

## **How HR can Assist Line Managers in Playing Their Roles More Efficiently and Effectively**

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### **Abstract**

While HR departments are responsible for formulating organizational policies, the effectiveness of these policies heavily depends on successful implementation by line managers. However, many line managers lack the tools, training, and support needed to carry out these responsibilities effectively, leading to implementation gaps and reduced organizational efficiency. This study aims to examine how Human Resource professionals can assist line managers in executing their roles more efficiently and effectively, particularly in policy implementation, employee engagement, performance management, and overcoming organizational challenges. The article adopts a conceptual and literature-based approach, reviewing recent scholarly and professional studies on HR-line manager collaboration. Key thematic areas include HR's policy development role, line managers' implementation responsibilities, training, communication strategies, and shared accountability mechanisms. The findings show that HR supports line managers by developing aligned policies, offering training, simplifying communication, and deploying technology like HRIS. HR also facilitates teamwork, manages employee resistance, and allocates resources for successful policy adoption. Collaborative efforts between HR and line managers result in improved policy adherence, better employee engagement, and smoother operational performance. The study concludes that HR plays a vital role in enabling line managers to implement policies effectively. This is achieved through strategic collaboration, continuous training, communication support, and fostering an inclusive work culture. Organizations should institutionalize structured HR-line manager collaboration frameworks, invest in regular training, and use integrated systems to support implementation. Emphasis should be placed on two-way feedback, adaptable policy mechanisms, and consistent alignment with organizational goals.

**Keywords:** *Human Resource Management, Line Managers, Policy Implementation, Employee Engagement, HR Support Strategies*

## 1.0 Introduction

In today's fast-paced and ever-changing business landscape, the role of Human Resources (HR) has become increasingly critical in driving organizational success. Ramlall and Melton (2019), explained the HR's key responsibilities in establishing new policies and practices that align with the company's goals and objectives. However, the implementation of these policies ultimately falls under the purview of line managers. This research aims to examine the view that HR initiate new policies and practices, while line managers have the responsibility of implementing them. Firstly, the assessment will discuss the importance of HR in policy development and how their expertise and knowledge support line managers in effectively implementing new policies within their teams. According to Guest (2021), HR professionals possess a deep understanding of the organization's culture, strategic objectives, and legal requirements. This knowledge allows them to develop policies that are not only aligned with the organisation's values but also comply with relevant laws and regulations.

Secondly, the research will analyse the role of line managers in policy implementation. Yusliza et al. (2019), highlighted that line managers play a crucial role in translating policy into practice, ensuring that employees understand and adhere to the new guidelines. They are responsible for cascading the policies down to their teams, providing necessary training and support, and addressing any concerns or challenges that may arise during the implementation process. Line managers are the direct supervisors of employees and are in the best position to oversee the day-to-day activities and monitor compliance with policies. Further, the study will explore how HR support line managers in their implementation role. HR provides line managers with comprehensive training programs that equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively communicate and enforce policies. Moreover, HR create user-friendly and accessible policy guidelines, handbooks, and documentation that simplify the implementation process for line managers (Kim & Kehoe, 2022). Regular communication and collaboration between HR and line managers also ensure a smooth and coordinated implementation effort.

Moreover, López-Cotarelo (2018), asserted that HR assist line managers in addressing any resistance or pushback from employees during the implementation phase. They provide guidance and resources to line managers on how to effectively communicate the benefits and rationale behind new policies, thus ensuring employee buy-in and cooperation. HR also

establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from line managers regarding the effectiveness and practicality of policies, allowing for continuous improvement and adaptation.

### **1.1 Importance of HR and line manager collaboration**

Evans (2022), noted that a strong collaboration between HR and line managers is crucial for successful policy implementation and employee engagement. Both HR and line managers play important roles in the organizational hierarchy, and their partnership is essential to ensure smooth implementation of new policies and practices. Ramlall and Melton (2019), highlighted that HR assist line managers by providing them with the necessary training and resources to effectively implement new policies and practices. HR professionals have expertise in designing and delivering training programs that equip line managers with the knowledge and skills needed to communicate and enforce policies effectively. By collaborating with HR, line managers gain access to valuable training materials, workshops, and guidance that enhance their ability to implement policies. Further, Townsend et al. (2022), pointed that HR support line managers by providing ongoing coaching and guidance. Line managers often face challenges while implementing new policies, such as resistance from employees or the need to make difficult decisions. HR professionals act as a resource for line managers, providing them with the advice and support they need to handle these challenges effectively. This collaboration ensures that line managers are not left to navigate policy implementation on their own, but instead have a valuable partner to rely on.

Kehoe and Han (2020), explained that HR role is crucial to line managers as it provide them with tools and technology that facilitate policy implementation. HR implement HRIS (Human Resource Information System) software, which automate administrative tasks related to policy enforcement, such as tracking attendance, leave, or performance metrics. By streamlining these processes, line managers can focus more on their core responsibilities and dedicate their time and efforts toward effective policy implementation. Further, Shakil and Mollah (2022), pointed that HR and line managers collaborate to ensure employee engagement throughout the policy implementation process. HR help line managers by designing effective communication strategies to ensure that employees understand the rationale behind new policies and their impact. This include creating informative email updates, conducting town-hall meetings, or organizing focus groups to address employee concerns or feedback. The collaboration between HR and line managers is important because it recognizes the diverse strengths each party brings

to policy implementation. HR professionals possess expertise in HR practices, legal compliance, and employee relations, while line managers have a deep understanding of their team's dynamics, performance, and day-to-day operations. By combining their knowledge and skills, HR and line managers implement policies that align with both organizational goals and employee needs (Evans, 2022).

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), HR holds a strategic position in the organization, influencing decision-making processes related to policy formulation and organizational development. They are responsible for designing policies that align with the organization's overall strategy, meet legal requirements, and promote a positive work culture. HR professionals work closely with top management, considering organizational goals, industry trends, and best practices while formulating policies. On the other hand, line managers are responsible for executing organizational policies and practices within their respective teams. They directly interact with employees, monitor their performance, and ensure policy compliance. Line managers have a critical role in policy implementation as they are the primary communication link between HR and employees (Wach et al., 2021). They are responsible for effectively communicating the policies to employees, clarifying any doubts or questions, and addressing concerns that might arise during implementation.

## **1.2 HR's Role in Assisting Line Managers**

Wren and Bedeian (2023), explained that HR plays a crucial role in assisting line managers in effectively implementing new policies and practices within an organization. By providing support, training, and guidance, HR helps ensure that line managers are equipped with the necessary tools and knowledge to successfully implement these policies. This ultimately leads to more efficient and effective implementation, aligning the organization towards its goals and vision. One way in which HR supports line managers is through developing policies that align with the organization's goals and vision. Swanson (2022), noted that HR professionals have a deep understanding of both the business needs and employee concerns, allowing them to create policies that strike a balance between both. By collaborating with line managers and various stakeholders, HR develop can policies that are comprehensive, fair, and practical. These policies serve as a framework for line managers to implement, providing clarity and consistency throughout the organization.

Another way in which HR assists line managers is through conducting training programs and workshops. These programs equip line managers with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively implement policies. Guest (2021), asserted that HR design training sessions that cover not only the content of the policies but also the rationale behind them. By explaining the reasoning and benefits of policies, HR helps line managers better understand their importance and gain employee buy-in. Further, HR can provide training on specific procedures or processes related to policy implementation, ensuring line managers have the necessary technical skills to carry out their responsibilities.

Armstrong and Taylor (2020), highlighted that Effective communication is essential for policy implementation, and HR plays a vital role in providing guidance and support to line managers in this area. HR can regularly communicate with line managers, providing them with updates, guidance, and clarifications regarding policies. This can be done through various channels such as team meetings, email updates, or HR intranet portals. By keeping line managers informed, HR ensures that they are aware of any changes or updates to policies. Regular communication also allows line managers to seek clarifications or guidance if they encounter challenges during implementation. HR acts as a resource, providing support and guidance to line managers, helping them navigate any difficulties and ensuring the successful implementation of policies. Kim and Kehoe (2022), pointed that the role of HR in assisting line managers in implementing new policies and practices cannot be overstated. By developing comprehensive policies, providing training and education, and offering guidance and support, HR plays a crucial role in ensuring the successful implementation of policies in an organization.

### **1.3 Developing Cohesive Teams and Fostering Employee Engagement**

Ramlall and Melton (2019), explained that when individuals work together as a cohesive team and are engaged in their work, they are more likely to be committed to achieving the goals set by the organization. HR play a significant role in assisting line managers in fostering teamwork and employee engagement, ultimately leading to more efficient and effective policy implementation. Firstly, Armstrong and Taylor (2020), noted that HR assist line managers in recruitment and selection processes to ensure that individuals hired align with the organization's culture and have the necessary skills to implement policies effectively. By collaborating closely with line managers, HR can develop a thorough understanding of the skills, competencies, and values needed for policy implementation success. HR can then help

line managers in designing job descriptions, screening candidates, and conducting interviews, focusing on identifying individuals with the right fit for the organization and the specific policies in question. This collaboration between HR and line managers ensures that the right people with the required skills and culture fit are hired, increasing the likelihood of successful policy implementation.

Further, Kim and Kehoe (2022), highlighted that HR provides line managers with tools and frameworks for performance management, which can aid in tracking and evaluating employee performance in relation to policy implementation. HR can develop performance appraisal systems that have specific metrics related to policy adherence and effectiveness. Line managers can then use these tools to provide feedback to employees, track their progress, and identify areas for improvement. By having structured performance management systems, line managers are better equipped to monitor and guide employees in implementing policies, ultimately ensuring their success. Furthermore, HR can collaborate with line managers in developing recognition and rewards programs that acknowledge and incentivize employees for their successful policy implementation. HR can assist in designing reward systems that align with the organization's culture and values, motivating employees to strive for excellence in policy implementation. By actively involving line managers in this process, HR ensures that the recognition and rewards programs are aligned with the team's specific needs and goals. Regularly recognizing and rewarding employees for their efforts and achievements not only boosts motivation and engagement but also reinforces the value the organization places on policy implementation (Kehoe & Han, 2020).

HR plays a vital role in assisting line managers in creating cohesive teams and fostering employee engagement for successful policy implementation. Wren and Bedeian (2023), concluded that by collaborating with line managers in recruitment and selection, performance management, and recognition and rewards, HR can ensure that line managers have the necessary support and tools to effectively lead their teams in policy implementation. Through these efforts, HR enhances the likelihood of successful policy implementation by promoting teamwork, employee engagement, and overall commitment to organizational goals.

#### **1.4 Overcoming Challenges and Obstacles**

Shakil and Mollah (2022), argued that addressing potential challenges and obstacles that line managers may face during policy implementation is crucial for effective execution. These

challenges can vary based on factors such as the nature of the policy, organizational culture, and the skills and experience of the line managers. One challenge that line managers may face is a lack of understanding of the objectives, rationale, and intricacies of the new policies. This can hinder their ability to effectively implement the policies. To address this challenge, HR can conduct comprehensive training sessions and provide clear guidelines to ensure that line managers have a thorough understanding of the policies. Another challenge that line managers may encounter is resistance from employees. Armstrong and Taylor, (2020), noted that this can occur due to fear, lack of trust, or concerns about how the policies will affect their work and personal lives. HR can assist line managers by equipping them with effective communication skills and strategies to address employees' concerns and highlight the benefits of the new policies.

According to Wren and Bedeian (2023), limited resources can also pose a challenge for line managers during policy implementation. They may struggle with limited time, budget, or staff capacity, making it difficult to effectively execute the policies. HR can work with line managers to identify and allocate resources effectively, streamline processes, and identify areas where automation or outsourcing can be utilized to ease the burden. Additionally, if new policies are not aligned with the existing organizational culture, line managers may struggle to implement them successfully. This misalignment can lead to resistance and difficulties in enforcing the policies. HR can engage in dialogue with line managers to understand the concerns and make necessary modifications to the policies to ensure better compatibility and acceptance. To assist line managers in overcoming these challenges, HR can provide consistent support. This includes establishing clear lines of communication, being accessible to answer questions, and providing timely feedback on policy implementation (Boxall & Purcell, 2022). HR can act as a resource for line managers, offering practical solutions based on their expertise in policy implementation and employee relations.

Adaptation and flexibility are also crucial in overcoming challenges during policy implementation. Collings et al. (2018), noted that HR can collaborate with line managers to monitor the effectiveness of the policies, gather feedback from employees, and identify areas of improvement. This continuous evaluation allows HR to suggest modifications or enhancements to policies, ensuring their relevance and effectiveness. By working closely with line managers, HR can leverage their expertise in policy implementation and empower them to successfully execute new policies. This collaborative approach not only assists line managers



in overcoming the challenges they may face but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement and adaptation within the organization. With consistent support and adaptation, line managers can implement policies more efficiently and effectively, creating a positive impact on the overall organizational performance (Swanson, 2022).

## **2.0 Conclusion**

In conclusion, it is evident that HR plays a crucial role in assisting line managers in effectively implementing new policies and practices within an organization. HR can assist line managers by providing them with the necessary training and resources, ensuring effective communication and understanding of the policies, and offering ongoing support and guidance throughout the implementation process. Firstly, HR can organize comprehensive training programs for line managers to equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to effectively implement new policies. This training can include sessions on policy objectives, implementation strategies, and potential challenges that may arise. By providing such training, HR can ensure that line managers have a clear understanding of the policies and are able to effectively communicate them to their teams. Secondly, HR can facilitate effective communication between top management, HR personnel, and line managers. This ensures that line managers have a thorough understanding of the policies and can effectively communicate them to their employees. This collaborative approach promotes buy-in from all stakeholders and creates a sense of ownership, thereby increasing the chances of successful implementation.

Further, HR can offer ongoing support and guidance to line managers during the implementation process. This can include regular check-ins to address any issues or concerns, providing clarity on policy interpretation, and offering solutions to overcome implementation challenges. By providing this support, HR can boost line managers' confidence and ensure a smooth implementation process. To summarize, HR can assist line managers in effectively implementing new policies and practices by providing training, facilitating effective communication, and offering ongoing support. Such collaboration is crucial for successful policy implementation and overall organizational success. By working together, HR and line managers can ensure that new policies are implemented efficiently, thereby enhancing employee engagement, fostering a positive work environment, and driving organizational growth.



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