Human Resource Management Policies and Practices in the United States



CRANET 2014/15 U.S.

Summary Report

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in collaboration with the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)





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ABOUT THIS REPORT

About CRANET

The Cranfield Network on International Human Resource Management (CRANET) was launched in 1989 to collect information regarding human resource management (HRM) practices and policies worldwide. Today, more than 40 academic partners across the globe collaborate to collect this data, making it the largest on-going HRM study in the world. The project's aim is to gain insight into best practices in the HRM field, to compare patterns of HRM policies and practices across countries, and to explore how HRM changes over time. Findings provide updated information about HRM practices for practitioners and academics, as well as policy makers and international institutions, for use with research or policy change. For more information about CRANET, you can visit www.cranet.org.

About CIHRS

The Center for International Human Resource Studies (CIHRS) is the US partner of CRANET. CIHRS is an initiative of the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the Pennsylvania State University (USA), which aims to encourage IHRM scholarly research, and to serve the International HR practitioner community. Through targeted events, our goal is to develop a strong community of academics and practitioners passionate about international HRM, enabling the sharing of ideas to advance knowledge and practice in the field. More details about CIHRS can be found on the web site: http://ler.la.psu.edu/cihrs.

About SHRM

Founded in 1948, the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) is the world's largest HR membership organization devoted to human resource management. Representing more than 275,000 members in over 160 countries, the Society is the leading provider of resources to serve the needs of HR professionals and advance the professional practice of human resource management. SHRM has more than 575 affiliated chapters within the United States and subsidiary offices in China, India and United Arab Emirates. Visit SHRM Online at shrm.org.

About the Data

The 2014/15 data (693 responses) in this report were collected by members of the Center for International Human Resource Studies (CIHRS) at the Pennsylvania State University and in collaboration with the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). The 2004 (260 responses) and 2009 (1,052 responses) data were collected by members of the ILR School at Cornell University (previous CRANET partner). Where possible, the 2014/15 data are compared with 2004 and 2009 data to show trends over time. Due to some changes in the questionnaire, trend data are not available for all items presented in the report; in these cases, only 2014/15 data are presented.

Acknowledgements

The authors of this report would like to thank the faculty of the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the Pennsylvania State University for their input in discussing these CRANET study findings. We would also like to thank SHRM Research for their support in compiling this report. This is the final report published from the CRANET/SHRM/CIHRS 2014/15 U.S. data collection exercise.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2014/15 CRANET/SHRM/CIHRS data are a clear reflection of how organizations across the U.S. are recovering from the recent global financial crisis. The research results show that many firms are

reporting strong financial returns and optimism for the future. Despite this financial prosperity, organizations do not appear to be spending these gains on employees: labor costs have declined slightly, along with the number of employee benefits being offered.

The 2014/15 CRANET/SHRM/CIHRS data are a clear reflection of how organizations across the U.S. are recovering from the recent global

Where possible, this report compares the 2014/15 findings with those from 2009 and 2004, revealing emerging trends over the last decade. Some of the findings and trends are summarized below:

- The HR function is increasing its strategic role. Relying predominantly on recruiting the head of HR internally from the organization's HR department, HR leaders are more often part of the Board or equivalent top executive team. Human resource management (HRM) strategies are also being formalized in writing. Clear distinctions are emerging between the HR function and line management in the responsibilities for HRM policy decisions, combined with high reliance on technology-based systems. [Pages 6-8]
- Organizations are increasing the size of their workforce and are also reporting higher levels of employee turnover than in recent years. Where downsizing has been necessary, it has been achieved primarily through recruitment freezes, wage freezes and voluntary attrition. The recruitment that does take place is predominantly through in-house activities, such as internal hires and postings on company websites, with emphasis on attracting minority groups. The use of commercial job websites is also increasing. In contrast, other selection methods, including application forms, references and one-on-one interviews, among others, are being used less frequently than in the past, according to research findings. The use of part-time work is decreasing, while teleworking and shift-work are on the rise. [Pages 9-14]
- Appraisal processes frequently require the input of employees themselves, often leading to recommendations for future training and career development needs, as well as pay decisions.
 Organizations are becoming smarter with providing training, as the average number of training days is increasing, likely due to greater use of e-learning systems and on-the-job training. [Pages 15-16]
- Perhaps related to stock market volatility, the use of incentives based on stock options and profit sharing as a part of management compensation has decreased. Similarly, the practice of offering employee benefits that exceed statutory requirements has been declining slightly, except for health care insurance (likely related to recent changes in legislation). [Page 17]
- The concentration of trade union members and the percentage of organizations recognizing trade unions have increased slightly. Nevertheless, perceptions of trade union influence in organizations remain low. Downward communication is most commonly taking place through electronic means, whereas upward communication is done through supervisors. Both upward and downward communication rely little on collective representation. [Pages 18-20]

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1. Introduction

Organizations that participated in the 2014/15 survey, which was administered from October 2014 to May 2015, included a similar percentage of private-sector firms as previous administrations of the survey (42%), with similar median organization size (750 employees). The predominant employee type remains clerical/manual. More information on the demographics of responding organizations can be found in section 7, "Study Methodology."

The 2014/15 *CRANET/SHRM/CIHRS* data can be seen as an indicator of how U.S. organizations have been recovering from the global financial crisis. Private-sector organizations are continuing to report

positive results; 82% of responding firms indicate that returns over the last three years were either "sufficient to make a small profit" or "well in excess of costs." The equivalent figures in 2009 and 2004 were 83% and 71% respectively.

About four-fifths (82%) of responding firms indicate that returns over the last three years were either "sufficient to make a small profit" or "well in excess of costs."

Organizations remain optimistic, believing that markets are growing (66% in 2014/15, which is comparable to 61% in 2004, but an increase compared to 45% in 2009 at the height of the recession). This optimism is reflected in how organizations see themselves in comparison to their competitors: in 2014/15, organizations consistently report that they believe they are outperforming their competitors through either better-than-average or superior quality (86%), productivity (74%), environmental matters (64%), stock market performance (64%), profitability (63%) and innovation (62%).

Against this setting, the following sections detail current findings and trends across HRM policies and practices, including the role of the HR department through recruitment, selection, training, compensation and employee communication. Please note that the percentages presented in the figures may not total 100% due to rounding.

2. HRM Activity in the Organization

HR Department

In 2014/15, 97% of responding organizations report having an HR department; in 2009, this number was 94%. Median HR-staff-to-employee ratios have fluctuated slightly in each year of data collection, from 1:89 in 2004 to 1:127 in 2009 to 1:83 in 2014/15. These numbers appear to indicate a relaxation of the intensity of HR department work compared to the recession figures of 2009.

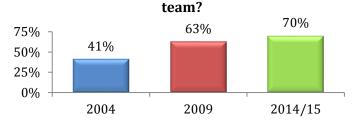
On average, women constitute around two-thirds of HR department members, but this proportion is declining (2014/15: 61%; 2009: 63%; 2004: 72%). 2014/15 saw a large increase in the number of organizations recruiting the head of HR from within their HR department, rising from around one-quarter to one-third of organizations (2004: 22%; 2009: 24%; 2014/15: 36%). In contrast, prevalence of recruiting the head of HR from an HR department in another organization has declined (2004: 52%; 2009: 52%; 2014/15: 41%).

In 2014/15, two-thirds of responding organizations (66%) report having a written HRM strategy,

HR is more likely to have a place on the board of directors than in previous years.

and HR is more likely to have a place on the board of directors than in previous years (2004: 41%; 2009: 63%; 2014/15: 70%) (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Does the head of HR or the person responsible for HR have a place on the Board or equivalent top executive



HR departments remain involved in the development of business strategy either from the outset or through consultation, although their involvement has declined slightly (ranging from 80% in 2004 to 78% in 2009 to 76% in 2014/15). There was a decrease in the percentage of HR departments NOT consulted when the organization was going through a merger, relocation or acquisition between 2004 and 2009 (8% in 2004, 4% in 2009); however, in 2014/15 the percentage returned to 9%, a level similar to that reported in 2004. More positively, more than one half of HR departments report that they are consulted from the outset in such situations, which has remained stable since 2004 at 54-61% (depending on the type of organizational change), an indication that HR continues to be involved in processes vital to the success of organizations.

The HR department appears to be moving away from working jointly with line management in terms of where the responsibility lies for major policy decisions across a whole range of HRM activities such as pay and benefits, recruitment and selection (see Figure 2.2), training and development, industrial relations and workforce expansion/reduction. In most cases, there has been an increase in either the

HR department taking sole responsibility for these activities or line management taking responsibility (but at a much lower absolute level), with a concurrent reduction in the number of cases where both parties collaborated on the activity led either by HR or by line management. On average, line management is most active in the area of training and development, and least active in establishing pay and benefits policies.

This trend implies that HR and line management roles may be becoming institutionalized, with each party focusing on its own responsibilities. The increasing regulatory environment may be playing a part here, with firms needing clear guidelines around responsibilities to ensure compliance with regulations and standards.

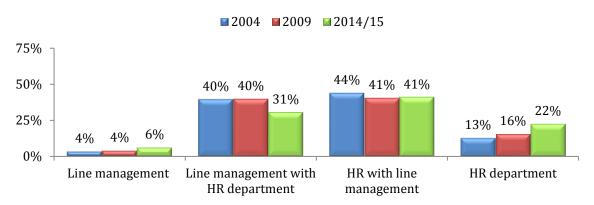


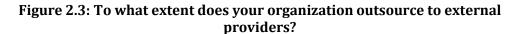
Figure 2.2: Who has primary responsibility for major recruitment and selection policy decisions?

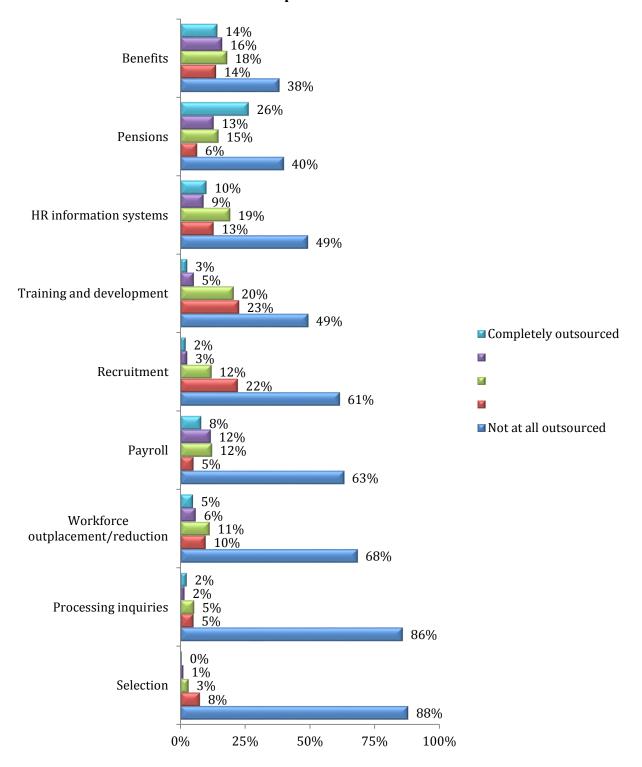
Technology and Outsourcing

The findings regarding clear delineation of responsibilities may also be related to the dominance of technology-based systems that allow more discrete allocation of roles. In 2014/15, the vast majority of organizations report using human resource information systems (HRIS) or electronic HRM systems (83%), with 50% of responding organizations using a manager self-service option and 67% using an employee self-service option.

In 2014/15, complete outsourcing is most frequently used for the accounting aspects of HRM, such as pensions (26%) and benefits (14%) (see Figure 2.3). Firms generally do not at all outsource the practices of selection (88%) and processing routine queries from managers/employees (86%).

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3. Staffing Practices

Downsizing

In 2014/15, organizations are more likely to have been increasing their headcount in recent years (46%) than decreasing it (31%), similar to the results from 2004 (41% increasing, 35% decreasing) and 2009 (51% increasing, 39% decreasing) (see Figure 3.1).

75%
50%
25%
Decreased to a great extent

Increased to a great extent

Figure 3.1: How has the total number of employees in your organization changed since three years ago?

Annual staff turnover rose from 12% to 19% between 2009 and 2014/15.

The percentage of operating costs accounted for by labor costs has seen a slight decline, with an average (i.e., mean) of 53% in 2004, 55% in 2009 and 51% in 2014/15. At the same time, annual staff turnover (calculated as the percentage of the total workforce that

left the organization in the past year) rose quite substantially from a mean of 16% in 2004 and 12% in 2009, when job markets were less buoyant, to 19% in 2014/15 (see Figure 3.2).

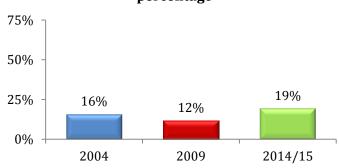
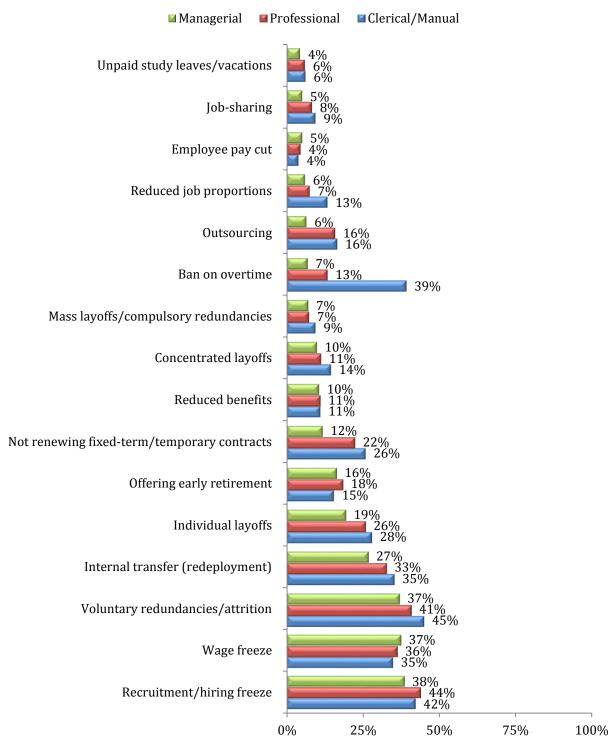


Figure 3.2: Annual staff turnover percentage

The dominant downsizing methods across the different employee grades were recruitment freeze, wage freeze and voluntary redundancies/attrition, all of which were reported by more than one-third of organizations (see Figure 3.3). Internal transfers (35%) and a ban on overtime (39%) for clerical/manual employees were also common.

Figure 3.3: Has your organization used any of the following methods to downsize the organization? (By employee category)



Notes: Reduced job proportions = Employees being changed from full-time to part-time working hours; individual layoffs = 1-4% of workforce laid off in a 12-month period; concentrated layoffs = 5-9% laid off in a 12-month period; mass layoffs/compulsory redundancies = 10% or more of workforce laid off in a 1-3-month period.

Recruitment and Selection

In 2014/15, for recruitment of all categories of employees, the majority of organizations used company websites (managerial: 79%; professional: 81%; clerical/manual: 81%),

Websites are used by a substantially higher percentage of organizations as a recruitment method than newspaper advertisements.

internal transfers (managerial: 80%; professional: 79%; clerical/manual: 77%), and commercial job websites (managerial: 75%; professional: 78%; clerical/manual: 66%) and word of mouth or employee referrals (managerial: 66%; professional: 71%; clerical/manual: 79%) (see Figure 3.4). Social media is being used by 39-46% of responding organizations, while newspaper advertisements are being used by 27-38%. The relatively high use of websites compared with "traditional" newspaper advertisements is notable and to be expected with technological developments.

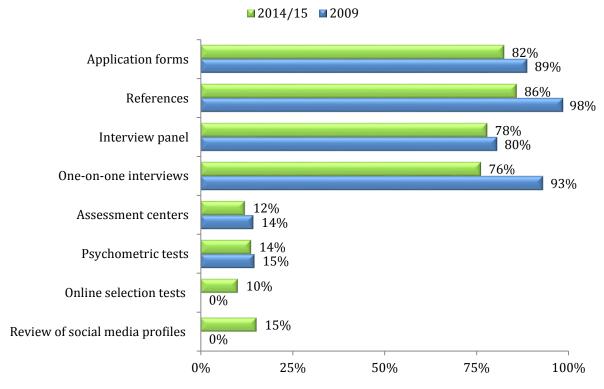
■ Professional ■ Clerical/Manual ■ Managerial Trainee program 28% 24% 20% Job centers (public) 37% 27% Vacancies in newspapers 38% 33% Career fairs 45% Social media 46% 56% Recruitment agencies/consultancies/exec. 42% search 16% 66% Word of mouth/employee referrals 75% Vacancy on commercial job websites Vacancy page on company website 81% 81% 80% Internal transfers 79% 77% 100% 0% 25% 50% 75%

Figure 3.4: Which recruitment methods are used in your organization? (By employee category)

Interestingly, most selection methods examined are being used less frequently for managerial hires in 2014/15 compared with 2009 (see Figure 3.5). However, based on data collected only in 2014/15, organizations are using new methods such as social media profiling (15%) and online selection tests (10%).

Although most selection methods are being used less frequently for managerial positions, some organizations are using new methods, such as social media profiling (15%) and online selection tests (10%).

Figure 3.5: Which of the following recruitment methods are used for managerial positions in your organization?



Note: Dashes (--) indicate the item was not included on the respective year's survey.

Diversity and Inclusion Programs

According to 2014/15 data (see Figure 3.6), organizations are implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives primarily at the recruitment stage, with racial/ethnic minorities, people with disabilities and women being the most frequently targeted groups in these efforts. This could be an indication of the importance organizations place on increasing diversity of their workforce. The low percentage of organizations using programs to assist women returning to the workforce and help low-skilled labor find their way (back) into the workforce is noteworthy.

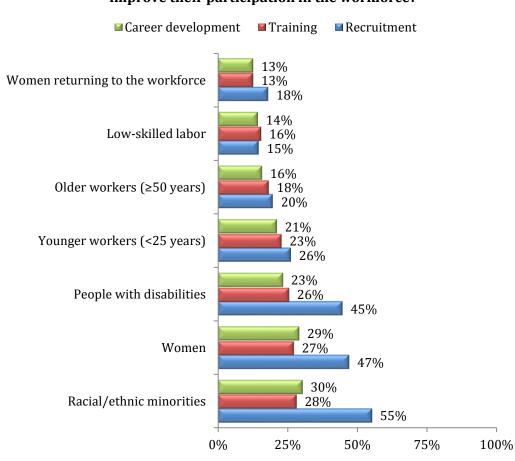


Figure 3.6: Does your organization have diversity and inclusion programs for any of the following groups to improve their participation in the workforce?

Working Arrangements

Comparisons of 2004, 2009 and 2014/15 data show a trend toward less frequent use of part-time working arrangements, but more frequent use of teleworking (see Figures 3.7 and 3.8). Shift work

Results show a trend toward less frequent use of part-time working arrangements and more frequent use of teleworking.

also shows a significant increase in use (see Figure 3.9): in 2004 and 2009, 10% of responding organizations reported using this practice for more than half of the workforce, rising to 24% in

2014/15. (This latter finding may be a result of a larger presence of the health care industry represented among 2014/15 responding organizations.)

Figure 3.7: What proportion of employees at your organization are part-time?

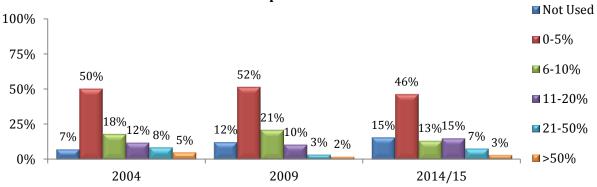


Figure 3.8: What proportion of employees at your organization telework?

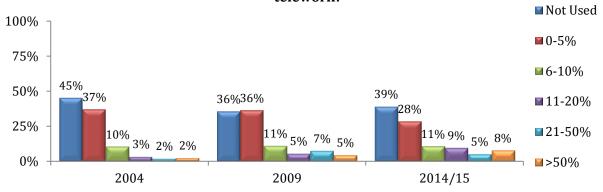
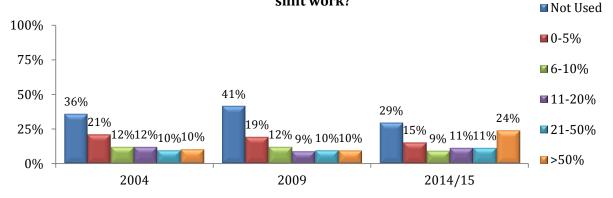


Figure 3.9: What proportion of employees at your organization do shift work?



4. Employee Development

Employee Appraisal

In 2014/15, most organizations report having a formal appraisal system for all categories of employees (management: 96%; professional: 95%; clerical/manual: 93%). These performance appraisal systems rely on the employee's immediate superior as the most frequent source of data (75-93% of responding organizations, depending on employee grade), followed by self-appraisal/evaluation as the second most widely used source of input (59%-74%), and then the supervisor's superior (41-67% of responding organizations, again increasing by grade) (see Figure 4.1). Subordinate and peer inputs are less likely to be included in the appraisal system across all categories of workers (up to 23% of responding organizations reporting these practices, depending on employee grade).

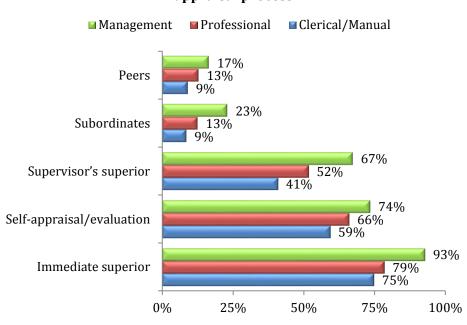


Figure 4.1: Who is expected to provide data for the appraisal process?

Appraisal data are predominantly used for decisions regarding pay (76%), career moves (75%), training and development (74%), and workforce planning (59%). A common perception is that appraisals are predominantly used for pay purposes; although pay is a significant outcome of the

performance appraisal process, the findings show that appraisal data are almost equally likely to be used for determining career moves and identifying training and development needs. One explanation could be an emerging trend facilitated by greater use of HRIS; standardized performance management systems include more explicit elements to be considered during appraisal, which may not

Although pay is a significant appraisal outcome, appraisal data are almost equally likely to be used for determining career moves and identifying training and development needs.

have been discussed previously between employees and their supervisors. This technology may also

explain why employees themselves are playing a significant role in the feedback process, as systems are designed to capture their opinions.

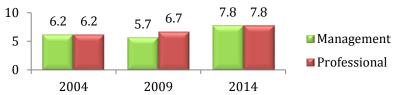
Training

Data from the 2014/15 survey show that 60% of responding organizations spend less than 5% of annual payroll costs on training. The mean number of training days employees receive per year has increased from 2004 to 2009 to 2014/15 (for management 6.2, 5.7 and 7.8 respectively; for professionals 6.2, 6.7 and 7.8 respectively)

60% of responding organizations spend less than 5% of annual payroll costs on training.

(see Figure 4.2). The low amount spent on training juxtaposed against the increasing number of training days may be explained by technology: the initial investments into developing e-learning systems (which are increasingly being used for training) may have already previously been made, so the actual cost to deliver more training requires less investment today.

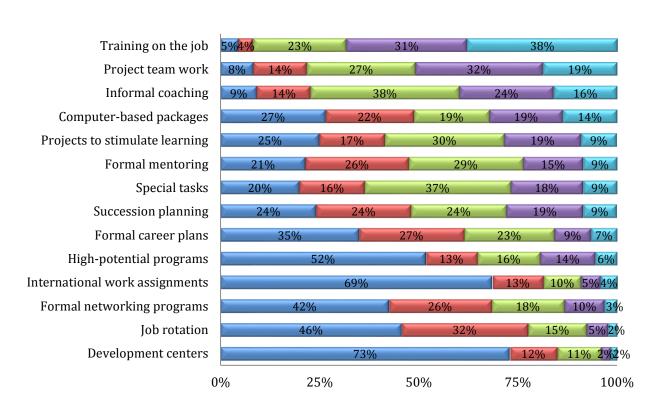
Figure 4.2: Approximately, how many days of training per year do employees in each staff category receive on average?



The most popular practices for career management in 2014/15 are on-the-job training, project team work, informal coaching and computer-based packages (see Figure 4.3), indicating that low-cost inhouse methods appear to be important. The least common practices used are development centers and international work assignments—both high-cost options. However, it is noteworthy that job rotation, formal networking and high potential programs are relatively rarely used despite their inhouse nature.

Figure 4.3: To what extent does your organization use the following methods for career management?

■ Not at all ■ ■ ■ To a very great extent



5. Compensation and Benefits

The use of stock options and profit-sharing incentives for management has decreased considerably from 2009 to 2014/15, whereas the use of employee share/stock programs for management has increased (see Figure 5.1). This may be due to a combination of regulation of such incentives and the volatility of the stock market since the global financial crisis.

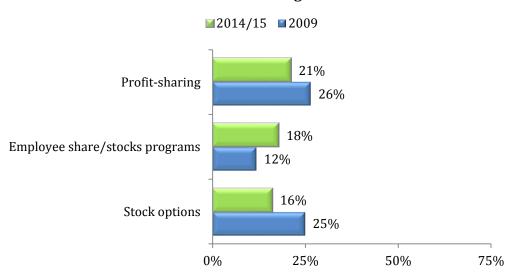
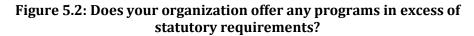


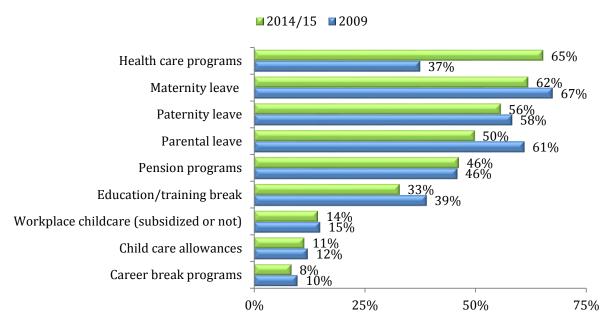
Figure 5.1: Does your organization offer any of the following incentives to management?

In 2014/15, the majority of organizations are offering employees a wide range of benefits in excess of statutory regulation. However, most employee benefits show a small decrease in use of each benefit compared with what organizations were offering in 2009 (see Figure 5.2). The exception to this is health care programs (which might be explained by the recent legislative changes regarding the provision of health insurance). In 2014/15, 65% of responding organizations report offering health care programs beyond mandatory requirements (compared with 37% in 2009), 62% offer

There was a small decrease in most employee benefits offerings in 2014/15 compared with benefits offerings in 2009.

maternity leave, 56% offer paternity leave, 50% offer parental leave (leave given to a parent to look after a child outside of maternity/paternity leave—for instance, to care for a sick child), 46% offer pension programs and 33% offer education/training breaks.





6. Employee Relations and Communication

Trade Unions

Following a decline in trade union membership density between 2004 and 2009, 2014/15 shows a slight increase (see Figure 6.1). This rise is also visible in the proportion of organizations recognizing trade unions for the purpose of collective bargaining. This number declined from 2004 (52%) to 2009 (33%), but now far exceeds the 2004 level

Following a decline in trade union membership density between 2004 and 2009, there was a slight increase in 2014/15.

at 64% in 2014/15. This fluctuation may at least partially be due to an increased proportion of health care organizations (which are more likely to be unionized environments) included in the latest data collection round (5% in 2004; 3% in 2009; 8% in 2014/15). The increase in collective bargaining recognition may also be related to the geographic location of the sample; bargaining rights are very dependent on state-level law.

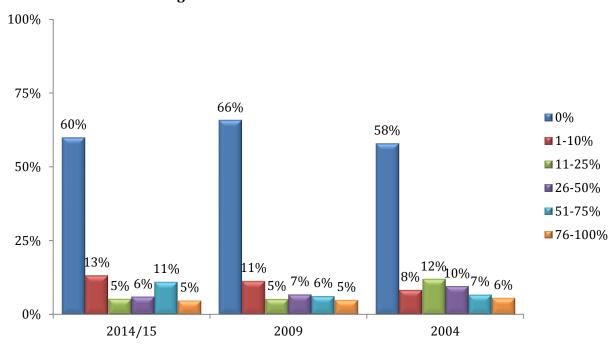


Figure 6.1: What proportion of the total number of employees in your organization are members of a trade union?

These trends are, however, inconsistent with the reported perceived level of influence of trade unions by organizations in 2014/15; the most common perception is that trade unions have no influence at all (40%), 13% of respondents indicate trade unions influence their organization to a very great extent, and 47% report their influence falls somewhere in between "not at all" and "to a very great extent." This may either be due to no union being present, or because of strong management rights clauses in union agreements that still provide management with considerable leeway in their actions.

Communication Methods

Organizations report a continued decrease in the presence of consultative committees or works councils, dipping from 33% in 2004 to 23% in 2009 and 22% in 2014/15. As for communication

about organizational issues, the data indicate a decline in the percentage of organizations in which managers are briefed about business strategy (97% in 2009; 89% in 2014/15), financial performance (96% in 2009; 86% in

There was a decline in organizations briefing management about business strategy, financial performance, and organization of work between 2009 and 2014/15.

2014/15) and organization of work (93% in 2009; 82% in 2014/15) (see Figure 6.2). Overall, these data point to reduced levels of information being shared.

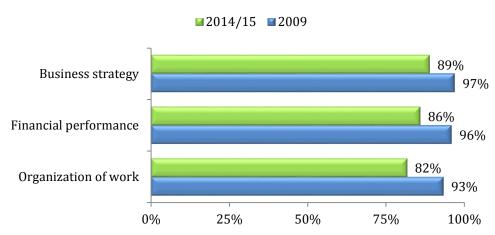
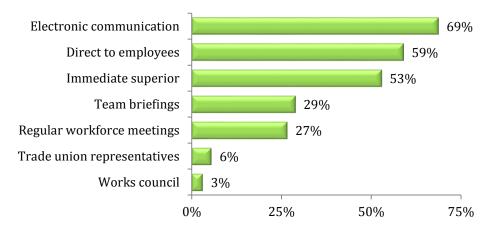


Figure 6.2: Which employee categories are formally briefed about the following issues?

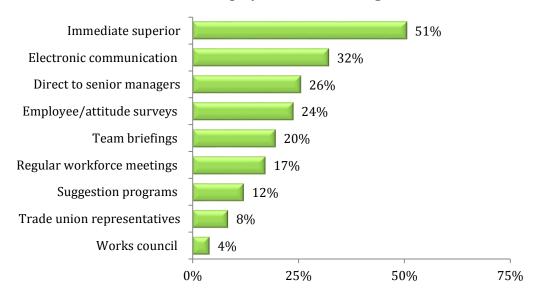
As for the most common methods for downward communication of major issues to employees in 2014/15, organizations predominantly point to electronic communication (69%) and communication directly with employees (59%) or through immediate superiors (53%) as being used "to a very great extent" (see Figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3: Which methods are used to a very great extent to communicate major issues to your employees?



Upward communication sees greater use of immediate superiors (51%), followed by electronic communication (32%) (see Figure 6.4). As with downward communication, collective representation methods for upward communication to senior managers are the least evident (works councils: 4%; trade union representatives: 8%).

Figure 6.4: Which methods are used to a very great extent to communicate employee views to management?



7. Study Methodology

This report draws on the results of the CRANET survey conducted in the USA in 2004, 2009 and 2014/15. In each round, more than 200 questionnaires were received from public and private-sector organizations, with almost 700 questionnaires received in 2014/15. The data are collected through a standardized questionnaire that is sent to senior-level managers responsible for HRM at the organization level. In 2014/15, 43% of respondents were the most senior HR representative in their organization and 93% were based in an HR department. The overall response rate for 2014/15 was 8% (comparable to previous years).

The 2014/15 data collection consisted of three sources. For each data source, the same participation criteria applied: respondents must be senior-level HR practitioners based in the U.S. and in an organization with 200 employees or more. Only one response per organization site was requested. For all three data collections, to increase response rates, participants were given the incentive of receiving a detailed interim benchmarking report on HRM practices following the data collection and analysis. Invitations also included an Executive Summary of the 2009 CRANET Survey findings to give a brief overview of past survey results and to establish interest in the study.

The first source of data was from the Center for International Human Resource Studies (CIHRS), which administered the survey from October to November 2014. A mailing list of 4,987 HR professionals was purchased from a commercial provider, Leadership Directories. Pre-notification letters were mailed on October 10 and introductory e-mails sent on October 14. E-mails with links to the CRANET Survey were sent on October 21, with a closing date of November 16, which was later extended to November 21. Approximately 2,000 telephone calls were conducted from October 28 to November 21 to encourage participation. The actual survey was left open until January 1, 2015; however, no further reminders were sent to participants. This data collection resulted in 279 responses (6%).

The second source of data was from the alumni of the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the Pennsylvania State University currently working in HR-related fields. E-mails with the survey link were sent to 299 alumni on December 4, 2014, with a closing date of December 19, which was later extended to December 24. Follow-up phone calls were conducted on December 9 and 10 to encourage participation. The actual survey was left open until January 1, 2015; however, no further reminders were sent to participants. This data collection resulted in 47 responses (16%).

The third source of data was collected in partnership with the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM), which contacted a random sample of 4,000 of its HR professional members who are managers and above at organizations with 200 or more employees. First round e-mails with links to the CRANET/SHRM Survey were sent on April 8, with a closing date of April 22, which was later extended to May 19. Twenty-five \$10 Starbucks gift cards were offered as an additional incentive to participants. Invitation e-mails included an Executive Summary of the 2009 CRANET Survey findings to give a brief overview of past survey results and to establish interest in the study. Reminder e-mails were sent to respondents on a regular basis to encourage participation. New invitation e-mails inviting participants to complete limited sections of the survey were sent on May

5, with a closing date of May 19. In total, 428 respondents started the survey, from which 367 valid responses were used in the data analysis (9% response rate).

Including all three data sources, a total of 693 valid responses were received and used in the analysis.

Sample Demographics

Over the three rounds of data collection, a slight decrease was observed in the percentage of private-sector organizations participating in 2009 compared with 2004, stabilizing between 2009 and 2014/15 (53% in 2004, 39% in 2009, 42% in 2014/15). Dominant industries in all three years include public administration and education. The health care sector is noticeably more present in the 2014/15 sample (5% in 2004; 3% in 2009; 8% in 2014/15). Ninety per cent of responding organizations in 2014/15 are headquartered in the U.S., which is consistent with 2009 and 2004 data. The largest group (33-37%) of organizations in all three years focuses on a worldwide market for its products or services, with a further 26-29% focusing on the U.S. domestic market. From 2004 to 2014/15, a larger percentage of organizations have experienced mergers (increasing from 6% to 11%) or relocations (increasing from 4% to 8%) in the last three years.

The age of the organizations participating has been gradually declining; in 2004, the mean age was 114 years, decreasing to 78 years in 2009 and 72 years in 2014/15. The median size of participating organizations has also seen a slight gradual decline, with 975 employees in 2004, 888 employees in 2009 and 750 employees in 2014/15. The majority of employees from responding organizations were in clerical/manual roles in 2014/15 (mean of 43%), which is consistent with previous rounds of data collection (47% in 2004; 37% in 2009). In 2014/15, 24% of responding firms reported that more than 75% of their workforce has a university-level education, and 23% reported that more than half of their employees are 50 years old or older, while 8% reported that more than half of their employees are 25 years old or younger.