

Humanitarian HR Online Network (HHR Online) Community Guidelines

(Formally EPN online)

Updated September 2009

NB: the email address for HHR online discussion forum will continue to start with “epn” until we move platforms.

GENERAL

Purpose

Humanitarian HR online; HHR online (formally EPN online) is an informal network of humanitarian organisations run by People In Aid which exists to improve the ability of participating organisations, both individually and as a community, to find, select, prepare and retain personnel for emergency operations. Participants are mostly Human Resources managers in humanitarian organisations worldwide.

Topics covered by HHR online have included:

- Cultural diversity
- Effective decision-making
- Safety and security of field staff on relief missions
- Finding and developing good field managers for relief assignments
- Good HR management for nationally recruited staff
- Management development for emergencies
- Proactive Human Resource planning for emergencies
- Professionalism – the role of human resources

The HHR group aims to extend the network, enabling participants to share ideas and experiences, ask for assistance and share information to improve the people management practices in their organisations and in the humanitarian sector,

Membership

Membership of HHR online network is open to Human Resources managers and others with responsibility for people management in humanitarian organisations, at HQ level and in field offices. Anyone else wishing to join the network should write first to epn@peopleinaid.org and describe their particular reasons.

Sending a message

You may send a message to all members of the network by emailing epn@dgroups.org. The discussion group only accepts messages from members of the group so please do not write until after you have joined.

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Reply to all

If you respond to a message received via HHR online, your response will go to all members. This reflects the intent of encouraging dialogue among all group members, rather than having private, bilateral exchanges between just two members. If you wish to respond privately to a message you may do so by addressing your email only to the original sender rather than to the entire group.

Meaningful subject lines

When writing to the group please also include a concise and meaningful subject line. It is OK to keep the original subject line if you are responding to a message but you should also change the subject line if you are changing topic. Using good subject lines can increase the effectiveness of your message by helping other members to quickly identify what it is about. It can also increase the likelihood of receiving a timely response

- Always preface the subject with HR JOB, when posting a vacancy
- Start with TRAINING when posting about a any capacity building
- Start with RESOURCE when you are posting a helpful HR resource

Introducing yourself

Once you have joined the online network, please send a short message introducing yourself to other members. Mention your role, which organisation you work for and which country you work in. If you wish, also comment on a recent achievement and/or a current challenge that you are facing in relation to finding, selecting, preparing and retaining humanitarian personnel.

Types of messages on the mailing list

The primary purpose of the online group is to promote dialogue and discussion on human resource practice and people management. Network members are also welcome to post short messages pertaining to:

- Events about humanitarian staffing that are being organised or suggested, including those with fees
- Web links, books or articles about humanitarian staffing topics written by members or others
- HR job announcements in humanitarian organisations, where applications are open to international candidates. Vacancies should be for HR, Training and Capacity Building.

If you are struggling to fill a difficult post which is not HR related, then please do ask colleagues for support and suggestions. What qualities should be essential? Where are good places to find candidates?

Jobs announcements that are not related to HR management in humanitarian organisations can use a large variety of other websites listed in the People In Aid [International Recruitment Resource sheet](#)

The following postings are discouraged by HHR

- Invitations to join social networking sites
- Postings of a purely commercial nature (e.g., ads for commercial software or systems)
- Postings containing political messages. The HHR discussion forum is not to be used as a political platform or to transmit political messages.
- Spam or repeat postings of the same content over a short period of time.
- Service adverts or job requests.

Contributions in languages other than English

Postings can be submitted in languages other than English but translations will not be systematically offered. Other members may be willing to volunteer their linguistic abilities to assist in translation but we cannot guarantee that it can be done for each message and each language.

Archive

There is an online archive of all messages sent to the HHR discussion forum group at www.dgroups.org/groups/EPN

WAYS TO PROMOTE DIALOGUE

Message tone and personal references

Please ...

- Keep your messages collegial and respectful. This is not to discourage critical thinking or disagreement. Diverse perspectives are welcomed and encouraged. We are more likely to learn from people who disagree with us than from other people, but friendly dialogue about disagreements is an art we all need to cultivate.
- Support your ideas with data and examples.
- Use questions and active, careful reading which can be useful in gaining understanding in a text-based environment.
- Pay attention so that discussions that could turn into disagreements do not veer into making the debate a personal one (i.e., where members personalize the disagreement). If you see this happening, try and help focus on the content, not the person. Otherwise, the members will be asked to take their disagreement off-list.
- Be sensitive to the fact that our diversity may also mean we have different levels of sensitivity.
- Because we are a global network, consider how your words might be interpreted by people from any corner of the globe.

Light moderation

The HHR online network is facilitated and all messages are lightly moderated by facilitators. From time to time the facilitator may reject postings if there is an excessive number of off-topic or inappropriate messages.

Facilitation

To promote dialogue the online facilitator will also post messages which are thought provoking and lead to further discussions. These may come as “hot topics” of the week or probing where a current discussion can be explored further.

The online facilitator will also encourage members of the community and the steering group to respond to messages by emailing them privately.

SHARING RESOURCES

Online workspace

Our online workspace at www.dgroups.org/groups/EPN includes a resources section to which members may upload documents for sharing. Our workspace is a public area so please consider any copyright or confidentiality issues before posting. To upload a document you must be logged in using your email address and password. If the document you wish to recommend to others is already available on another website then it is already in the public domain and there are probably no issues with sharing it, but it may be easier to share a link rather than posting another copy.

If sharing documents and resources which are not your own, please always cite and credit the contributor with names and dates where possible.

File attachments

Some people have limited ability to receive file attachments so please think carefully before attaching a file to your email, especially if it may not be relevant to everyone in the group. The online forum will only forward small files. Alternatively please consider posting your document to the resources section (see above) and sharing the link instead.

SUPPORT

The HHR Steering Group and online facilitator

Steering Group: The HHR online steering group comprises individuals from each region and a range of different organizations, who help to guide the online network for the benefit of all members

Core group members contribute their time and energy towards supporting the needs of HHR members and building the quality of the network. If you are interested in joining the Steering Group, or would like to contact the group, please email maduri@peopleinaid.org

Lead Facilitator: Maduri Moutou is the online network's lead facilitator. For any questions, issues or to provide private feedback on email discussions, please contact her directly at maduri@peopleinaid.org

CONCERNS OR ISSUES

About other members

If you have concerns related to the behaviour of a member, you are invited to do one of the following:

1. Raise the concerns or issues with the member and work towards a solution.
2. Send an email to the facilitator addressing your concerns or issues.

Emails sent to the list facilitator about the behaviour of a member will be handled on a case-by-case basis. The approach is one in which the member will be asked for a change in conduct. Three individual notices to the same member, without any change in conduct can – after consultation with the Steering Group – lead to removal from the list.

Technical issues

If you have any questions or technical problems with your membership, please contact the group administrator at epn@peopleinaid.org

Too much email?

Most email programs allow you to automatically filter messages from the HHR discussion group into a separate folder which can make it easier to deal with. All messages from the HHR discussion group have "[epn]" at the start of the subject line so that you can easily identify them.

To receive just one email per day which combines all messages from the group, send a blank email to epn.digest@dgroups.org

If you prefer to read messages online without receiving any emails, write to epn.nomail@dgroups.org

RSS Feed

You can also follow HHR online discussions by using an RSS reader.

To subscribe or unsubscribe

To join the group, please write to epn@peopleinaid.org including your name, organisation, job title and country in which you work. You can also complete the online form at www.epn.peopleinaid.org

To leave the group, send an email to leave.epn@dgroups.org or click on the personalised link in the footer of every message sent via the group.

Evaluation of the HHR Online Network

Evaluation of the impact and effectiveness of HHR online will take place annually. Details of the online survey will be posted on the forum.