Talent Management:
From the Perspective of Management Trainees in Hong Kong

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STATEMENT OF ORIGINALITY

The thesis contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying subject to the provisions of the Copyright act 1968.

Flora Leigh

Leigh Soo Mai, Flora
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ABSTRACT

Organizations have always been keen to enhance their competitiveness by identifying, developing and retaining the right talents. They offer the best to talents and have great expectations of them. However, the assumption that being a special group, talents should be contended and happy and stay with the company may have over simplified the situation. Referring to resource-based view (RBV), talent is the strategic resource with cognition, emotions and free will. They are high achievers and have high expectations. Any unmet expectations may lead to disillusion and frustration. Understanding the expectations and how talents interact with other resources thus exert key implications to the effectiveness of talent management.

Bulk of extant literature has looked at talent management from the system and organizational points of view. In order to fully address the research question of what constitutes the effectiveness of talent management, this dissertation seeks to explore via semi-structured interview, the three talent management phases from a biangular approach, consisting both the system and emotional sides from the perspective of the management trainees from different industries in Hong Kong.

Findings reveal that while expectations on learning and growth, and the advancement journey match between the company and talent, the latter is particularly looking for a caring family culture and ownership and recognition of their role. At time with unmet expectations, choice and reciprocity are suggested to positively affect the trust level of the psychological contract of the talents when supported by quality communication. In addition, the capability of the companies to integrate the process, system and tools and anticipate the needs of the new generation talents all shed light to effective talent management. Identification of talents’ unique expectations and retention elements in Hong Kong contributes to organization’s TM strategies and the global talent retention inventory. This research answers the call for establishing micro-foundation of RBV and S-sensing as an HR capability complementing VRIO is suggested to make the RBV framework more holistic at least for the case of talent. A contemporary talent management model incorporating both the system and emotional aspects is proposed and suggestions are made for organizations to revisit talent management effectiveness.