Instructor's Resource Guide

to accompany

Human Resource Management, 9th edition

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Chapter 3
Human resource information systems

In-chapter Questions

Newsbreak

You are what you Facebook 'like'

As a class, critically discuss the article and its implications for HRM, employees and you personally.

Answers will vary and should generate some interesting discussion from personal perspectives. The complexity of the issue is trying to create a happy, inclusive workplace, but knowing where the line between personal and work life is likely to be different for each employee. Issues surrounding privacy will continue to intensify in the future, especially regarding employers checking job applicants' social media accounts like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

End of Chapter Questions

Review questions

1. *What are the benefits of HRIS to (a) the organisation, (b) the HR department, and (c) the individual employee?*

    A HRIS involves the use of computers to systematically generate relevant and timely information for the making of HRM decisions. Its primary purpose is to assist both the HR manager and line managers in decision making. Thus, a HRIS must generate information that is accurate, timely and related to the achievement of the organisation's strategic business objectives. HRIS can assist organisations in forecasting, succession planning, and career planning and development.

    The importance of analysing HRM needs must be stressed because each organisation will want to use its data in different ways. Some uses of HRIS include the management of personnel records, HR planning, recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, training and development, career planning and development, compensation and benefits, health and safety and industrial relations.

    HRIS, if used correctly, can provide a powerful competitive edge. As HR managers further assume the role of business partners with their line counterparts, the need to improve HRM productivity, planning and decision support services increases. The ability to analyse, to estimate costs, savings or benefits, and to determine and examine trends becomes vital if HRM is to become a value-adding function. 'There is no doubt,' says Dr Peter Salmon of Salmon Cybernetics, 'that HR systems when viewed as information systems rather than administrative systems can contribute significantly to the corporate mission.' The message is obvious: 'the focus of HR systems must be on the corporate

business objectives, not simply the HR department's administrative problems.' Thus, HRIS is much more than a computerised record of employee information. It is an integrated approach to acquiring, storing, analysing and controlling the flow of HR information throughout an organisation. It provides the necessary data for the planning activities such as forecasting, succession planning and career planning and development. The major benefit of HRIS is the accurate and timely access to diverse data that it provides to the HR manager and top management. In conducting HR planning, it is valuable (and simple) to examine various 'what if' scenarios or simulations to test out different strategic alternatives. 'This is particularly important,' say Hall and Goodale, 'in large, decentralised organisations, where manual data collection would be almost impossible.' Once again, it must be emphasised that if the HRIS is not related to the organisation's strategic business and HR objectives, there will be little or no return. However, by applying HRIS technology appropriately, HRM can facilitate its transition from a reactive administrative role to that of a proactive strategic business partner.

2. *What should be the minimum capabilities of a HRIS?*

   At a minimum a HRIS should:
   - do what it was intended to;
   - include sufficient flexibility to address changing needs;
   - have sufficient security built into the system;
   - have ease of use;
   - have regular maintenance/upgrading;
   - include training and support availability.

3. *Why have many HR managers faced serious problems when introducing or upgrading their HRIS?*

   Many HR managers face problems when introducing or upgrading their HRIS because of lack of understanding. For HRIS to be introduced and used successfully it is essential that HR has the support and cooperation of top management and all employees that will need to access the system. An understanding of the requirements and capabilities of the system, technology, costs, and need for flexibility and adaptability are needed. A good relationship and level of communication between departments is also necessary to ensure that everyone's needs are being catered for.

4. *What should be done to maintain the security of an organisation's HRIS?*

   HR data are typically confidential and sensitive. Consequently, a key concern with HRIS is the potential for the invasion (and abuse) of employee privacy by both authorised and unauthorised personnel. It is important for ensuring employee and management confidence in a HRIS to thoroughly explore questions about user access, data accuracy, data disclosure, employee rights of inspection and security. Failure to do so may result in ethical, legal and employee relations problems of a magnitude which could destroy the credibility of the system. 'Establishing security and end user privileges,' says O'Connell, 'calls for a balance of incorporating HR policy, system knowledge and day to day operations.'

The HRIS security checklist:

- Review all PC-based HR applications.
- Verify that all users are properly trained in the secure use and handling of equipment, data and software.
- Ensure that all users sign-off (log-off) before they leave the PC unattended, regardless of how long they intend to be away.
- Caution users not to give or share their password with anyone. Each user should be accountable for everything done with his or her ID and password.
- Recommend a change of password on a monthly or quarterly basis.
- Caution users against duplicating not only copyrighted programs purchased from vendors, but also programs and data that are proprietary to the company. Copies should be made only to provide necessary backup.
- Ensure that all software acquired from sources other than vendors are run through a virus detection program prior to installing on your system.
- Consider the feasibility of separating the duties of the users (i.e. assigning the tasks of inputting data, balancing control totals, etc., to different people) to achieve and maintain confidentiality. Keep in mind, the separation of some duties may cause users to lose the continuity of the entire task. Look at the whole function and how it relates to others in the department before separating duties.
- Review who will use the PCs and where their equipment will be located.
- Ensure that current and backup copies, data files, software, and printouts are properly controlled so that only authorised users can obtain them.
- Conduct reviews, scheduled and unscheduled, to ensure that an effective level of security is being maintained by PC users. Staff members who use PCs in their work must be responsible for ensuring that practices and administrative procedures adhere to security.

5. *How would you evaluate an organisation's HRIS?*

For the HRIS to add value to the organisation, the data generated must be timely and accurate. To evaluate an organisation's HRIS, the manager should ask the following questions:

- Is the time spent on entering data justified by the accuracy, timeliness and value of the information generated?
- Is the HRIS response time appropriate?
- Is the HRIS integrated with the payroll system?
- Is the HRIS able to generate answers to specific HR questions?
- Is the HRIS able to generate ad hoc, on-request reports as well as regular detailed reports?
- Is the cost of the HRIS outweighed by its benefits?

6. *What is cloud computing? What is big data? What implications do they have for HRM?*

Cloud computing allows organisations to access software via the internet, without owning it or the hardware it runs on. It offers lower costs and flexibility, but requires careful planning and consideration of what materials are located on it (e.g. security issues).

Big data is a term for data sets that are so large or complex that traditional data processing applications are inadequate. These large volume data sets can be either structured or unstructured in nature and inevitably inundate a business on a day-to-day basis. Organisations need to determine what to do with these large data sets. HR managers can use/exploit big data analytics to determine and more accurately predict patterns of behaviour and predict the likelihood of future events. Further, big data analytics can help facilitate employee engagement, organisation performance, and strategy development as well as to make evidence-based decisions on the likely rate of inflation, the probable demand for labour, the likely cultural fit of a job applicant, and the probability that an employee will have an accident or be a drug addict.

7. *What is the difference between the internet and an intranet?*

> **Internet** – A global network of electronic information sources. It enables people to send e-mail, access reference materials, share documents electronically, and send computer software directly from one computer to another.

> **Intranet** – A network of computers that enables employees within an organisation to communicate with each other.

8. *How does HRIS help HR managers to make better decisions?*

Because the HRIS now makes timely and accurate information more readily available, HR managers are better informed and able to respond more quickly when decisions are necessary. The quality of decisions is better because of the easy access to a broader range of information through, for example, collated reports. At a glance, they can find out details about staff turnover, individual or department performance, training requirements, and the like.

9. *What are the basic steps to consider in developing and implementing a HRIS?*

A number of issues must be considered before deciding on a final design and developing and implementing a HRIS. The section 'Computerising the HR department: the decision-making process' outlines a series of issues or steps that should be followed.

10. *What types of employee information should/should not be stored in an organisation's HRIS?*

The HRIS is used to assist in planning, decision making identifying historical trends, and so on, but it is primarily used for processing, manipulating and reporting HR information. To do this, it needs to store a great deal of information about individual employees,

departments, work units, performance, costs, training and future needs. At a minimum, a HRIS would need to store the information listed in Figure 3.3 (p. 114-5).

Environmental influences

Identify and discuss the key environmental influences from the model (see figure 3.9) that have significance for HRIS

Figure 3.9 provides an insight into the impact of the external environment on the HRIS function in organisations. The HR manager must identify those external influences that will impact on the organisation and the management of its human resources. Some of the major influences existing outside of the organisation that may influence decisions relating to HRIS include:

- *Legal*. Laws and regulations regarding the keeping of employment and personal records. This includes personal details, hours of work, holidays, equal employment, affirmative action, sexual harassment, workers' compensation, health and safety, fringe benefits and terminations, which all impact on HRIS design and data collection and maintenance.

- *Environmental*. Government and community concern these issues — such as privacy, and confidentiality – directly or indirectly affects HRIS design and management.

- *Cultural*. Historical background, ideologies, values, norms and language all influence employee views on the role of HRM, and how people perceive the use of data stored on the HRIS.

- *Demographic*. The nature of human resources available to the organisation in terms of numbers, geographical distribution, age, sex, literacy, skill and education levels of the population has an obvious impact on HRM. Labour shortages and the declining quality of local graduates in Hong Kong, for example, have spurred organisations to automate, dramatically increase compensation and benefits, and intensify their recruiting efforts overseas. Data stored on the HRIMS can help HR managers to plan for such shortages and to minimise their impact.

- *Social*. Changing values and attitudes towards issues associated with HRIS and its use affect every aspect of HRM. Changing values and attitudes typically create new challenges for the HR manager.

- *Business*. The degree of competition, industry size, takeover and merger activity, industry characteristics, the nature of customers and suppliers, the nature of shareholders and levels of activism and entry into foreign markets are some of the factors which influence the acquisition, development, reward and motivation, maintenance and departure of an organisation's human resources. The type of business, its goals and competition have some influence over what information is available on the HRIS and how it can be used.

- *Economic*. Such factors as the level of economic activity, the unemployment rate, public versus private ownership, the level of investment, the availability of credit, the degree of centralised economic planning, the amount of debt and the level and type of taxes directly

and indirectly influence recruitment, selection, compensation and benefits, industrial relations, retrenchments and labour turnover. These can all be addressed through the use of HRIMS by making information readily available and providing management with advanced notice of some changes.

- *Industrial relations*. Factors relating to privacy and confidentiality will be particularly important, and unions will want to ensure that these issues have been adequately addressed.

Ethical dilemmas

Because these are ethical dilemmas, it would be foolhardy to propose clear-cut answers to the questions raised. There are however clear legal and HR issues that should be addressed.

The cheating marketing manager

1. *What ethical, legal and HRM issues are raised in this case?*

- Ethical: Traditionally, issues of a more personal nature, such as an employee's marriage, are not something that an organisation involves itself in. However, in this case, the organisation has become involved and is forced to take action. This extends to Angelo, the employees identified in the email (Connie O'Brien, Teresa Wong, and Sophia Engholm), and Angelo's wife. An organisation is not legally obliged to become involved, but it is desired (and perhaps even expected) due to the large-scale reach of the email.
- Legal: Connie O'Brien, Teresa Wong, and Sophia Engholm could sue (the firm and/or Angelo/Angelo's wife) for defamation (the action of damaging the good reputation of someone) based on the claims that have been made against them. Further, as Angelo's wife has accessed his personal email account, the confidentiality, security, and privacy of Angelo's colleagues and clients have been breached. This will need to be investigated to see whether any legal action will need to be taken.
- HRM: Human resource management issues involve the allegations of inappropriate relationships in the workplace. This may involve educating members of staff about such relationships and counselling of affected employees. Further, the trust and respect by senior management may need to be re-established as a result of the nature of the emails. Lastly, an investigation may need to be undertaken regarding the alleged conduct of Angelo. This may result in re-training/education or a form of punishment like a demotion or his employment being terminated.

2. *If you were Penny Dale, HR manager, what recommendations would you make to your CEO on how best to deal with the situation?*

Penny Dale needs to ensure that the situation is dealt with professionally as the incident involves multiple parties, including Angelo, Connie O'Brien, Teresa Wong, Sophia Engholm, as well as every senior manager at Oz Electronics.

Recommendations (to the CEO) include:

1. Investigation: undertake an investigation and speak to the people mentioned in the email (Angelo, Connie, Teresa, and Sophia) as well as to Angelo's wife to determine the validity of the claims.
2. IT department: work with the IT department to determine whether there were breaches to the confidentiality and privacy of Oz Electronics' clients. Ensure that other staff members' accounts have not been accessed and upgrade security/change passwords.
3. Legal department: speak to the legal department to determine what options are available to the firm regarding the people involved in the email (education/retraining; demotion; employment terminated etc.) as well as the extent of the privacy breach and the (possible) reactions by clients.
4. Education: retrain affected staff members regarding appropriate workplace conduct, emphasising the appropriate forms of relationships.
5. Termination: (if appropriate, following the results of the investigation and discussion with the legal department as well ensuring that the decision is in line with appropriate legalisation) recommend terminating the employment of Angelo.

3. *Identify all the major stakeholders involved in this case and, as a class, discuss their likely reactions and how you would deal with them.*

- Senior management (including, Penny Dale, HR manager; Harry Bentham, CEO; and others who received the emails) would be feeling annoyance and exasperation due to being involved in what, up until that point, had been a personal matter. Senior management will need to be assured that this is an isolated incident and that the matter (and affected individuals) has been dealt with appropriately.
- Affected employees (including Angel, Connie O'Brien, Teresa Wong, and Sophia Engholm) would be feeling embarrassment, shock, and anger at being identified in the emails. These employees should be dealt with in a sensitive manner using a number of techniques including counselling, education, and training. Termination of employment should only be used if these techniques are have not worked and/or the results of the investigation has indicated gross violations in trust and inappropriate conduct.
- Angelo's wife would be feeling anger, shame, and retribution regarding what her husband allegedly has done. Whilst Angelo's wife is not a member of staff, Oz Electronics may offer her counselling services to ensure that she is appropriately looked after during this difficult time.

Ok to Google Glass in the office?

1. *As a class discuss the pros and cons of using Google glasses in:*
   (a) the workplace
   (b) social situations.

   PROS:
   a) The workplace: employees will most likely experience more creativity and innovation with problem-solving and ideas when using the device; when used correctly, employees should also experience increased levels of productivity with work-related tasks; employees will also be able to be more versatile with how and where they work which will increase workplace flexibility.

b) Social situations: individuals will experience fun and enjoyment from using the device around friends and family; it will enable taking photos and videos as well as sharing these moments with their friends and family via their mobile phones and/or social media quick and easy.

CONS:
a) The workplace: difficulties around controlling privacy and confidentiality as managers would find it difficult to monitor/track what their employees are doing with the device/what they are looking at; there will be issues, particularly at the beginning as the new technology is rolled out, regarding productivity of employees as the interruptions of email, phone, and message notifications coming through on the device may distract the employee from his or her task; the cost of the purchase, roll out, and training of the devices will be high; it may make it harder for employees to 'switch off' from work if the notifications (phone/message/email) are constantly being flashed in front of their eyes
b) Social situations: individuals may feel that their privacy and confidentiality is threatened due to others potentially taking photos/videos without their knowledge; individuals may be 'taken out of the moment' when in social situations by constantly using their device (similar to individuals constantly being on their mobile phones).

2. *What are the HR implications of employees wearing Google glasses?*

- Privacy and confidentiality: this is a new form of technology. No precedent or model exists regarding the appropriate use of the glasses. What is designated as a 'work-related task' maybe blurred/unclear as the firm and its employee begin to use the glasses. Therefore, employees may have their privacy breached if other employees are recording them (even innocently or 'for fun') without them being aware of this occurring. Employees wouldn't stand around recording another employee with their mobile phone and/or video camera due to fear of being caught, however, they may feel that they can 'get away' with using the glasses to do the same thing.
- Monitoring productivity: it may be difficult to monitor the productivity of the employee who is using the glasses. The firm may not be able to track or monitor what the employee is doing whilst wearing the glasses and whether wearing them is actually contributing to workplace productivity.
- Cost: investment in such technology should not be rushed. Cost per employee for each pair of glasses is very high. Employers will need to ensure that the individuals who are receiving these glasses are trained in how to use them as well as keeping track of the productivity of each employee that are using them.
- Safety: the firm needs to ensure that the employee is paying attention to his/her surroundings when using the glasses. This is similar to being self-aware when an employee is using their mobile phone.

Exercise

Form into groups of four to six. Imagine you have been asked by the HR manager to draft a policy regarding Google glasses, for consideration by the Board of Directors.

Students are encouraged to use the information above regarding the HR implications of employees wearing Google glasses when drafting their policy. These include issues around privacy and confidentiality, productivity, cost, and safety.

Students should also consider relevant legislation such as the *Fair Work Act 2009* and the *Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)* as well as any relevant State based legalisation for issues like workplace privacy and confidentiality; the *Fair Work Act 2009* for expectations about productivity; and the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* for issues around workplace safety.

Too hot to handle

1. *Is this just a case of harmless fun in the workplace or does it represent something more serious? If you were the HR manager, how would you handle the situation?*

   Regardless of whether this was a case of 'harmless fun' or not, the actions of these two staff members (Brendon Smith and Dustin James) was inappropriate. The temptation in this case, since the two staff members are described as "major profit generators" for the firm, is for Oz Bank to ignore or downplay the email and the affect that it had on the staff members identified in the email.

   The HR manager needs to ensure that he or she considers existing workplace protocol as well as relevant legislation before making any decision. Ways to handle the situation include undertaking an investigation into the email and the impact that it had on the firm, re-training the offending staff members, counselling the affected staff members, addressing workplace culture issues that may have encouraged (or at the very least not 'frowned upon') such discriminatory activities, demoting/punishing/terminating the offending staff members.

<u>**Exercises**</u>

1. *In small groups of four to six, discuss the HR, legal and public relations issues relevant to this case.*

   - HR: some HR issues that will arise from this incident will be around training and compliance (e.g. do proper codes of conduct exist to educate employees about sexual harassment and discrimination?); assessing risks that may impact the health, safety, or welfare of employees, including managing mental health concerns (e.g. are systems in place to counsel individuals that may be experiencing mental health issues as a result of the email being circulated?); having mechanisms to deal with discrimination concerns (e.g. is there a system in place for an employee to lodge a complaint/have their concerns listened to if he or she feels that they have experienced discrimination/harassment?); having a system in place to discipline an employee who has performed unsatisfactorily (e.g. keeping accurate records of any disciplinary issue, to ensure that the issue is dealt with properly; including minutes of meetings, letters between employer, employee, and trade union representatives, and any follow-up activities that need to be undertaken).
   - Legal: the *Sex Discrimination Act 1984* (Cth) makes it against the law to treat someone unfairly because of his or her sex as well making sexual harassment against the law. Female members of staff may feel that they have been sexually harassed due to the sexually suggestive comments contained in the 'Hotness Ratings' email. These

staff members may take a number of steps to resolve this issue including: raising the issue directly with the harasser and telling them that their behaviour is unwelcome; talking to a union delegate; contacting a solicitor for legal advice; contacting an online or phoning a counselling service for more information and referrals; complaining to their manager/employer; or contacting the Australian Rights Commission or state and federal anti-discrimination agencies for information or to take a complaint.

- Public relations: there will be a need to initiate effective internal and external PR strategies as a result of what has occurred. In the modern workplace, 'PR disasters' like the one experienced here will most likely be forwarded onto other colleagues in the firm as well as forwarded via email to other people (including news sites) or posted onto social media (Facebook, Twitter etc) for others to like, share, and comment on. It is becoming increasingly difficult to self contain incidents like this one. The PR department will need to respond to this issue very carefully and work hard to gain the respect and trust back from its employees and other stakeholder groups.

2. *Prepare an action plan outlying the steps to be taken to deal with the situation.*

An action plan is a detailed plan outlining actions needed to reach one or more goals. In order to be successful an action plan needs to have ownership, meaning having one person who is responsible and accountable for keeping track of the progress of the goals (this might be Kim Donovan, vice-president of HR); clear and actionable steps to get to the desired goal; assigning one member of staff to be responsible for the tasks to be undertaken for each step; supporting that person by assigning multiple people to assist with completing the relevant tasks and objectives for that step; keeping the right people informed for each action in order to assess the state of progress of the objectives; setting milestone dates for each action step; and having a final completion date for achieving the end goal.

In this case, the HR team will need to engage in a number of steps in order to deal with this situation, including undertaking an investigation regarding the email and the staff members involved in crafting the email; consider steps around training/re-training staff members about effective workplace conduct and sexual harassment/discrimination; counsel and look after employees who were affected by the contents of the email; take disciplinary/corrective action regarding those employees involved in crafting and sending the email.

Students are encouraged to model their action plan after best practice examples found online. There is no 'model answer' and students are encouraged to use the information above to help them construct a suitable action plan that balances the needs of multiple stakeholders.

Case studies

Mistaken communication

1. *What would you do if you were:*
   (a) *Jake*

Jake's understandable (and natural) reaction will be shock, embarrassment, and (potentially) anger. Jake may go and speak to Oscar/Angelia/Colleen to confirm whether this is correct and to try and understand why this has occurred. Jake may also speak to other people 'in the know' to confirm whether this information is correct. Further, Jake may use this information as leverage with his employer to negotiate a higher severance package.

(b) CEO Oscar Treyvaud

(c) Jake's boss Angelia Wyatt

(d) HR manager Colleen Albright?

The other parties to this dilemma may act in a similar manner: shock and embarrassment that this information was leaked as well as anger directed at the relevant party who leaked the information. As the details of the case are minimal, we do not have any knowledge as to why Jake is being terminated. Oscar/Angelia/Colleen may feel sympathy towards Jake if the circumstances of Jake's termination are related to something outside of the firm's control like a recession. However, Oscar/Angelia/Colleen may not experience such emotions if Jake is being terminated due to poor workplace performance.

2. *What ethical HR and legal issues does this case raise?*

    *   HR issues: the process of how Jake obtained the leaked termination and severance package information needs to be investigated to ensure that workplace privacy and confidentiality for all employees is preserved. Further, the firm needs to examine its workplace performance management system to ensure that performance management policies, performance objectives and standards, performance appraisal processes, management of underperformance and discipline, and reward and remuneration strategies exist, are effective, communicated, and are transparent to all employees.
    *   Legal issues: Jake may apply for unfair dismissal if he feels that he is being dismissed from his job in a harsh, unjust, or unreasonable manner. The Fair Work Commission decides unfair dismissal applications. However, as there is such limited information available on the circumstances surrounding Jake's termination, it is difficult to form a clear conclusion regarding Jake's potential future actions.

Social media 101

1. *What ethical, legal and HRM considerations are raised in this case?*

    *   Ethical considerations: the Golden Rule or the law of reciprocity (the principle of treating others as one would wish to be treated oneself) should be employed here. There would be a tendency to make snap decisions that would demonstrate low emotional intelligence (e.g. making mean, retaliatory comments towards Britney Lee either face-to-face, on social media, or via email) based on the statements that Lee has made about Patrick O'Brien, Catherine Moore, James Cody, and Maria Spinelli.

- Legal considerations: the individuals personally named and shamed in Lee's post may consider suing her for defamation (the action of damaging the good reputation of someone) based on the claims that have been made against them. Lee's defamatory comments reveal employee misconduct and damage the firm's business reputation. In order to be considered as defamatory, the *Defamation Act 2005* requires an individual to demonstrate some of the following elements to have occurred: the material must have been communicated to at least one other person, the material must be defamatory, or the person claiming to have been defamed must be identifiable. Lee's employment will potentially be terminated. Here, the *Fair Work Act 2009* needs to be considered when terminating employment including establishing rules as to whether the termination of the employment was unlawful or unfair, what entitlements an employee is owed at the end of their employment, and what must be done when an employee is dismissed because of redundancy.
- HRM considerations: the HR department will need to consider training/re-training Lee and its employees regarding social media/communications etiquette and/or taking corrective action against Lee. Corrective action may involve termination of Lee's employment with the firm.

2. *Is it reasonable for organisations to access an applicant's (or an employee's) social media sites?*

Increasingly, employers are accessing or checking an applicant's (or an employee's) social media sites. This can occur during the recruitment stage (to assess suitability for the role), during employment (as employers are being held liable for conduct of its employees), and during termination of employment (as a result of defamatory comments or employees engaging in excess use of social media during working hours).

This is a subjective question. Some people may argue that their social media posts are, in a way, personal and are therefore not subject to scrutiny by their employer, regardless of what the individual says online. In this case the accessing of an applicant's/employee's social media accounts is completely unacceptable, regardless of whether this takes place without the applicant/employee knowing or whether it is done in front of the applicant/employee (e.g. by asking the employee to log-in to their account). Others may argue that as long as the individual does not write defamatory comments about the firm or its employees then the individual is entitled to post/like/support whatever they like. Still others may argue that the employer does in fact have the right to access the individual's social media sites in order to check that the individual's values are in line with the employer's and/or to ensure that the applicant/employee is the right fit for the firm.

3. *If you were CK Wong, would you have informed Maria Spinelli of your findings? Explain your answer.*

CK Wong did the right thing in informing Maria Spinelli of Lee's comments. As hard as it would have been to have read what Lee had written, Spinelli had the right to know of the defamatory comments.

4. *If you were Maria Spinelli, what would you do now? Justify your proposed actions.*

Spinelli has a number of options available to her regarding her actions towards Lee. Ideally, Spinelli will act appropriately and demonstrate high emotional intelligence, even

though she is angry and disappointed with Lee's comments. Spinelli should first seek to raise the issues with Lee to better understand why she made such comments. These comments may have been made during a time when Lee was herself very angry and/or emotional and may not be the way in fact she feels about her superiors/Ace International. Regardless of how she was feeling at the time, the comments that Lee made were extremely unprofessional and corrective action needs to be taken. First, Spinelli may need to explain to Lee the etiquette regarding online communications, including the appropriate use of social media, even though the comments weren't made via official organisational channels. Second, Spinelli may determine that Lee needs to be trained and performance managed in order to ensure that this does not happen again in the future. This training may need to be made available for all employees in the organisation. Third, Spinelli may determine that the most appropriate corrective action is that Lee is punished and her employment is terminated.