

Last Thoughts on HR: From Problem Management to Corporate Priority:

The sum of what I have sketched out here does not constitute a revolution. Moreover, we have started down this road in the last year. It does, however, imply a much greater emphasis on the management of our human resources than we have given it in the past. The appointment of an ADM to take charge of HR is an important signal, but it is only the beginning.

I realize that the vision for our future that I am suggesting here will require a substantial investment, probably beyond our present means. What is essential to our future, however, is to act on the basis that a much greater expenditure of funds and effort on HR can be justified by DFAIT. We have only one product - the output of individual employees. Like in any corporation, our infrastructure costs go in support of the delivery of the product. Our expenditures on HR is that investment.

To manage that investment:

We should:

- **continue to encourage individuals to take significant responsibility for their careers and diminish the constraints placed on our internal labour "market";**
- **ensure that line managers spend more time and pay more attention to the recruitment and cultivation of their workforce;**
- **staff and resource the HR function adequately to ensure a service oriented approach including to career and succession planning, to ensure satisfying the needs of employees and the institution;**
- **expand central support systems for the management of our international and expert staff; and,**
- **make internal communications much more of a priority, starting at the top.**

Lastly, if we are to think boldly of the uniqueness of our institution, we might consider moving the Department to a special status within the government for purposes of H.R. Management - freeing us to adapt to the special challenges we face in managing diversity around the world.