

Application and Practice of Strategic Human Resource Management in the High-quality Development of Hospitals: A Case Study of Hospital C

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Abstract: *Objective:* To explore the application path and practice of strategic human resource management in the high-quality development of public hospitals, and to provide a reference for the same type of medical institutions in talent strategy planning and implementation. *Methods:* Taking hospital C as the research object, based on the development strategic layout of the hospital, the strategy decoding and strategy mapping tools were used to systematically analyze the strategic planning and implementation path of human resources management in the past three years from the four dimensions of attracting talents, carefully employing talents, carefully educating talents, and sincerely loving talents, and to analyze the coupling relationship between talent team building and hospital strategic goals. *Results:* An organizational quantitative index system covering the four dimensions of party construction, finance, learning and growth, and internal operation was established, and a four-in-one closed-loop talent management system of “recruiting, employing, and retaining” was constructed. *Conclusion:* Embedding the concept of strategic human resource management into the overall development strategy of the hospital, and achieving the precise docking of talent work and organizational goals through strategic decoding are important support and effective ways to promote the high-quality development of public hospitals.

Keywords: Strategic human resource management; Public hospitals; Decoding of strategy

Online publication: June 26, 2026

1. Introduction

In the report of the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China, it is proposed that the strategy of “talent is the first resource” must be adhered to ^[1]. With the continuous deepening of the reform of the medical and health system and the comprehensive promotion of the high-quality development of public hospitals, the strategic position of medical human resources as the first resource has become increasingly

prominent ^[2]. In this context, how to transform and upgrade the traditional personnel management of public hospitals to strategic human resource management, so that talent work can truly serve the overall strategic development of hospitals, has become the core topic faced by public hospital managers and human resource departments ^[3]. Hospital C is a provincial tertiary general hospital integrating medical treatment, teaching, scientific research, prevention and rehabilitation. This paper took the human resource management strategic planning of the hospital as a research sample, analyzed the combination path of strategic human resource management theory and practice of public hospitals, and discussed the specific application of strategic decoding tools in talent work, in order to provide reference for similar types of medical institutions.

2. The origin and development of strategic human resource management theory

2.1. Evolution of Western human resource management theory

As an independent management discipline, the theory system of human resource management has experienced a gradual evolution from germination to maturity, from operation to strategy. During the period of the handicrafts guild in the 15th to 18th centuries, the management of apprentices by workshop owners mainly stayed at the level of simple employment records and salary distribution, which was the embryonic stage of personnel management. In the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution gave rise to the large-scale factory production mode, and Taylor's scientific management theory was born, which promoted labor efficiency to the core position. The system of job analysis, working hour research, piece rate and other systems made personnel management begin to have systematic characteristics. From 1924 to 1933, Mayo's famous Hawthorne experiment in Hawthorne factory revealed the significant influence of interpersonal relationships, group norms, and informal organization on production efficiency, which promoted the development of interpersonal relationship movement and made humanistic thought begin to be integrated into management practice. In the 1960s, traditional personnel management entered a mature period, and the functional modules such as recruitment, training, salary, and labor relations were basically finalized, but their roles were still located in administrative affairs and cost control. In the 1980s, with the rise of the knowledge economy and the intensification of global competition, the concept of human resource management formally replaced personnel management, and human resources were regarded as value-added organizational assets rather than simple cost factors ^[4].

2.2. Development history of human resource management in China

From the founding of New China to the germination of reform and opening up (1949 to 1978), China's personnel management was labor and personnel management under the planned economy system. From 1978 to 1993, it was the personnel management in the transition from the planned economy to the market economy, and in 1993, it began to implement human resources management during the cultivation and development of the market economy. Since China entered the WTO in 2008, facing global market competition, enterprises have begun to combine human resource management with strategy formulation ^[5].

2.3. The special situation of human resource management in public hospitals in China

Compared with general enterprises, the human resources management of public hospitals faces more complex internal and external environments. In terms of the external environment, public hospitals are subject to industry supervision by health authorities, staffing constraints by staffing management departments,

total salary control by human resources and social security departments, and transmission pressure from payment system reform by medical security departments. From the perspective of internal characteristics, medical staff, as a group of knowledge workers, are characterized by strong professional autonomy, a long career development cycle, high pressure of technical updating, heavy workload, and high requirements for multidisciplinary collaboration. Their management is far beyond the scope of material incentives of enterprises.

The personnel management of public hospitals in China has long followed the management mode of administrative institutions, and there are prominent institutional constraints in staffing allocation, professional title review, post employment, salary distribution and other aspects^[6]. There are differences in status treatment, development channels, social security, and other aspects of the personnel inside and outside the establishment. The deviation between the evaluation standards of professional titles and actual clinical contributions, the egalitarian tendency in salary distribution, and the lack of fine performance appraisal restrict the full play of the enthusiasm of medical staff and the release of the vitality of the talent team. These particularities determine that the strategic human resource management of public hospitals cannot simply transfer the experience of enterprises, and the space for innovation and breakthrough must be sought within the institutional framework^[7].

3. Overview and strategic orientation of Hospital C

3.1. Basic scale and service capacity of Hospital C

Hospital C has two campuses. The hospital has 44 clinical departments and 12 medical technology departments, with 3100 approved beds and more than 4000 employees. Annual outpatient and emergency services for 2.4 million people, hospital discharge services for 140 thousand people, medical radiation population of more than 33 million, the total number of patients served ranked first in the five cities in the region. As a direct affiliated hospital of the teaching hospital, the hospital undertakes the training task of undergraduate, master's, and international students in clinical medicine, nursing, and other specialties, and is an important medical personnel training base and clinical research innovation platform in the region.

3.2. Connotation and structure of development strategy

On the basis of summarizing previous development experience, the hospital systematically put forward the “136” development strategy layout, drawing a clear blueprint for high-quality development in the next five years. The strategy takes “adhering to the leadership of party building, integrating into the national strategy, strengthening the discipline drive, consolidating the talent base, and strengthening management and efficiency” as the overall development idea. “1” refers to the goal of completing the construction of the provincial medical center and provincial regional medical center at the national level with high quality, and building the hospital into a high-level medical university affiliated hospital with international communication, domestic influence, and first-class in the province. “3” refers to the three core strategies. The first is the strategy of “one hospital and multiple districts”, which expands development space and optimizes resource allocation through the coordinated layout of multiple hospitals. The second is the “first-class discipline” strategy, which takes discipline construction as the leading factor to promote clinical service ability and academic influence. The third is the strategy of “first-class major”, focusing on professional connotation construction to improve the quality of talent training. “6” refers to six capacity improvement

projects, including the Party construction leading ability improvement project, the medical service ability improvement project, the scientific research ability improvement project, the education and teaching quality improvement project, the hospital management ability improvement project, and the cultural and people's livelihood construction improvement project. The six projects cover the core dimensions of hospital operation and management, forming an action matrix to support the realization of strategic goals.

4. Strategy decoding and implementation path of human resource management

Strategy decoding is a key management tool for translating macro strategies into concrete action programs. Based on the “136” development strategy, the hospital identified the key drivers of talent management using the strategy map method, and made systematic planning from the four dimensions of attracting talents, carefully employing talents, carefully educating talents, and sincerely loving talents. The qualitative strategy description was transformed into quantifiable and traceable three-year action goals.

4.1. Attract talents and build a new highland for talent gathering

The shortage of high-level talents is a key bottleneck restricting the construction of regional medical centers. The hospital takes the introduction of doctoral talents as the core indicator of the recruitment work, and clearly puts forward the strategic goal of reaching 300 doctoral students in the next five years, which will be promoted according to the phased goal of 220, 240, and 260 from 2024 to 2026, respectively. The setting of this goal matches the functional orientation of the hospital as a provincial medical center. The development and transformation of high-level medical technology, the improvement of treatment ability of difficult and critical diseases, and the continuous output of clinical research all rely on the support of high-level talents with systematic scientific research and training background. In addition to the rigid introduction mechanism, the hospital synchronously improved the flexible introduction mechanism, and introduced well-known experts and their teams at home and abroad for regular guidance and cooperation. The assessment management of soft introduction experts highlights the effectiveness orientation, reflects the flexible employment concept of “not seeking ownership, but seeking use”, effectively breaking through the geographical and staffing restrictions, and improving the level of discipline construction with the help of external intellectual resources.

4.2. Carefully employ talents to activate the power source of talent development

The value release of talents depends on a scientific and reasonable employment mechanism. Centering on the five career sequences of “medical, teaching, research, management and service”, the hospital established a post-level management system, breaking the traditional single administrative promotion channel, and providing differentiated career development paths for different post categories. In 2024, we will formulate and release a post-level management system, organize the first post competition, and realize the transformation from “identity management” to “post management”. The annual post assessment will be carried out in 2025, the dynamic adjustment mechanism of “ability up and down” will be implemented, and a mature post level management operation system will be formed by 2026. At the same time, the hospital implemented the elimination system of the lowest ranking in the assessment, and retrained and adjusted the positions of the lowest-ranked personnel, releasing the “advance or fall back” employment orientation. The step-by-step arrangement of issuing the system in 2024, formally implementing it in 2025, and continuously

improving it in 2026 has reserved an adaptation period for the smooth implementation of the system.

4.3. Sincerely love talents and strengthen the centripetal force of Party management talents

The key to retaining talents is to create an organizational atmosphere and institutional environment that respects talents and makes talents successful. The hospital incorporated employee satisfaction into the strategic measurement index system, and carried out full staff satisfaction measurement step by step. The employee satisfaction evaluation and analysis feedback of administrative and logistics departments should be completed in 2024, the key clinical specialties should be covered in 2025, and the evaluation of all departments of the hospital should be completed in 2026. The evaluation results and improvement measures form a closed loop, reflecting the response to and attention to the demands of employees. The salary system reform is closely related to the policy orientation of “three changes and three improvements”, namely, transforming development mode to improve development quality, transforming management mode to improve management efficiency, transforming service mode to improve service level, and gradually increasing the salary of medical staff. The reform will be carried out in three steps. A reform plan and related supporting systems will be formulated in 2024, a formal plan will be issued in 2025, and phased in by 2026. Compensation reform and post management, performance appraisal, professional title evaluation, and appointment system linkage design, forming an incentive-compatible system combination. The construction of talent culture is committed to the core values of “respect for labor, respect for knowledge, respect for talent, and respect for creation”. Specific measures include the appointment of “tenured professor” honor, selection of “outstanding contribution award” and “Outstanding Youth award” and other honorary awards.

4.4. Quantitative tracking of strategy execution and performance management

The implementation of strategic planning needs the support of a quantifiable index system and a clear division of responsibility ^[8]. The hospital has established an organizational quantitative assessment system covering the four dimensions of Party building, finance, learning and growth, and internal operation, as shown in Table 1 ^[9]. The quantitative index and weight setting reflect the management concept of paying equal attention to outcome orientation and process control ^[10].

Table 1. Organizational quantitative assessment system

Evaluation dimension	Evaluation indicators	Weight
Comprehensive indicators of Party building	Party building business integration, anti-corruption and clean governance construction, ideology and culture, etc.	25%
Financial indicators	Budget and operating costs	10%
Learning and Growth Indicators	Internal control construction, talent capability building, etc.	10%
Internal business operation indicators	Key tasks of attracting talents, cultivating talents, utilizing talents and retaining talents	55%

5. Experience summary and prospect

The practice of hospital C shows that the effective implementation of strategic human resource management in public hospitals needs to grasp three key links. The first is strategic alignment, which deeply integrates talent planning with the overall development strategy of the hospital to ensure that human resources

allocation serves core business objectives such as discipline construction, medical quality, and scientific research innovation. The second is the system design, and the closed-loop management system of “introduction, use and retention” is constructed. The four links support each other and work together, and the outstanding single link is not enough to make up for the shortcomings of other links. The third is quantitative drive, which decodes strategic goals into measurable stage indicators and traceable action plans, and realizes process monitoring and result evaluation through a quantitative index system to avoid strategy staying at the level of concept declaration.

Looking into the future, human resources management of public hospitals will face many challenges. The reform of the staffing system has not been completely broken, and the differences in treatment and development barriers of the personnel inside and outside the staffing system still need to be fundamentally solved at the system level. The salary distribution is restricted by the total amount control, and the contradiction between market-oriented salary and internal management is particularly prominent when attracting professionals in short supply. The reconstruction of the talent evaluation standard system is still under exploration. How to balance the weight relationship among clinical service, teaching contribution and scientific research output, and establish an evaluation mechanism that truly conforms to the characteristics of the medical and health industry, needs continuous theoretical research and practical innovation.

Disclosure statement

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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