

UK-Japan Higher Education Project

What we learned from human resource management at universities in UK

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Vice President, Hirosaki University
Kensaku Kanda

Purpose of this presentation

- Facing with the incorporation in April 2004, Hirosaki University has a big task for establishing a vital university by utilising current human resources and by recruiting new human resources, as a mid-size comprehensive university in northern Tohoku area.
- The Universities of Sheffield and York, which the study team visited, are both held as examples of progressive reform within the British tertiary education system. Both have implemented rigorous internal reforms in order to secure excellent human resources and become dynamic seats of learning. .

Impression of the visit to universities in UK

- During the meeting with Sheffield University, the relationship between teaching staff and administrative staff came up in discussion. Only when the research staff and administrative staff achieve an equal relationship, with an awareness of partnership in their work, and a sense of trust, can each group begin to really concentrate on the work they are there to do. The administrative staff who helped us in this study had a great sense of responsibility, and took pride in the University as their place of work. Their cheerful confidence in the tasks they were required to carry out made a great impression on our team during the process of collecting resources and data.

Issues of human resource management at universities in Japan

- It has been pointed out in other circumstances that the Japanese system of making the professors of a university 'all-powerful' means that a wide range of problems and issues arising within a university are discussed only by committees (made up of teaching staff) or the board of professors. Staff in administrative positions are required only to support or assist this process, and have almost no power to make suggestions or decisions.
- In order to make improvements to Japanese universities after incorporation, it seems that both teaching staff and administrative staff must gain an awareness of the responsibility to build up their own working environment, and that a system must be put in place that allows all members of the organization to express their opinions and make suggestions.

Corporate Plan of the University of York (2000-2004)

- York University has instigated a Corporate Plan (2000-2004), to lay down the policy for the University as a whole. The Corporate Plan states that the vision of the University is 'to develop as a major centre for the advancement of learning, whose influence is global; whose research is fundamental, valuable and useful; and whose students are exceptionally well equipped to lead successful lives and to contribute effectively to society'

- Based on this, the aims of the University are as follows:
- To (a) provide an outstanding and distinctive intellectual, social and physical environment in which research, scholarship and learning may flourish, and all students and staff achieve their potential;
- (b) sustain and develop the University's position as a leading international institution in the higher education sector committed to the highest standards in the selection, learning experience and pastoral care of students, within a collegiate context;
- (c) develop further the University's established position as one of the country's leading research universities, balanced in academic composition, in order to become pre-eminent in its chosen areas of research and scholarship;
- (d) grow sustainably in response to the needs of education, training, research and employment
- (e) to use and apply knowledge in such a way that society as a whole receives the benefit;
- and (f) to respond to expectations and needs expressed from outside the University.

Human Resource Policy of the University of York

- four core principles:
- 1) the University aims to recruit staff of the highest quality in order to provide outstanding teaching, research and supporting services;
- 2) the University undertakes to treat its staff with fairness, respect and dignity at all times;
- 3) the University recognizes that the academic pre-eminence for which it aims cannot be achieved by teachers and researchers alone, but derives from the combined efforts of all its staff;
- 4) the University values all its staff for their knowledge, skills, talents, flexibility, commitment, creativity, productiveness and service orientation.

- The University also defines its responsibilities to its staff:
- 1) the University undertakes to encourage all its staff to be creative, flexible, efficient and collaborative, generating fresh ideas and innovative practices that will enable the University to achieve pre-eminence in teaching and research
- 2) The University undertakes to adopt and maintain policies and procedures that develop and support creative, flexible and high performing staff in all groups;
- 3) The University undertakes to develop and maintain an environment that promotes a cohesive, inclusive and diverse University community, affirming the inherent worth and equality of all individuals and emphasizing the importance of collaboration, trust, tolerance and open communication.

- Staff will be expected to
- 1) honor their contractual commitments to perform their duties responsibly and to the best of their abilities;
- 2) treat other members of the University community in accordance with the values;
- 3) create a positive environment for students in respect of their learning, welfare and support;
- 4) take advantage of available systems of communication to inform themselves about issues that will affect them; 5) respond flexibly to change;
- 6) take part in developmental and training opportunities in order to keep skills and competencies current and in line with University needs, including the need for statutory compliance;
- 7) work collaboratively and effectively in teams and groups within and across units or departments to support the aims of the University;
- 8) ensure that, where their work relates to people who are not University of York staff or students, they preserve the University's good name.

Staff Training and Development in the University of York

- Staff training and development is implemented by the Staff Training and Development Group (STDG), which works under the Staff Committee, with the support of the Directorate of Facilities Management and the Training and Development Office.
- STDG has the Pro-Vice-Chancellor as its chair, but the rest of its membership is comprised mainly non-academic staff who run training programs.

- The program includes courses that involve staff at all levels throughout the university, in areas including the following:
- 1) Legal compliance (health care, safety, environment, equal opportunities, etc.)
- 2) Computer technology (computers, audio / visual, time cards, attendance system update training)
- 3) Career development / study support (annual work evaluation workshops, individual development planning)
- 4) Performance review training (for both reviewers and reviewed staff)
- 5) Other training (customer care, identifying stress and relaxation, etc.)
- 6) Management development (for managers).
- In addition to this, there are also training programs for staff involved in facilities management and contract staff, as well as the following categories of program for academic staff:

York Certificate of Academic Practice (YCAP)

- The purposes of YCAP are:
- 1) To impart to participants teaching skills
- 2) To improve participants' research skills within their own disciplines
- 3) To assist participants in finding the optimum balance between the teaching, administration and research requirements of their job
- The purpose of York University's implementation of this course is to maintain its high ranking in terms of teaching staff evaluations, but the program has been designed in such a way as to also offer support for individual staff members' career formation.

Leadership and Academic Management Programme

- This program is aimed mainly at Heads of Departments and other senior staff with related interests, and has as its purposes the following:
- 1) The acquisition of a style of academic leadership suited to the participant
- 2) Understanding strategies, taking the role of a manager and introducing change
- 3) Demonstrating effective leadership through understanding key processes
- 4) Improved skills and understanding of academic leadership and management
- 5) Management of people and other resources

Recruitment of academic staff in the University of York

- A case of Hull York Medical School(HYMS) Clear explanation on;
- 1) Specialization and affiliation of post being recruited
- 2) Outline of HYMS
- 3) Explanation of the HYMS Curriculum
- 4) York University
- 5) Explanation of the Department of Health and Science
- 6) Post details, 7) Job description, 8) Salary, 9) Application method, 10) Deadline.

Promotion of Academic Staff at the University of York

- At York University, the promotion of all academic staff is done by a process of reports made by the Promotion Committee to the Senate and Council.
- Equal opportunities are emphasized in the process of promotion. Detailed regulations regarding promotion exist at each level, and are published on the internet .
- Heads of Department have an obligation to support lower level lecturers in their progress towards promotion, but staff are required to complete and submit documentation themselves to back up their application for promotion, for consideration by the Promotion Committee.
- The documentation process is handled by the Registrar.
- Budgetary restrictions can mean that some people who are recommended for promotion by the Promotion Committee are not able to be promoted at that time.

Comparison with Hirosaki University in HRM, and the tasks for incorporation

- 1. Comparison with Hirosaki University and Japan's national universities
- 2 . Tasks and perspectives for the incorporation of national universities

Study visits to foreign universities by Hirosaki University

- Hirosaki University has made study visits to US universities in March and September 2002, visiting firstly the University of California, Berkley, the University of California, San Diego, and San Diego State University, and in the second visit, Maine State University and Pittsburgh University, among others). We have learned much regarding the teaching, research and management of the universities through these visits.
- These visits enabled us to gain much in the way of suggestions and advice in regard to clarification of the University's mission, the need for speed and visibility in decision-making, assessment and promotion systems for staff, procuring external funding, and positive promotion and advertising activities, all of which are relevant to our considerations of the incorporation of Japan's universities. (For further details, please see Hirosaki University's 'Report of Visits to US Universities', issued in June 2003.)
- During our visits to the UK, we learned much of the differences between British and Japanese universities, but at the same time, found much to inspire us.
- Regional universities similar in scale and feel to Hirosaki make up a large proportion of Japan's national universities. For this reason, it is thought that the problems and issues faced at the moment by Hirosaki University are probably common to many of these universities.

1) Vitalization of the University and Effective Utilization of Human Resources

- The effective use of existing human resources, and the recruitment of new staff, is an important issue in increasing the vitality of a university. This is applicable not only to teaching staff, but also to non-academic staff.
- In regard to this area, UK universities are establishing Human Resources Management as one of the basic policies for their establishments, giving all staff opportunities for appropriate training, development and education, and supporting them in the acquisition of necessary skills. This was a particularly noteworthy feature.
- A particular example of this is the time spent in the systematic organization of training programs for new teaching staff and other programs facilitating staff to utilize their skills.
- Japanese universities do not have departments responsible for this work, and it is clear that this will be a problem in the future in terms of the effective utilization of current staff.

- The issue of whether national universities are capable of completely reorganizing the education and research aspects of their work into new operations, organizations and human resources systems, regardless of the outstanding problems this will leave to be solved in the research / teaching aspects of staff work in the future, is an extremely significant one.
- Examples of the many issues that need to be overcome within university administrative organizations are: the issue of who has authority for personnel decisions; staff recruitment and management appointment methods; the role of female staff; specializations of university employees; training of staff through interaction with other industries; and the maneuverability of university administration systems.

2) Clarification of University Mission and Staff Work Descriptions

- In any UK university, the University Mission, in other words, the objectives set by the university, is given priority, and other strategies and plans are instigated based on this. University Vice-Chancellors and the managing directors working under them have clear guidelines for executing authority and awareness of their own responsibilities. Each department or faculty also establishes its own policy based on the University's policies.
- In comparison with this, the policies of Japan's national universities have a tendency to be uniform and expressed in abstract terms. This reflects the reality that Japan's national universities have to date been considered as a single arm of the government (the Ministry of Education).
- In addition to this, staff at British universities have contracts with the university they work for based on the job description relevant to their post. Teaching staff are given details of the proportion of time they are expected to spend in teaching, research and management.
- In Japan, however, teaching staff are technically required to have teaching, research and management abilities, but no rules or systems are in place to evaluate achievements in these areas. It is extremely important for the future that we begin to put in place appropriate strategies for the evaluation of people by people, based on an understanding of the difficulties involved.

3) Details of various university reforms – restructuring and mergers

- Hirosaki University is currently engaged in discussion regarding the issue of the restructuring and merger of the three Universities in the Tohoku Region – Iwate, Akita and Hirosaki – and organized a ‘Discussion Forum’ for deputy principals, which has been meeting since last February. This Forum delivered its response on 27th February of this year, which proposed the progression of ‘strong partnerships’ for the time being. The specific outworking of this is now to be decided, but the implication is that it has been decided not to push for a single incorporation for the three Universities, but continue to search for a mutually beneficial solution to the issues facing the universities while focusing on strong partnership. The study visit to the UK enabled us to see the example of the joint establishment of a school of medicine by two universities, which provided an excellent reference point for the future direction of regional universities in Japan.
- In recent years, various significant changes have taken place within the Medical Schools of Japan’s national universities. The first of these is the transfer entry of graduate students. As of this academic year, the Hirosaki University Medical School intake of 100 students has been filled partly by 20 third year students transferring from other universities – the largest number of transferred students in Japan. The School is considering selecting all its students for the medical school from among transferred graduate students in the future.

4) The importance of a thorough assessment method for teaching staff

- The self-evaluation and self-declaration system implemented by Hirosaki University in relation to the reappointment of teaching staff demonstrates one potential method for staff taking responsibility for their own assessments.
- The assessment systems being introduced within British universities in regard to this point are worth investigating further for this reason.

5) Establishment of a sense of equal partnership and trust between academic and non-academic staff

- It will be necessary for academic and non-academic staff to work together like the wheels of a car in order to manage and operate our universities after incorporation. Significant differences can be seen, however, between the staffing systems of our national universities and those of the UK. Subsequent to our visit to the UK universities, we sent four staff members, including our administrative head, to the same universities. The purpose of this was to encourage both academic and non-academic staff to visit the same universities, and share an awareness of the issues and problems regarding the management and organization of the university.
- It is thought that it was not only the party visiting from Hirosaki University who felt the significant difference between the level of pride and enjoyment of one's work felt by people working in Universities in the UK and Japan. There is an obvious need for serious consideration of the staffing systems employed by Japanese national universities. Without this, it is difficult to see how the national universities will make the change into freer and more autonomous organizations after incorporation.

- The question must also be asked as to whether incorporation will bring about the necessary internal reforms. It is also necessary to ask whether the role of the board of directors and the operational structure is capable of functioning efficiently. The challenges of establishing boards of directors and staff organizational systems are still to be met, as is the organization of management systems for beyond incorporation.
- The universities we visited on this tour mentioned that they had faced extremely difficult problems of various types after incorporation.
- It will be vital for the future of our universities that we use the lessons learned by the UK in the process of incorporation, in order to trace a route for a similar process in Japan.