will be filled, including from where candidates will be drawn from. The process must also account for the requirements for each position, in order to accurately allot candidates to open positions. These derive from the force design process, and could include rank, professional military educations, technical skills, or years of experience. By aligning the projected losses and vacancies with specific requirements, IHRM system are able to evaluate whether their existing military forces contains enough qualified candidates, or if more need to be sought.

The role of human resources planning is capital and need to be fair and transparent in order to establish the number of military needs, ranks, professional military educations, technical skill and must design a succession plan for senior leadership and other key positions.

The next processes are recruitment and selection. Requirements-based, objective, and transparent recruitment and selection processes are the major element of the development function. The basis for all of these processes is identification of vacancies by grade and specialty, in accordance with needs projected and another of the many connections among the elements of the HRM system. It is important to emphasize that selections are based on medical tests, physical test and psychological exams in order to keep and develop the right military. The selection system must be founded on objective selection criteria that are disseminated to and understood by those affected. Another significant challenge is the establishment of selection procedures (as distinct from criteria), that implies the recommendations for some specialty like paratroopers, pilots, mechanics, scuba divers. These processes, depend heavily on the active and informed support of recruitment system.

Professional military education (P.M.E.) systems support the professional development system outlined above, and could thus be combined with professional development. Typically, however, the institutions that perform these functions are separate from the staff and leadership organizations that accomplish the functions listed above. Whether the institutions are combined or not, the functions must be well coordinated with one another and with the assignment and career management functions.

Usually P.M.E. provides the requirements for the training and education system, thus enabling the managers of that system to project and specify training and education needs for all



**The 15th International Scientific Conference
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components of the force. The IHRM system must also develop and maintain the capacity to provide required training and education. Ideally, this is a flexible capacity that can adjust, within reasonable limits, to changes in requirements.

Part of this flexibility can come from judicious planning and projecting from HR plans. Integrating available foreign or civil sector training and education courses with requirements determination is another potentially significant source of flexibility in matching requirements with the capacity of national institutions; this plays a particularly significant role in the training, education, and professional development systems.

Evaluation and validation of the effectiveness of all of these systems, and the degree to which they are suitably coordinated, is also a key responsibility. For that reasons a high level of interoperability can only be achieved through a transparent and critical approach to the development of military training, education programmed and systems⁶

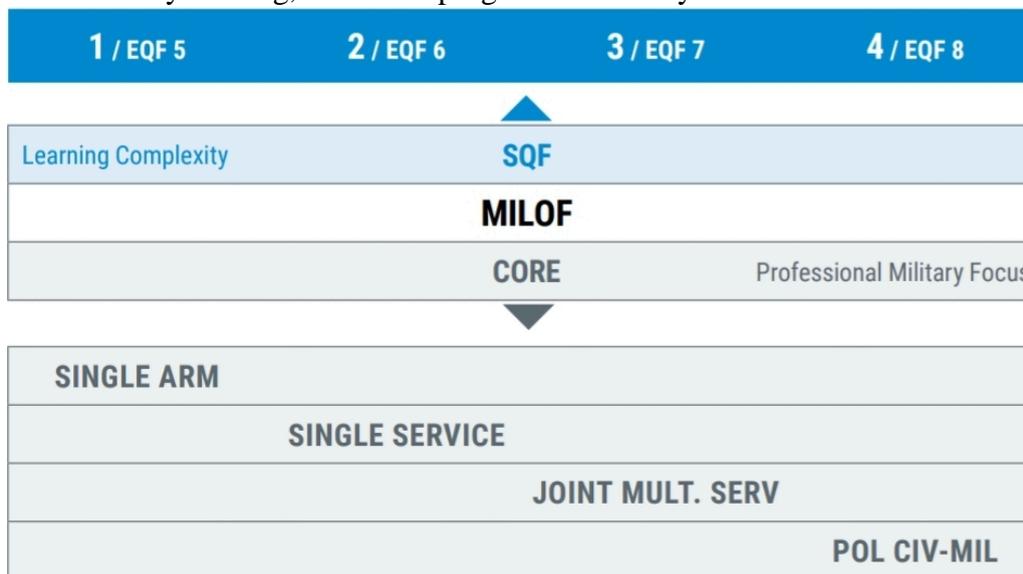


Figure 3. Levels of complexity for military profession

The four levels of complexity range from comprehensive (level 1) to most advanced knowledge and professional skills (Level 4). The four levels of operations focus the learning from individual or low tactical level (Single Arm/Branch) up to strategic level (Political Civil-Military). The new concept, SQF-MILOF implements the modern realities of lifelong learning for military officers. It is fully in line with the European Qualification Framework that covers all types and levels of qualifications.

This new concept is in developing and will be implemented in accordance with the new concept for training and educations for Rou Army in order to align the competence area as military service member, military technician, leader and decision maker, combat role model, communicator, learner and teacher/coach, critical thinker and researcher, international security/diplomacy actor for officers.

The talent management process must also be tied to the career management system to ensure positions are filled not just on the basis of immediate needs and qualifications for the position in question, but also with a view toward the experience the position will provide in developing the

⁶ Sectoral Qualification Framework for the Military Officer Profession (SQF-MILOF), <https://esdc.europa.eu/sqf-milof/>, last viewed in 20 october 2021



The 15th International Scientific Conference
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IN THE 21st CENTURY”**
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incumbent for other positions in the future. This implies the need to connect the succession planning system and assignment systems with professional military education, selection and professional development systems in a comprehensive career management system.



Figure 4 Individual career planning

Correlated with the previous process the professional development process must be a comprehensive and well-maintained with professional military education process. An effective professional development system must first project and identify vacancies, along with the education, training, and experience requirements associated with the coming vacancies. Career and assignment human resources managers need to match the pre-requisites with available military persons in the market and determine any needs for additional training or education, and also enables better alignment of individual development needs with the manning requirements of the force. The result of these coordinated processes is the efficient matching of best-qualified candidates against projected vacancies.

Part of talent management and professional development can be considered performance management⁷ like an important contributor to development. Performance management starts with establishing and publishing overall goals for the system. This includes developing criteria for evaluation—professional values and standards, and key common competencies, knowledge, and skills—and developing skill and knowledge requirements by specialty and grade. This connects closely with job description and position classifications and, again, with professional development.

The IHRM system must also organize evaluation means and methods into a comprehensive process for individual evaluations and establish methods to be used in the evaluations: the means by which leaders and managers communicate evaluations of key traits, knowledge, skills, competence, overall performance, and potential. Typically, this is done using evaluation forms; getting these forms structured in ways that truly accomplish the purposes of the evaluation system is a frequent challenge.

It is important to stress that while evaluations can and should have a prominent role in selection processes, performance management should also contribute in more general ways to furthering the development and improving the abilities of the workforce to accomplish its goals. In this regard, appropriate policies and practices for other means of recognizing achievement (e.g., awards, other commendatory actions, and bonuses) can be useful contributors to the overall performance management system.

⁷ Joseph Soeters, *Management and Military Studies*, Michael Porter - *Strategic management and value creation in bussines and the military*, Routledge Taylor &Francis Group, 2020, p.109



The 15th International Scientific Conference
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Braşov, November 12th-13th 2020



One very important part of processes of talent management is retention. Effective retention processes start with the establishment of retention goals based on manning requirements and predicted losses: skills, aptitudes, qualifications, and numbers, which, taken together, comprise specific retention requirements. Retention planning should include the means to compare retention goals with anticipated behavior and adjusting policies or incentives accordingly, and to apply those incentives to encourage the required number of people to continue their careers. This is partly an ongoing and relatively short-term dynamic process centered on bonuses or other immediate incentives, but over the longer term it should include periodic examination of the retention effects of the entire compensation system, including all pays and benefits. Retention processes should also identify training and education requirements and select individuals to align with them, with sufficient lead-time to allow efficient allocation of training and education resources. Finally, the IHRM system must ensure that the assignment and distribution systems place retained individuals in accordance with requirements; this is another case where periodic assessments are needed to ensure all systems are aligned.

The elements and sub-elements presented here also connect very closely with one another and in many ways with the engagement and acquisition functions. Of all the parts of the strategic IHRM model, this major function depends the most on active participation from the leadership in operational units and supporting institutions, not just members of HR staffs.

Effective strategic IHRM includes establishing a retirement and pension system that fairly and effectively rewards dedicated service, adequately provides for retirees, and complements the rest of the compensation system in accomplishing motivational and force-shaping goals.

The last process in their raw forms, are simply inventory management- transition plan. In a well-designed IHRM system, they are an integral part of total compensation; they become an effective part of both engagement and inventory management when designed fairly and efficiently, and when aligned with force shaping goals. In some cases, it will be necessary to develop standards for separation and selective retention to accomplish these purposes. Involuntary separations are also a necessary component; fairness in their design and implementation includes provisions for independent appeal processes. Appropriate types and amounts of transition assistance enhance the fairness of the separation system, as do transition benefits. The latter should be designed with entitlement provisions tied to eligibility criteria such as length of service, disabilities, or other appropriate considerations. Veterans' outreach programs and other means of recognizing service of those being separated are also worthwhile enhancements.

3. Conclusion

All human resource management systems need a system for collecting, using, analyzing, and archiving information on the members of the workforce. Such a system is valuable not just for managing and tracking individual careers (reason enough to have the system), but also for evaluating the effects of policies and programs and for planning future adjustments to them. Most modern systems are automated, but that is not a hard-and-fast requirement to have manual records or a system that combines digital and manual records. However, it is essential that some system be in place that stores and makes available information for decision support, research, actuarial analysis, reporting, and evaluation of programs and policies. In any records system, it is also important that the information be periodically and systematically updated; contained in archived records to enable compiling of histories (like assignment records) and longitudinal analyses; and accessible, with appropriate safeguards, to personnel staffs and key decision makers. The choice of which types of



The 15th International Scientific Conference
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IN THE 21st CENTURY”**
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information to include in the records system will naturally reflect the priorities and requirements of operational level.

Finally, as long as organizational success depends on qualified people performing the tasks they are assigned, good strategic human resource management will be at the core of that success. Strategic IHRM is a complex iterative process that involves the entire organization, and the single most important prerequisite for success is that it be fully integrated into the workings of the military organization.

Senior leadership provides the guidance, direction, and visible support needed to get the entire defense establishment working together to accomplish the needed IHRM changes. It also means developing and continuing constructive relationships with the HRM staff to support their efforts to design policies and programs suitable to their context. Accomplishing these aims requires both empathy and strategic patience.

The models presented here, with its basis in the modern Talent Management construct, is a comprehensive approach to framing efforts first to understand, and then to adapt or refine the IHRM policies and practices. Those using these ideas must have sufficient expertise in strategic IHRM to be able to judge which elements of the framework are applicable of the model accordingly.

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