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**POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MANAGEMENT (2024-25)
MID TERM EXAMINATION (TERM -II)**

Subject Name: **Human Resource Management**
Sub. Code: **PG21**

Time: **01.00 hrs**
Max Marks: **20**

Note: All questions are compulsory. Section A contains two questions, each carrying 5 marks, while Section B carries 10 marks.

SECTION-A

Sonoma Partners, LLC (Sonoma Partners), a consulting company based in Chicago, USA, was founded in 2001. It helped small and medium enterprises (SME) to build and manage their database using Microsoft Dynamics CRM (Customer Relationship Management) software. Sonoma Partners was a Microsoft Gold Certified Partners and had been working with Microsoft CRM since its inception. In addition to its success in CRM implementations for client firms and the various awards it received for it, the relatively small entrepreneurial venture had also earned accolades for its human resource (HR) management practices.

In addition to a good compensation package, the company provided the employees with a stimulating workplace. According to the company, “Sonoma Partners offers its employees an exciting, creative and fast-paced working environment. Unlike traditional consulting firms that base their hiring on expecting high employee turnover, Sonoma partners hires people that can grow with our company. We hire only the brightest minds, then we invest heavily in them and provide a culture where they can do their work... instead of wasting their time fighting office politics.” In addition to attractive base salaries, the employees were eligible for annual, employee referral, and certification bonuses, monthly book allowances, tax-free transit programs, etc. The benefits package also included medical, dental, and life insurance plans. Employees could also invest tax- free through the Charles Schwab IRA retirement plan, with dollar-for-dollar employer matching up to 3% of salary. In addition to this, the employees were treated to free drinks and snacks. In early 2007, the company also installed a Flavia drink system from which employees could choose from over 30 different flavor packets to make Coffee, tea, hot cocoa, Cappuccinos, mochaccinos, chai lattes, etc.

The company aimed to provide a flexible workplace where casual dress, including shorts and sandals, were encouraged. There were no cubicles and each employee got his/her own private office that included three LCD monitors and an ergonomic Aeron chairs. To ensure that employees achieved a work/life balance, Sonoma Partners stuck to a 40 to 45 hour work week. Employees were given the flexibility of leaving at 1 pm on Fridays in lieu of one hour extra work Monday through Thursday. In addition to a 10-day company holiday schedule, the employees were eligible for three weeks“ paid time off annually. This increased to four weeks and five weeks for employees who had completed two years and five years of service in the company respectively.

Sonoma Partners was also committed to the development of its employees with each employee being provided with plenty of scope for technical training. For instance, the company footed the bill for expenses related to the employees“ Microsoft certification testing, preparation, and exam fee. In addition to this, each employee was put though a formal employee development program, based on his/her functional role, with a minimum of 40 hours of training annually. Each employee was also subjected to a formal performance review every six months.

For the development of the employee and to ensure that new recruits could adapt to the culture, each employee was designated a mentor from his or her department. Employees who had demonstrated their potential to become managers in the future were given the task of mentoring and it was their job to make the new recruit aware about the company's culture and goals. In such interactions, the new recruits could also ask „questions that seem too obvious, silly, or numerous to pester a manager with“.7 According to Sonoma Partners' CEO, Mike Snyder (Snyder), being a mentor also allowed the employee to show that they were ready for bigger responsibilities.

As of 2008, Sonoma Partners was a US\$4 million company with 35 employees. Experts felt that its HR practices were among the best and the company had been successful in developing an energized workforce. Experts had long been of the opinion that energized and committed employees were more productive. For its efforts, the company was recognized as one of Chicago's Best and Brightest Companies to work for in 2007 and 2008. This award recognized employers that had demonstrated imagination and conviction to create organizational value and business results through their policies and best practices in human resource management, according to the award organizer Michigan Business & Professional Association. "What does this mean? I think [it] means we're a fun place to work at, but we also do a great job taking care of our customers," said Snyder.

Q. 1. Identify practices in Sonoma Partners that demonstrate a strategic approach to HRM rather than traditional HRM. How does the company go beyond typical HR functions to create strategic value?
CO1

Q. 2. Identify and elucidate the various HR practices at Sonoma Partners and analyze how each of these functions integrates with and supports the company's broader strategic objectives. **CO1**

SECTION-B

Q.1. Samtech, a fast-growing organization in the technology and services sector, is committed to nurturing young talent by hiring Management Trainees across key functional areas. The company's goal is to develop skilled professionals who can eventually take on leadership roles within their respective departments. To achieve this, they are recruiting Management Trainees in Human Resources, Marketing, Operations, and Data Analysis.

As part of this initiative, the company requires a detailed Job Description (JD) and Job Specification (JS) for each Management Trainee role. **Your task is to select one of these functions and develop a JD and JS that outlines all components such as the role's purpose, core responsibilities, essential skills, and required qualifications.**

This JD will help Samtech attract the right candidates and set clear expectations for their development within the organization. **CO2**