This course supports the assessment for Human Resources. The course covers 5 competencies and represents 2 competency units.

**Introduction**

**Overview**
Welcome to the Human Resources course of study. In this course of study, you will work on developing skills and competencies that will allow you, as a manager, to handle a variety of critical human resource issues. More than any other activity, human resource management requires almost daily attention and can present a manager with unique and challenging situations. Legal requirements, including various federal laws and regulations, require precise actions and responses in order to protect your company. In this course of study you will work on understanding those types of legal requirements, as well as ethical considerations and strategies for managing the human resources of a company. An effective manager must have an understanding of key human resource management issues. This course of study covers critical human resource management issues including topics such as performance evaluations, succession planning, and legal discharge issues. The performance tasks will result in critical analysis, documentation, and communication regarding these issues.

**Competencies**
This course provides guidance to help you demonstrate the following 5 competencies:

- **Competency 325.1.4: Leadership Ethics**
  The graduate identifies influences on ethical leadership and analyzes the construction of a code of ethics.
- **Competency 325.1.5: Managing Human Resources**
  The graduate develops strategies, policies, and procedures for effective human resource management within an organization.
- **Competency 325.2.1: Team Development**
  The graduate selects the appropriate type of team structure for a project and proposes strategies and structures to build team cohesion and effectiveness.
- **Competency 325.4.1: Enhancing Organizational Communication**
  The graduate communicates effectively within an organizational setting.
- **Competency 329.4.6: Government Regulation**
  The graduate analyzes applicable legal and regulatory requirements to determine whether organizations meet legal responsibilities and act with social responsibility.

**Activities at a Glance Outline**
The following document is a brief outline of the activities you need to complete this course:

- "[Human Resources Activities at a Glance](#)"

**Course Mentor Assistance**
As you prepare to successfully demonstrate competency in this subject, remember that course mentors stand ready to help you reach your educational goals. As subject matter experts,
mentors enjoy and take pride in helping students become reflective learners, problem solvers, and critical thinkers. Course mentors are excited to hear from you and eager to work with you.

Successful students report that working with a course mentor is the key to their success. Course mentors are able to share tips on approaches, tools, and skills that can help you apply the content you’re studying. They also provide guidance in assessment preparation strategies and troubleshoot areas of deficiency. Even if things don’t work out on your first try, course mentors act as a support system to guide you through the revision process. You should expect to work with course mentors for the duration of your coursework, so you are welcome to contact them as soon as you begin. Course mentors are fully committed to your success!

Preparing for Success

The information in this section is provided to detail the resources available for you to use as you complete this course.

Learning Resources

The learning resources listed in this section are required to complete the activities in this course. For many resources, WGU has provided automatic access through the course. However, you may need to manually enroll in or independently acquire other resources. Read the full instructions provided to ensure that you have access to all of your resources in a timely manner.

Purchase Learning Resources

Listed below are the learning resource materials you will need to obtain


*Note: This textbook is available as an e-book through WGU at no expense to you. Please enroll for it through your Degree Plan. You will receive instructions accordingly.*

Additional Preparations

Study Notebook

While many students take notes right from the reading materials, it can also be helpful to use a notebook to record your observations, ideas, and connecting thoughts as you move through the variety of materials included in this course. At various points in your studies, you will be encouraged to include noteworthy ideas and observations in a study notebook as you begin thinking about these human resources issues.

Manually Enrolled Resources

Take a moment to enroll in the learning resources listed in this section. To enroll, navigate to the “Learning Resources” tab, click the “Sections” button, and then click the “Enroll Now” button for each resource. Once your mentor approves your enrollment in the resource, you will receive an e-mail with further access instructions. Contact your mentor if you have questions.

You will need to enroll in or subscribe to learning resources as a part of this course. You may already have enrolled in these resources for other courses. Please check the “Learning
Resources” tab and verify that you have access to the following learning resources. If you do not currently have access, please enroll or renew your enrollment at this time.

**Minedge**

This course utilizes module materials from MindEdge. This series of interactive modules will assist you in developing competency in the course content.

### Legal and Regulatory Requirements

The legal environment in which business must operate regulates most daily activities, including those involving the human resources of your company. Legislation such as Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 set out specific employment standards and restrictions that businesses must follow in hiring and managing employees. As a manager, you must understand and be able to effectively handle issues such as constructive discharge, diversity requirements, discrimination, and harassment issues. As a manager, it is critical to have an understanding of these legal requirements to ensure that employees, as well as your company, are protected.

**Legal and Regulatory Requirements**

Many would argue that one of the most influential pieces of legislation passed to date is the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Title VII of this act prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Review the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its relevance to the workforce. Start by reviewing the instructions in TaskStream for Human Resources task 1. Then study the relevant legal and regulatory requirements using the learning resources outlined in this section.

At the end of this section, you should be able to

- describe how government and legal regulation can impact human resource management;
- determine if constructive discharge, as a legal concept, is relevant in a given scenario;
- identify key actions companies need to take to manage diversity;
- identify classes protected under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964;
- describe how Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is relevant to a given organizational situation;
- select an appropriate legal reference to support your recommendation in a specified situation; and
- evaluate a scenario to determine the appropriate recommended steps companies should take to comply with government and legal regulation in a given scenario.

### Foundations of Constructive Discharge

Read chapter 4 (“Managing Diversity”) in the *Managing Human Resources* textbook. As a manager, why is it critical to manage diversity?

Read the journal article "Constructive Discharge Under Title VII and the ADEA" located in the WGU Library e-reserves, paying particular attention to when constructive discharge is
applicable. From the WGU Library page, select e-reserves and then Business, followed by selecting JDT2. When prompted, enter the e-reserve password which is found on the WGU Library Login page that appears when you click on the Library link from the Resources tab.

Review the following constructive discharge websites and article, paying particular attention to the concept of constructive discharge and its applicability in the work environment:

- Prohibited Employment Policies/Practices
- Policy Guidance on Current Issues of Sexual Harassment
- "The U.S. Supreme Court Clarifies Constructive Discharge Under Title VII: Responsibilities & Opportunities for Human Resources Practitioners"

Consider how constructive discharge, as a legal concept, is relevant to the scenario given in the performance tasks.

**Legal References**

This task requires students to provide three legal references that support their recommendation for the given scenario. Legal references could include cases, amendments, laws and policies, etc. Each legal reference listed on the reference page must have an accompanying APA citation within the document. Please refer to the APA blog in the MBA Human Resources Community for additional help. References for each legal reference will vary, so please refer to the websites below for examples of APA citations and references:

- How to Read a Case Citation
- Citing Government Documents: American Psychological Association

**Complete: Task 1**

Complete the following task in TaskStream:

- Human Resources: Task 1

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment Preparation" box in this course.

**Foundations of Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

Read the following in the Managing Human Resources:

- chapter 3 ("Understanding Equal Opportunity and the Legal Environment")

Test yourself by reviewing discussion questions 2 and 7 at the end of the chapter.

To search for applicable cases to use to support your recommendation, refer to these sites:

- LexisNexis Legal Newsroom
- Google Scholar
- Justia
Review the following equal opportunity websites, paying particular attention to how Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is relevant in the work environment:

- Laws and Guidance
- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act
- Teaching With Documents
- Employment Litigation Section

Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 established the concept of equal employment opportunity laws. Consider how this act is relevant to the given task scenario. Begin keeping a study notebook of your observations so that you can construct your own understanding of the application of these various concepts to a variety of situations. This will also help in your preparation for the performance assessment.

**Ethical Leadership**

You may have been bombarded with news of ethical shortcomings and unethical behaviors of corporate executives across the business spectrum. This, quite naturally, has resulted in increased scrutiny of the actions of corporations and those who act on behalf of organizations, including mid-upper level managers. There has also been additional attention placed on the development of proper ethical behavior and actions within organizations. Effective ethics programs provide the opportunity for management to establish a culture that establishes ethical behavior, both inside and outside of the organization, as the business strives to eliminate unethical conduct.

**Ethical Leadership and Social Responsibility**

A company can benefit from promoting a work environment that encourages individuals to develop ethical leadership and social responsibility. In turn, individual employees can be a source of ethical guidance in their respective organizations. Start by reviewing the instructions in TaskStream for Human Resources task 2. Then study ethical leadership and social responsibility utilizing the learning resources outlined in this section.

At the end of this section, you should be able to

- identify possible decision alternatives for a given ethical situation;
- describe the financial, legal, and ethical considerations of identified decision alternatives for a given scenario;
- discuss the role of social responsibility in the decision-making process for a given organizational situation; and
- outline strategies a company could adopt to ensure that ethical decision making takes place within an organization.

**Ethical Leadership**

Complete the "Business Ethics Simulation" (PD002A) SkillSoft module.

Complete MindEdge module 2 ("Mini Cases: Ethical Tests").

**Social Responsibility**
Complete the "Making Decisions Ethically" (pd_02_a01_bs_enus) SkillSoft module.

Read the journal article "Why Doing Good is Good for Business". Pay particular attention to the arguments made in behalf of companies being socially responsible.

Go to the message board and post your responses to this article and your thoughts on its relevance in the business world. Look for posts from your fellow students and respond to those. This is an excellent forum for sharing ideas and engaging in a dynamic interaction around these important issues.

Ethical leadership in an organization can be instrumental to a company’s long-term success. Consider how the concepts of ethical leadership and social responsibility are relevant to the scenario given in the performance tasks, and make note of this in your study notebook for later use as you prepare for the performance assessment.

**Decision Making Process**

Human Resources task 2 asks you to explain the process that you used for creating your alternatives. There are multiple approaches to this work, but the article below will give you an example of a process that may help you get started.

**Code of Ethics**

Many organizations have responded to the increased ethical scrutiny by establishing formal ethics programs, including codes of ethics, to foster ethical decision making for business directors, officers, and employees. What is a code of ethics? Utilize the learning resources outlined in this section to understand the importance of a code of ethics and its key components.

At the end of this section, you should be able to

- explain the benefits of a company adopting a code of ethics,
- analyze a company's code of ethics in order to determine critical components of a code of ethics, and
- identify key components of a code of ethics.

**Complete: Task 2**

Complete the following task in TaskStream:

- Human Resources: Task 2

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment Preparation" box in this course.

**Concepts of a Code of Ethics**

Complete the "Understanding Organizational Ethics" (pd_02_a03_bs_enus) module, as well as the skillbrief associated with the “Creating a Code of Ethics” and "Codes of Ethic and Conduct" (HR0262) SkillSoft modules.
A code of ethics can be an effective tool for companies as they strive to incorporate a culture of ethical decision making. Consider key components companies should include in an adopted code of ethics. Record your thoughts in your study notebook. Include your observations about key components of a code of ethics as you begin constructing a sense of what is required for an effective corporate ethical program.

**Managing Human Resources**

The need to effectively manage human resources is vital to the success of any organization. This includes a variety of practices and approaches, from performance appraisals, to team development and performance, to succession planning. It is essential that a manager be able to support employees in making valuable contributions to the company through a clear and effective strategy for maximizing the use of human resources.

**Human Resource Management Policies and Procedures**

Having an understanding of key human resource management policies and procedures will make individuals more valuable members of their organizations. Start by reviewing the instructions in TaskStream for Human Resources task 3. Then study key human resource management policies and procedures using the learning resources outlined in this section.

At the end of this section, you should be able to

- describe the optimal results of an effective performance appraisal,
- recommend pre-appraisal activities that will ensure performance appraisals are effective,
- recommend post-appraisal activities that will ensure performance appraisal processes are effective,
- discuss steps managers can take when delivering a performance appraisal to an employee,
- discuss the benefits of organizations working with their employees to further their career goals,
- recommend a strategy a company could adopt to assess team performance based on a given scenario,
- illustrate the differences between evaluating team performance and individual performance,
- identify reasons a company should incorporate succession planning,
- discuss how succession planning can be utilized in a given organizational setting,
- outline an appropriate succession planning process for a given organization, and
- communicate effectively within an organizational setting utilizing multimedia presentations and presenter notes.

**Assessing Teams**

Read chapter 10 ("Assessing Team and Individual Performance") in Leading the Professionals: How to Inspire & Motivate Professional Service Teams located in SkillPort Books24x7.

Team assessment refers to how you assess and evaluate team performance. Assessing teams poses different challenges from assessing individuals.
This section will require you to research different methods for assessment team performance and summarize your research. In addition, you should consider the differences between evaluating a team and evaluating an individual. The SkillPort book above is a great place to start your research. Possible search terms for this research could include:

- Assessing team performance
- Evaluating team performance
- Evaluating teams vs individuals

Consider various techniques that can be used to assess teams effectively, and make note of those in your study notebook. These will be valuable insights later as you prepare for the performance assessment.

**Succession Planning**

Read chapter 9 ("Developing Careers") in the *Managing Human Resources* textbook.

Complete [MindEdge](#) module 4 ("Mini Cases: Making a Choice on Promotion at Pacific Machine Tools").

Read chapters 1-3 in Succession Planning Basics located in [SkillPort Books24x7](#).

Complete the "Handling Organizational Change" (PD003A) and "Implementing a Succession Plan Simulation" (LEAD030S) [SkillSoft](#) modules.

Read the journal article "Leading Leaders: How to Manage the Top Talent in Organization" located in the WGU Library.

Succession planning can be a key aspect of a company's strategic planning. Consider how it could be beneficial for a company to adopt succession planning.

**Complete: Task 2**

Complete the following task in [TaskStream](#):

- Human Resources: Task 2

For details about this performance assessment, see the "Assessment Preparation" box in this course.

**Performance Appraisal Systems**

Read the following in the *Managing Human Resources*:

- chapter 7 ("Appraising and Managing Performance")

Complete the following [MindEdge](#) module:

- module 4 ("Mini Cases: Handling Appraisal Results")
Read chapter 6 ("Employment Laws") in *The Manager's Guide to HR: Hiring, Firing, Performance Evaluations, Documentation, Benefits, and Everything Else You Need to Know* located in SkillPort Books24x7. Pay particular attention to the importance of having an understanding of key employment laws.

Read the journal articles "Management by Whose Objectives?" and "Following a Few Simple Rules Can Ease the Pain of Employee Reviews" located in the e-reserves in the WGU Library.

An effective performance appraisal system can result in employees having a clear picture of the contributions they can make to an organization. Consider the importance of companies having a well-defined performance appraisal system. What are the benefits to the employee and to the organization of a well delivered performance appraisal system? What results should be achieved by a well delivered performance appraisal?

**Final Steps**

Congratulations on completing the activities in this course! This course has prepared you to complete the assessment associated with this course. If you have not already been directed to complete the assessment, schedule and complete your assessment now.

**The WGU Library**

The [WGU Library](https://www.wgu.edu/library) is available online to WGU students 24 hours a day.

For more information about using the WGU Library, view the following videos on [The WGU Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdY8c3lqZc3bZ7mP0Ww3zjA):

- [WGU: Accessing the Library](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=example)
- [WGU Library: Finding Articles, Books, & E-Reserves](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=example)

**Center for Writing Excellence: The WGU Writing Center**

If you need help with any part of the writing or revision process, contact the Center for Writing Excellence (CWE). Whatever your needs—writing anxiety, grammar, general college writing concerns, or even ESL language-related writing issues—the CWE is available to help you. The CWE offers personalized individual sessions and weekly group webinars. For an appointment, please e-mail writingcenter@wgu.edu.

**Feedback**

WGU values your input! If you have comments, concerns, or suggestions for improvement of this course, please submit your feedback using the following form:

- [Course Feedback](https://feedback.wgu.edu/)

**ADA Requirements**
Please review the University ADA Policy.