

## Book Review

### **EMPLOYEE RELATIONS MANAGEMENT by P.N. Singh & Neeraj Kumar, Kindersley (India) Pvt. Ltd, 2011, Paperback, pp 420, Rs. 365**

Employee Relations Management by P N Singh and Neeraj Kumar is a book of value for the students and the professionals in the Human Resource field. In the wake of globalization and liberalization, Indian economy has become more competitive. The demographics of the Indian employees have changed and the level of education and awareness through media including social networking sites has altered the way one looked upon and managed the human capital. This book provides an insight in to the paradigm shift observed in 21<sup>st</sup> century from looking at traditional industrial relations as moving from conflict resolution to collaborative partnership and then to employee relations management.

The book reveals the expertise of the authors as professionals and academicians in their dealing with the subject of Industrial Relations and establishing systems and procedures for handling employee relations concepts in today's scenario. Having spent several decades in industry and academia, they realized the need for a book for practicing and aspiring HR managers to be able to correlate concepts and theory of Industrial Relations with prevalent industrial practices.

The reader's journey will start from evolution and growth of Industrial Relations and trade unions in India and a comparative background with the major industrialized economies. Later on it deals with the transition of the Industrial Relations to employee relations with today's perspective. The book gives an elaborative analysis about various labour legislations and institutional framework for preventive measures and settlement of industrial disputes. The book ends by discussing the essential skills for human resource professionals for managing employee relations. The book has integrated several pedagogical features to cultivate the ability to question, correlate and investigate events from the real world in each chapter.

Part I deals with Industrial Relations in India wherein the backdrop is provided to the readers with the different approaches to study Industrial Relations. The concept of trade unionism, its phases and growth in India have been penned down. A comparative study with different major industrialized economies provides the reader to critically comprehend the Indian scenario with global trends. Intensive focus on policies of other industrialized economies and impact of international labour organizations on India

could have enriched the readers focus to manage employee relations in multinationals.

Differences in the perspective of Industrial Relations and employee relations have been discussed in Part II. A strategic framework for employee relations in the context of organizational behaviour and development has been provided with an overview about the role that a manager plays in employee relations.

A study of Industrial Relations is incomplete without understanding the applicability of various labour legislations enacted by the state. Part III deals with important legislations on social security, working conditions, wages and bonus. The big picture about industrial disputes causes and forms of industrial actions adopted by the employees have been discussed at length. The different trends in industrial disputes and the machinery available for resolution under the Industrial Disputes Act 1947 have been laid down through two chapters. The concept of collective bargaining which is widely operative across the globe to improve employee relations has not found enough emphasis in this book. The book discusses the recommendations of the

Second National Commission of Labour and hence, provides the reader an insight in to the much needed revision in labour laws in the changing context of the growing economy. Two chapters focus on administrative issues dealt by a professional on a routine basis.

Part IV of the book briefs about the soft skills needed for HR professionals with special emphasis on negotiation as a methodology to resolve industrial conflicts.

The book uses lucid and student friendly text with chapter objectives, opening cases, margins for definitions and important notes and relevant content for class discussions. Each chapter ends with questions that require critical thinking, debate topics and appropriate cases for analysis to provoke the readers to understand and appreciate various aspects of Industrial Relations.

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