

**What is Human Resources**

**Drake University**

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What is Human Resources is a question that has been looked at in varying ways during the Drake EDL 288 course. Initially, upon taking this course and because of previous work experiences, I really thought of Human Resources as the guideline to provide an outline for hiring, teacher evaluations, termination or lay-offs, employee negotiations and employee law. Human Resources, is indeed all of those things, but more importantly it is about creating an atmosphere, a culture if you will, that people want to be a part of. A place where people love to work, and don't want to leave because they feel valued, respected and a place where their work matters. Laura Kacer, Superintendent of Johnston CSD, stated it well during our class on February 17<sup>th</sup>, "People are our most valuable asset and building trust with these people is essential in Human Resources." She went on to say that in building trust it is also critical to, "Hold people accountable in a dignified manner." I couldn't agree more.

The book, *Cases in HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT*, by David Kimball would echo this sentiment. The book is filled with examples from a variety of companies, and outlines in the beginning chapters about Costco and their organizational culture. Their former CEO, Jim Sinegal said, "When employees are happy, they are your very best ambassadors." (Kimball, 2017; p. 9). I would agree that this is especially true in school climate and culture. I have had the opportunity to work in schools that had positive climates and some that did not. Utilizing the role of Human Resources can support in the creation of school climates where employees feel valued, supported and happy.

Supported and happy employees are working in a place where the law and policies are being followed and are transparent. Knowing and following federal and state law and policies is

essential in today's school climate. This is critical in working with and in the training of school employees. Human Resources can and should support schools in keeping up with ever-changing state and at times federal law changes to be compliant. An example would be the recent changes in Title IX that were only guided through a "Dear Colleague" letter to a 2,500 Federal Law document. These laws and policies must be shared with employees and be easily found and visible in employee handbooks, board policies and shared with employees.

Dr. Remy, Superintendent of West Des Moines, shared some important strategies that she always sought to do in creating relationships with staff on a daily basis. The first was to be visible and available at the beginning and the close of every day. The second was to always answer people, especially parents, in a timely manner. Finally, when visiting staff be vulnerable and ask the important question, "What could we do better?" This is the essence of Human Resources. Connecting with people and striving to always do better, realizing that people are our most valuable asset.