



The Prime of the HRM

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I had no intention of going into government service at first. Although both my mother and grandmother used to be in the political arena, I wanted to become a doctor and took up BS Biology in UP Diliman. But because of financial constraints, this dream seemed far from reality.

In my last year in college, one of my professors tried to “force” us to take the Civil Service exam. Surprisingly, I passed with flying colours and this fuelled my motivation to see government service in a new and different light. After graduation, I applied for a government position. From the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) which brought me to far-flung provinces such as Zamboanga and Lucena, I transferred to the Civil Service Commission (CSC). Right now I am a Director II at the CSC, handling the Quezon City government field office as well as the UP

Field Office in the same city. Our programs are geared toward HR systems. I get involved with training, placement, and developmental human resources.

Studying with PAHRODF

In January 2013, I went to Australia to take up Masters in Human Resource Management at the University of Newcastle. Studying there helped me prepare for CSC’s vision, which is to be Asia’s leading centre for HRM Excellence in 2030. Definitely, it pays to study abroad because I was gaining new learnings and new ways of looking at things.

I struggled during my first few months though. Apart from the challenges in school, which required me to submit at least four assessment papers per subject, it was more about acclimatizing myself and adapting to a whole new world. In Australia, I had a lot of time in my hands, given that I only went to school for three hours a week unlike going to the Office here as early as 6AM – every day. In other words, I was trying to find some resemblance to what I used to do. Gradually, I learned that the key was to find a new routine. So I did a lot of volunteer work for the Ronald McDonald house, which allowed me to take care of, and bring back to health, sick and ailing children.

After three months, I finally got the hang of it. I embraced my new lifestyle and my new routine – and the realization that Australia is one big continent. I took opportunities to travel from one city to another during vacation and semester breaks, which allowed me to see exciting and enthralling new sights and sounds as well as experience the culture. My studies ended in December 2013 and I finished with a distinction.

The Beauty of the Prime-HRM

Upon my return home, I immediately went to action. In just two months, I was able to implement the Program to Institutionalise Meritocracy and Excellence in Human Resource Management (PRIME-HRM), a mechanism that empowers government agencies by improving their human resource management competencies, systems, and practices geared towards HR excellence. One of our first clients was the Department of Education (DepEd) which, of course,

was expected to deliver teachers who are of high calibre and quality. While we were working towards this new development at the CSC, PAHRODF was also working double time in funding some DepEd programs. In some cases, we also met with superintendents and officials of the schools to point out things that are still needed to be done. It was encouraging to see them taking an active and efficient role in coming up with plans to address those problems.

Aside from funding some programs that actually conceptualized and crafted some systems that we needed to do in my Re-entry Action Plan (REAP), PAHRODF worked hand in hand with the Prime HRM as we served to assess the level of maturity of the agencies in terms of recruitment selection, performance management, learning and development, awards, and recognition. This is critical because, at the entry level, our recruits in the government should already meet a certain standard. We are eyeing quality hires; plus the people who are involved are the ones taking the initiative.

Another measure we implemented is what we call “Conversations” where we opened our doors at CSC to teachers and superintendents. If they have problems, they can come to us any time and we can approach them any time as well. We set meetings and I do HR coaching whenever they set schedules. This is the essence of Civil Service.

When it comes to awards and recognitions, we also offer scholarships to the employees and their families, provide financial assistance, and give some praise awards. If they get an outstanding rating, we increase their pay to further motivate them. Interestingly, because of these programs, some teachers from the private sector have already expressed interest to transfer to government service. In the near future, we hope to further grant deserving people with a Seal of Excellence to acknowledge their transformation from a transactional role to a strategic one.

All of these programs continue to inspire me to make a difference in this world. I get really motivated to do well because it's about governance and a productive work force. In the end, investing in people will keep them in the service for a long time and develop them as well.

Success, after all, is about knowing what you do and doing it well. See to it that you empower yourself by continuously learning and thinking out of the box. Don't get discouraged by limitations. Instead, embrace what is new to see what, and how, you'll benefit from the system. Moreover, try to find inspiration as well as mentors from those around you.

Jocelyn Deco finished her Masters in Human Resource Management at the University of Newcastle in 2013. Her REAP was all about process review & improvement, capacity building and institutionalization of PRIME HRM in five DEPED agencies.