

ASHESI UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

GHANA

**ORGANISATIONAL RESTRUCTURING AND AN ENHANCEMENT OF
RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PROCEDURES AT ATALA LIMITED**

By

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Declaration

I hereby declare that this Applied Project Report is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature:

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Date:

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the Applied Project Report were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of Applied projects laid down by Ashesi University College.

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Executive Summary

Managing human resources and organizational structures in every organization is vital in increasing productivity and overall performance. This project was undertaken to aid Atala Limited in managing its administrative tasks as well managing prospective recruits.

After a needs assessment conducted via interviews, observation and focus group discussions, and an organizational SWOT analysis, 3 major needs, in order of importance to the organization, were found: Organizational Structure, A Staff Recruitment and Selection Plan and Inventory Management.

These results and an extensive literature review led to a proposal of developing an organizational structure for effective management, and a staff recruitment and selection plan to provide the company with standard procedures in recruiting and selecting applicants. In addition to this, sample job descriptions were developed for key managerial positions.

It is recommended that Atala Limited adopts the designed organizational structure, develops job descriptions for all positions on the structure and utilize the proposed recruitment plan to aid and enhance its managerial practices, hence secure a competitive position in the market.

Key words: Organizational Structure, Needs Assessment, Competitive Position, staff recruitment and selection plan and Atala Limited

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.0 Chapter Overview

Companies all over the world have different management styles, beliefs, values and norms, which all members of the organization share. These management styles and values evolve from the organization's culture. One factor that influences the culture of an organization is the type of organizational structures they operate by, their operation and generally how people are managed within these organizations. Organizational structure, operations management and human resource management have practically become fundamental in managing organizations. Proper implementation of these, results in the overall well-being of the organization.

Thus, this project aims to improve the organizational structure of Atala Limited and review the Staff Recruitment process to ensure employee satisfaction and to improve management decision-making processes within the organization. This first chapter introduces the reader to the chosen company, provides a brief of the needs assessment conducted and methods adopted, findings from the needs assessment and a proposal to address these needs.

1.1 Aim and Objectives of the Project

The aim of this project is to improve the overall management functions and human relationship management at Atala Limited. From the needs assessment

conducted in the organizations, it was revealed that management needed a structure to operate with and a plan for staff recruitment. Therefore the objective of this project is to develop an organizational structure and recommend an explicit procedure to be employed in recruiting and selecting staff for use by Atala Limited.

1.2 Industry Analysis

The building and construction industry provides the infrastructure and facilities required for other sectors of the economy to flourish (Ahadzie 2009). According to this author, these include schools for education and training, factories and shops for commercial and business activities and housing for basic human needs. This agenda has drastically increased the demand for high standards within this industry to ensure proper execution of projects and delivery of products. The push for development will continue to soar, causing the building industry to be highly competitive. It is comprised of a wide array of stakeholders including manufacturers and retailers specializing in the production and selling of building and construction materials. This sector of the industry is competitive due to the existence of many players.

Atala Limited, like most retailers in this sub-industry, serves as a distributor for major manufactures such as Tema Steel, Sethi Brothers and B5 Plus. The unstable world market prices, lack of resources and raw materials forces retailers to import from other countries to meet demand. Also, the higher restrictions and import duty on steel discourages manufactures from producing hot rolled steel locally. Most products on the market now, work with cold rolled steel, which is cheaper to produce and draws less tax. Also, Portland cement manufacturers,

Ghacem and Wacem, are the only two companies that produce cement in the country. The two companies do not have the capacity to satisfy demand in the country, hence more companies who focus on importing raw cement and bagging in Ghana are springing up.

This industry plays an immeasurable role in the national developmental agenda, hence its contributions towards infrastructure must be vital (Ghana Business News, 2012). The building and construction industry, contributes immensely towards the GDP and infrastructural development in the country. In 2011, the construction industry was the second highest contributor to the country's GDP (Ghana Broadcasting Corporation (GBC), 2011). For the industry's contribution to GDP to increase, there is the need for organizations to be efficient in decision-making and employing quality individuals to works towards achieving this goal.

1.3 Company Profile

Atala Limited is a registered limited liability company in the building and construction industry in Ghana, which has been in existence since 1986. It can be described as one of the leading retailers of steel products in Ghana. It was recognized for its contributions in the industry at the 2010 Ghana Property Awards (Ghana News Agency (GNA), 2010). Mr. Kwaku Atala Asante, the founder and Managing Director, established the company in 1986 as an Enterprise before converting it into a Limited liability company in 1998. The company has four main distribution outlets at Achimota, Medie, Weija and Abeka lapaz all in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana, with the latter being the headquarters. Its primary activities are the distribution of building materials such as iron rods, cement, nails, binding

wire etcetera, to wholesalers, retailers, individuals as well as public and private institutions. The company also serves as a main distributor of petrol and diesel generators for the Gesan Grupos Electrogenesis based in Spain.

The mission of the company is to provide the public with quality building materials at reasonable prices and to contribute to the overall development of the real estate industry by collaborating with public and private developers on projects. Projects Atala has procured building materials for include the Government of Ghana affordable-housing project, and University of Ghana hostel projects, Trassaco Estates and Villaggio apartments. The company also seeks to meet and exceed customer expectations with regard to quality service and price, and strives to be a world-class distributor of building materials and generators in years to come.

Atala Limited employs over 140 employees (upper and lower level staff and casual labourers) and 10 auxiliary staff that supports activities in the company and has a customer base that stretches across the country. The company's success is driven by the principle of trust and satisfaction and the provision of superior customer service compared to its competitors. Atala Limited imports steel products and cement from Togo, China, Brazil, Ukraine and Turkey to meet high demands.

1.4 Needs Assessment and Methods Adopted

"A needs assessment is a systematic way of determining the current state of an organization before developing solutions to improve existing current conditions" (Musser et al, 2012). A needs assessment is used to identify the strength and weakness of an organization. In order to improve upon the overall

performance of the company, the needs assessment was conducted at Atala Limited to identify deficiencies in all departments.

In conducting the needs assessment, the research methods or techniques used were observations, interviews, and a focus group discussion. Detailed modalities for use of these methods are described in the next chapter, which examines the needs assessment carried out. However, the sub-sections following will briefly describe each of them.

1.4.1 Interviews

Interviews were conducted as a medium of accessing information. They are basically conducted to gain information on a particular topic or subject under study from a source who has the information to share. They are widely used because they are a powerful means of both obtaining information and gaining insights (McKenzie & Hannan 2007). In assessing the needs of the Atala Limited, individual interviews were conducted. Individual interviews are in-depth qualitative interviews on a one-to-one basis, either face-to-face or by telephone (Leicestershire County Council, (LCN) 2012). According to this author, an interviewer can give the researcher a deep understanding of a particular topic and grant the opportunity to obtain individual attitudes, beliefs and feelings.

The Managing Director was interviewed first followed by the Operations Manager. The interview was semi-structured, which means that, there were standardized and open-ended questions to enable free flow of communication on both sides. Questions asked were centered on operations, marketing, management and human relationship management. The informal nature of the interview made it

easy for the Managing Director to open up freely. The most pressing issues that evolved from this interview were the inexistence of an organizational structure and an unskilled workforce.

1.4.2 Observation

Observation, another method used in the needs assessment, is described as one of the purest forms of research, as it taps directly into behavior rather than perceptions, secondary or self-reports of behavior (Orient Pacific Century (OCP), 2012). Observation is one of the most effective techniques used in research because it gives the researcher first hand information on real- life situations. This method was used because of its focus on observed behavior and a reliable source of primary information. Observation is useful as it documented, in real time situations the actual events happening in the company. The observation was focused on how quickly and effective decisions were made, how employees were recruited and monitoring of overall performance of workers. The overall running and management of the business was monitored as well. Observation was conducted over a period of one month to ensure information gathered was consistent and systematic to reduce any errors.

1.4.3 Focus group Discussion

Focus group research involves organized discussions with a selected group of individuals to gain information about their views and experiences of a subject matter (Gibbs 1997). A focus group discussion was also used as a research tool for identifying the needs of Atala Limited. Discussions were organized with top and lower level employees in different groups of six members to gain insights into their

understanding of an organizational structure. The idea of having different groups was to aid in knowing the different perspectives of the employees. Employees shared their thoughts, feelings and experiences on the overall running of the business. There was a balance of information received because different levels of employees were involved. The main idea for these group discussions was to have a collective idea of prevailing issues.

1.5 Findings from the Needs Assessment

The company had a competitive advantage over its competitors because of its marketing strategies, goodwill and the quality of building materials. It created a niche for itself by providing good customer service and quality of products by ensuring accurate sizes of steel and its products meeting the ICS 77.140 quality standards. Decision making in the company, is however a challenge due to the unavailable clear line of communication and authority. The company has no explicit organizational structure with which to operate. There was also the issue of who to take responsibility of various activities and occurrences hence a lack of well-defined roles and responsibilities for its employees.

Proper management of inventory is another challenge the organization has. Inventory records are not accurate because of the large quantities of materials in wholesale and the non-existence of a proper inventory keeping and management system. The company operates on an error margin of 20% in valuing stock.

The process of recruiting staff was also found to need a revamp because of the criteria and methods used in employing workers. There are no standard

recruitment and selection procedures in place to aid in the employment of the right caliber of people, resulting in poor performance.

In order for the company to run its operations effectively and efficiently, there is the need to fill these identified gaps. The aim of the project therefore is to reduce or eliminate the gaps in human resource management by developing a staff recruitment plan and providing an organizational structure for the company to have a line of authority to improve its decision making process. It will however not touch on the inventory related challenges.

1.6 Proposed Solutions to address the needs of Atala Ltd

The proposed solution to address the needs of Atala Ltd is to design an organizational structure and develop an appropriate staff recruitment plan for use in planning the HR needs of the organization. An organizational structure can be defined as the way responsibility and power are allocated, and the work procedures are carried out among organizational members (Teixetra et al 2012). Designing an organizational structure for Atala Limited will draw on the recommendations by Schein (1992) as cited in Baker (2002). According to Schien (2002), an organizational structure should define how power and responsibilities would be allocated appropriately to promote coordination and integration across organizational units to improve efficiency, quality and speed of designing and implementing decisions or strategies.

A functional organizational structure will be developed to ensure the existence of this. After a review of the possible types of structures such as the

functional, matrix and divisional structures, the functional structure was chosen as the most suitable structure for Atala Limited because of the nature of its operations. Full details of this structure will be in chapter 3 of this project. The functional organizational structure groups employees based on the functions of their jobs. Sims (2002) defines functional structure as depicted by a pyramid, with senior management at the top, middle and lower managers spread out below, and workers at the bottom. Designing this will ensure a clear line of authority the company and this in the long run will improve decision making.

Recruitment is described as the set of activities and processes used to legally obtain a sufficient number of qualified people at the right place and time so that the people and the organization can select each other in their own best short and long term interests (Dessler 1987 cited in Richardson, 2012). A staff recruitment plan was also designed to ensure employment of the right caliber of personal. Elements under this plan will be the expansion of sources, interviews and tests. The current procedures followed at Atala Limited are ineffective and inefficient as it does not results in the employment of the right caliber of employees. An efficient recruitment plan will aid in the employment of workers who are capable of increasing the performance of the company.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has given the reader an in depth knowledge of the needs and the proposed solutions for Atala Limited. The needs were identified through an assessment of the company's strengths and weaknesses, and were found to include poor performance of staff, no line authority, inventory management, lack of skilled

personal etcetera. The development of an organizational structure and a staff recruitment and selection plan are proposed solutions.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.0 Chapter Overview

The literature review gives an in depth analysis and evaluation of existing literature on organizational structure and staff recruitment and selection plans. It reinforces the main objective for undertaking this project and its theoretical backbone.

2.1 Organizational Structures

Organizational structures are sets of relations between the roles of an organization usually structured according to hierarchy (Grossi et al 2007). A well structured company implements a line of authority, which controls and coordinates the responsibilities of employers and employees in a company. To further explain this, the structure defines directs roles of employees. Fredrickson (1986) argues that, until only recently has there been a widespread agreement that structure can have a profound impact on strategy through its direct effect on the strategic decision-making process. Hence, a well-structured organization will have a positive impact on strategy in a business because decision-making process will be effective and efficient.

Many companies re-engineer their processes to improve performance, to adjust to the dynamic nature of the business environment and to reach its set objectives. Organizations also constantly modify and refine the mechanism by

which they achieve their purposes by rearranging their structure of roles and relationships and their managerial processes (Miles et al 1978). To emphasize on this, for a company to continue to strive and sustain its competitive edge, managers must revamp their organizational structure to ensure efficiency in decision making for effective strategies to be implemented.

Nicholl (2006) explains that, the importance of organizational structure is linked with good governance as well as performance. An organizational structure is particularly effective if its elements are in line with set objectives and goals of the organization. It does not only spell out responsibilities and roles of employees but also defines the framework under which the company is set up. According to Jenster and Hussey (2001), when an organizational strategy is not matched with the most appropriate structure and controls, performance eventually declines.

Organizational structure therefore has many benefits from establishing a line of authority to ensure effective communication. Ensuring efficient and effective decision making process is the main theme of various organizational structures. Managers simply want effective communication through all levels of authority and again want decision-making power to be decentralized for lower level managers to have a degree of autonomy. In the long run, Managers are vying for decisions to be made easily and quickly. To further stress on the importance of communication in decision-making, Johnson (1992) asserts that, organizational communication structure is a relatively stable configuration of communication relationships between entities within an organizational context. With an appropriate

organizational communication structure therefore, managers can achieve their desire of efficient communication and decision making within organizations.

Organizational structures take many forms from a functional structure, by process or equipment, structure by geographic location, matrix and hybrid structures. The matrix structure is a type of organizational structure in an organization in which an employee is required to report to both a functional manager and the manager of a specific project (Greenberg, 2010). In essence, each employee reported to two bosses. The structure by geographical location is where an organization allows its offices in different locations to operate independently but adhering to company policies (Friend 2012). This structure, allows executives in each location to act as overall supervisor and be responsible for its entire operations. The structure by process, products or processes creates self-contained divisions, each of which is responsible for everything to do with a certain product, process or group of products (Greenberg, 2010). The functional structure is the best fit for Atala Limited because of different departments such as marketing, inventory and transport that exist in the company. This will allow each department to perform task in their units and employees will also be grouped based on tasks that require specific skills. This will further enhance skill development of employees.

In a functional organizational structure, activities are grouped together by common function from the bottom to the top of the organization (Anand & Daft 2007). Under this structure, activities are specialized and grouped together into specific areas, which enhances decision-making and allows the company to be more effective. Elimination of operational inefficiencies in the company maximizes

employees skills and performance due to the fact that, they are working in the realm of their own expertise.

2.2 Human Resource Management

Human relationship management specifically includes activities managers or organizations undertake to manage and influence behaviors of employees. Howard Schultz, chair and chief of Global Strategist of Starbucks is of the opinion that, when it comes to being successful, it is all about how you manage your people. Managing current and potential employees is important for organizations largely due to the fact that, employees are retained and skilled staff is employed. Retaining staff and recruiting skilled personnel increase the performance of any organization. As Richardson (2012) explains, acquiring and retaining high quality talent is critical to an organization's success.

Recruitment as a human resource management function is one of the activities that impact most critically on the performance of an organization (Richardson, 2012). Recruiting the right staff is one of the basic processes an organization needs to carry out if it aims at increasing its competitiveness, as it serves an entry for firms to receive new ideas. In today's business environment, companies need to adjust their processes and methods to catch up with the changes in the business environment. Constant changes in human resource management and structure of organization increases competitiveness in the industry.

2.3 Conclusion

The literature clearly supports the importance of organizational structures in companies and helped in identifying the appropriate structure for Atala limited: a functional organizational structure.

Also, it is evident firms must attract and hire quality individuals to contribute to the organizations success. If wrong personnel are hired for various roles within the organization, it will not result in organizational success and may even damage the organization in terms of lower productivity, potential loss of clients, training costs, advertising costs, recruitment fees and redundancy packages.

Chapter 3

Needs Assessment: Methods and Findings

3.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter gives an extensive detail of the needs assessment undertaken at Atala Limited. It goes on to provide details of methodology and the methods employed, and then discusses the findings. It gives an account of how the research was conducted and information gathered.

3.1 Needs Assessment

A needs assessment is the formal process of identifying needs as gaps between current and desired results, placing those needs in a priority order based on the cost to meet each need versus the cost for ignoring it, and selecting the most important needs for reduction or elimination (Kaufman 1992, 1998 cited in Leigh et al 2000). In other words, it outlines the problems which when intervened will create a desirable outcome for the organization. A needs assessment is conducted at all levels of the organization to detect gaps that affects the firm's performance.

It is an important part of the processes used to improve organizations and individuals. Need assessment is central to selecting the correct problems for resolution and will provide the necessary information for determining appropriate interventions (Kaufman & English 1979). Most companies waste a lot of time and money in improving human relations development by engaging employees in

training sessions and by other costly procedures in managing the business that does not improve the existing situation.

When needs assessments are conducted, managers are better able to know the needs of the organization and the specific solutions required to fill the gap. Needs assessment is mostly considered to be the first step in any organizational or human resource development intervention (Leigh, et al 2000 cited in Dahiya & Jha 2011). To effectively and efficiently revamp the current conditions in relation to human management development and organizational structure, there is the need to conduct a needs assessment.

3.2 Research tools

This section will discuss the various tools employed in the needs assessment, which included interviews, observation and focus group discussions.

3.2.1 Interviews

An Interview is defined as a purposeful conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (interviewer) and another answers them (respondent) (Frey & Oishi 1995 cited in Oatey 1999). An Individual interview is the most effective method used in interviews. Individual interviews were used in the research because of how it is performed. It is conducted face-to-face with individuals to gain insight into their experiences and opinions concerning a particular issue.

Individual interviews encourage individuals to expand upon their answers by providing explanations, rationale, and additional context and related issues (United

Nations World food Programme, 2012). The individual interview was semi structured and aimed at exploring the broad views and experiences of the respondent. Semi- structured interviews are interviews conducted using a guide of set open-ended questions. In the course of the interview however, there is room to adjust the sequence of the questions to be asked based on the context of the participant's responses (Zhang and Wildemuth, 2012).

For this research, the Managing Director and Operations Manager were interviewed because of the line of authority that existed at the company, that is, all employees reported to them making them central in the management of the organization. They were both interviewed also to get different views on their specific experiences and values in managing and running the company.

The Managing Director and the Operations Manager were interviewed using the same questions, contained in Appendix 1 of this report. Questions asked were based on decision-making process, staff recruitment methods and current management procedures. This was to assess the current situation of the company, and to identify gaps in management and in their operations. There were also general questions on performance of staff and general challenges they faced. The major needs after conducting the interview, were centered on organizational structure and human resource development.

3.2.2 Observation

Observation involves monitoring and recording patterns of an event. This type of research involves observing the participants for a period of time and recording the events. The observation was done over a period of one month to

eliminate biases and to gain true results based on some consistent patterns of behaviour. The Managing Director, the Operations Manager and all other employees were observed during the period. In order to eliminate the possibility of the Hawthorne effect, participants were not informed of this observation. Observation was conducted in the offices of all the branches of Atala Limited.

The observations looked out for the following:

- Day-to-day activities of the company;
- Various roles of managers and employees in decision making;
- How decisions were made in the absence of the Managing Director;
- General performance of task by employees and efficiency;
- Line of authority; and
- Recruitment of new staff.

3.2.3 Focus groups

A focus group discussion usually involves gaining information from a group of interacting individuals having some common interest or characteristics (Seymour 2004). The focus groups employed in this research consisted of top and lower level management. Unlike the individual interview, the focus group discussions made it possible for the researcher to compare the different points and views, which provided more information about the subject matter. The focus group session was important in this project because it gave the researcher a greater insight of different opinions and how people think about the issues under study.

The first group discussion was held between the top-level management, which included the Managing Director, Operations Manager, Secretary and all the branch managers. The other group was made up of lower level management. Lower level employees were randomly selected from the casual labourers and sales personnel. The group discussions were done to gain information on:

- Involvement of employees in decision making
- Their perspective about management and decision making process
- Relationships with top level management
- Any challenges they faced as employees of the company

3.3 Findings from the needs assessment

The findings from the research will be discussed in this section of the chapter. This will be done alongside a SWOT analysis, which was also conducted to evaluate the strength, weakness, opportunities and threats of the organization. The findings were in the areas of management and human resource management.

3.3.1 Management

During the interview sessions with the Managing Director and the Operations Manager, it was evident that the company had no line of authority. Decision-making was centralized and only the Managing Director made decisions. The company had a tall organizational structure, which resulted in a long chain of command and delegation of authority was limited. The Managing Director complained about the heavy workload because of the non-existence of a clear organizational structure.

In the absence of the Managing Director, no decisions were made because employees felt they were not in the right position to do so. Certain menial decisions such as punishing employees for misconduct and approval of petty expenses are all the sole responsibility of the Managing Director. The interview also showed that, other managers were afraid to make decision because they did not want to take responsibilities for their actions. The Managing Director is always consulted no matter how urgent the situation or problem is. All major decisions involving running of the company was made by the Managing Director single-handedly.

It was also observed that, productivity decreased because of the lengthy time used in decision-making as employees had to wait for approval from the Managing Director. The focus group discussions also showed that employees were not involved in decision-making, which prevented employee creativity and efficient utilization of skills and abilities. Some of the employees realized shortcomings in the company but with no avenue for them to implement solutions to fill the gaps, nothing was done about it. This in the long run, prevents innovation within the company, which might be vital in improving performance.

There was also the problem of who to take responsibility for an action. The roles of employees were not properly defined so there was confusion as to who to blame for non-performance of duty. The company has a vision of expanding its business. An expansion will definitely need an organizational structure for both managing and operating the business. Clearly, it can be seen that the company needs a complete overhaul in structuring its business.

3.3.2 Human Relationship Management

From the interviews conducted, the observation and the focus group discussions, a gap in recruitment and selection of staff were realized. The company had no standard procedures or processes for recruiting and selecting staff. Some employees were employed based on qualifications and experience while others were employed based on personal relationships with management. About 60% of employees did not pass through any recruitment process. They were offered the job immediately they came to the company. No background checks were done and their experiences with other organizations were also not investigated. The research further showed that, only sensitive positions such as the accountant and office staff received rigorous check of documents. Positions like stock keepers and drivers did not go through formal procedures.

Generally, for a person to be employed in the company, an application letter and résumé is required. However, the company sometimes overlooks these requirements. In the case of employing people for sensitive positions, the Operations Manager, who has some background in human relationship management, examines the résumé. An interview is conducted for selected candidates and they are appointed based on how well composed they are. The employee is then trained for a month or two. The procedure in recruiting and selecting employees at Atala Limited has many lapses because various important aspects of recruiting staff such as testing and background checks are not taken into consideration.

The Managing Director argued out that, because of the nature of the organization and the kind of work they do, some of the employees normally do not require any proper documentation for employment. From the research carried out, it was realized that, the inappropriate assessment of employees resulted in difficulties in performing easy tasks. Basic knowledge to perform a task such as calculation was missing which resulted in poor performance. The company does not evaluate the performance of its employee. The lack of evaluations causes poor performances by employees. The absence of standard procedures has an adverse impact on employee that is low performance. This brings about conflicts of interest in achieving the set objectives of the company because employees do not perform to meet standards.

3.3.3 SWOT Analysis

Information for the SWOT Analysis was collected during the interviews and focus group discussions. Some of these factors, which were observed, were confirmed during these processes. The results are as described below:

Strengths of Atala Limited

- **Goodwill:** Atala Limited has established a reputation in the building and construction industry as one of the leading retailers in building materials. Its name is associated with good services and quality products.
- **High quality products:** The Company's product are said to be of the highest quality and standard sizes are offered.

- **Marketing strategy and corporate social responsibility:** the company employs an intensive marketing campaign in radio and newspapers. It is also recognized for its contribution of helping girls under the Pamela Waterbridge foundation

Weaknesses of Atala Limited

- **No line of authority:** decision making process is slow and centralized
- **Poor inventory management:** the firm does not have proper methods of keeping inventory. Inventory is always not accurate
- **Lack of skilled employees:** there is no standard procedure of recruitment. Recruitment is done with no justification

Opportunities of Atala Limited

- **Expansion:** the company plans to open more branches to keep up with competition and gain more market share. It also plans to establish a steel production factory
- **Acquisitions:** the company plans to purchase a defunct steel company in Tema and revive it

Threats of Atala Limited

- **Competition:** the high demand of steel products and cement has led to new companies springing up

- **Demand and supply:** the shortages arising from excess demand over supply makes price unstable resulting in increased cost.

3.4 Conclusion

From the interviews with the Managing Director and Operations Manager, the needs of the company were identified in the areas of operations, human relationship management and overall management of the organization. From the SWOT analysis as well, some deficiencies in these same areas were identified.

The needs were ranked in order of priority and improving management activities and human relationship management were uppermost which resulted in recommendations for both. These recommendations are proposed and detailed out in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

Discussions, Recommendations and Conclusions

4.0 Chapter Overview

After an extensive research in determining the needs of the company, an organizational chart and a staff recruitment and selection plan were proposed to fill the gaps identified from the needs assessment conducted and described in Chapter 3. This chapter will thus outline these proposed solutions and detail them out for use by the management of Atala Limited in enhancing their organizational management practices.

4.1 Organizational chart

Every company needs a structure in the organization to be able to formally configure individuals and groups with respect to the allocation of task, responsibilities and authority within an organization (Greenberg, 2010). Individuals must therefore be formally assigned roles and task for effective communication and decision-making. The structure of an organization is the architecture both visible and invisible, which connects and weaves together all aspects of an organization's activities that it functions as complete dynamic entity (McMillan, 2012). It serves as a platform for business activities to be directed in the course of achieving set goals. Effective and efficient organizational structure enables both employers and employees to perform the duties of management that is directing, organizing, planning and controlling of activities in the organization.

The roles, functions, responsibilities and line of authority in an organization can be depicted graphically in an organizational chart. Organizational structures are in many forms. The best type of structure for Atala Limited is the functional structure because of the nature of the business and its plans to expand its operations in the future. However, elements of the structure by geographic location will be used to support the functional structure due to the fact the company has three different branches in three different locations. This will make each branch report to an executive and the said executive will report to the Managing Director.

The company plans to venture into manufacturing; hence new departments that will require autonomy will be created. Under the functional structure, individuals are grouped according to the same functions they perform with people who perform similar functions assigned to them. Jenster and Hussey (2001) suggested that, when a company's set objectives or structures are not matched with its goals, performance decrease. It is in this vain that the developed functional structure, contained in Appendix 2, was developed. The structure was developed to enforce the following.

4.1.2 Delegation of Authority

All decisions were made by top management, delaying decision-making and burdening the Managing Director. To reduce the workload of the Managing Director, there is the need to delegate authority to other supervisors to manage and undertake menial activities and decisions on behalf of the manager. To ensure good and effective decisions are made, the other managers who are also experience in the business and show good leadership qualities need to be empowered.

4.1.3 Hierarchy of Authority

The organizational chart proposed to the company showed the hierarchy of authority. The hierarchy of authority answers the question of who reports to whom within the organization. It clearly establishes a communication path among employees in the firm. During the research, there was the obvious question of whom to report to, who was in charge of a particular task etcetera. The recommended organizational structure will aid in defining a clear line of authority for employees to know their superiors and subordinates. This enhances effective monitoring of activities and employees, which increases their performance. Individuals will know the appropriate person they can report incidences to as well. This will reduce conflicts in communication.

4.1.4 Efficient and effective decision-making

Fredrickson (1986) stated in his review that, organizational structures have an intense impact on the decision making process. Recommending the functional organizational structure also ensures the making of effective and efficient decisions. Initially, decision-making was done and implemented by one person, which reduced productivity because of the time it took for approval. With the structure put in place, all employees will contribute in making decisions concerning administrative tasks of management and operations related decisions. This will serve as an opportunity for employees to feel their contributions are needed. Also, the organization will make good decisions because of different perspectives and insights gained on an issue. There is also the possibility of the business generating new ideas from the involvement of employees.

4.1.5 Effective communication

The organizational structure provides a clear line of communication between employees and management. Ineffectiveness in communication was existence in the company because roles were not properly defined. With this structure put in place and graphically displayed, the level of communication will increase because each individual will know who his or her superiors and subordinates are. This will ensure effective communication amongst all employees. In the literature review, Johnson (1992) argues that communication and relationship between employees is stable when there is an existence of a structure.

With the functional organizational structure in place, the company will be able to delegate authority, take effective and efficient decision and ensure communication is effective to improve management of the company.

4.2 Staff Recruitment and Selecting Plan

A staff recruitment and selection plan was proposed to Atala Limited to enable them recruit the right people for the right job. The company did not have standard procedures it followed in recruiting staff. This resulted in an inability to recruit the right caliber of personnel, which lead to poor performance, hence the need for a plan.

Recruitment involves searching for and obtaining qualified applicants for the organization to consider when filling job openings (Jackson et al 2009). The aim of this plan is to buttress the assertion of Richardson's (2012), which states that acquiring high quality staff is critical to an organizations success.

The proposed plan is in two in parts that is the recruitment process and methods and selection process and methods. The recruitment process is the first process followed by the selection process. Appendix 3 shows a flow chart of the process of staff recruitment and selection. The procedures, are outlined in Fig 4.1

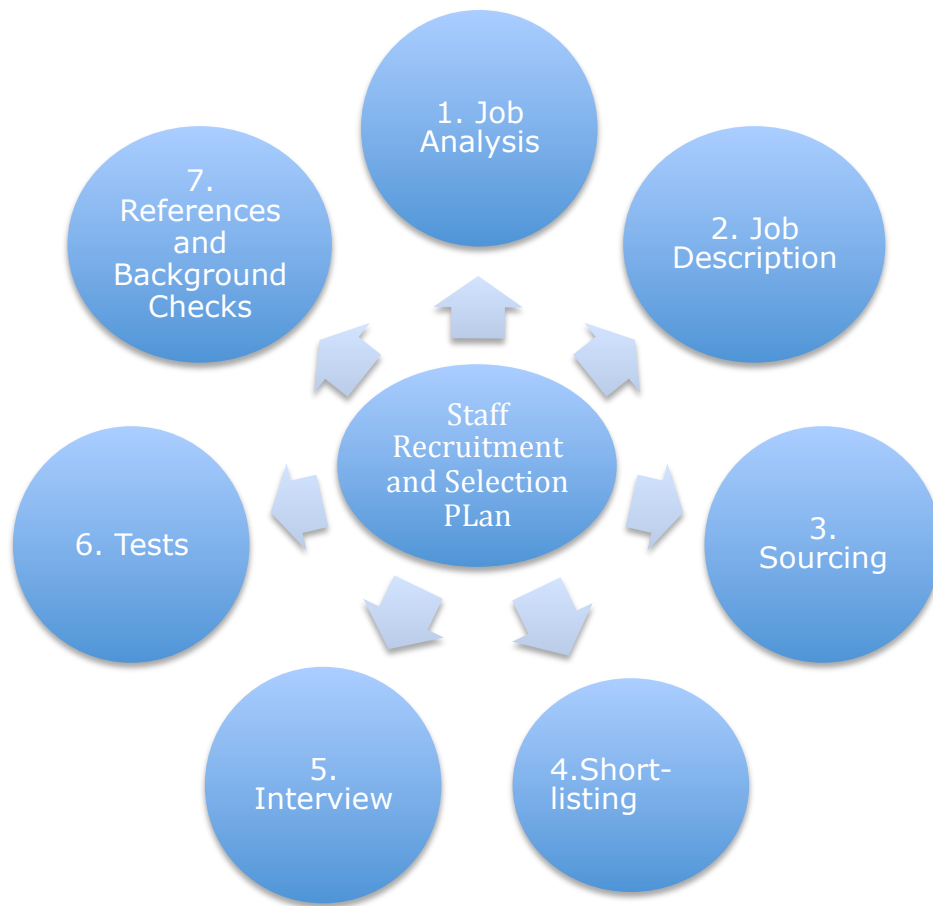


Figure 4.1: Staff Recruitment and Selection Plan

4.3 Recruitment Process and Methods

The recruitment process consists of a job analysis and job description. Before the company starts recruiting, a job analysis must be performed first to identify the requirements for the job. A job description is then written to explain the duties of the available job. Prospective Applicants are then sourced internally or externally.

4.3.1 Job Analysis

In recruiting staff, the company must perform a job analysis to identify the requirements of the job. A job analysis is the systematic process of describing and recording information about job behaviors, activities, and worker specifications (Jackson et al 2009). The job analysis is intended to bring out what the company needs and the required skills or abilities needed to carry out the job. It literally analyzes the job position available to be filled and gives the organization information about the particular position, the task or work involved. The analysis goes on to identify or recommend the necessary and required competence or knowledge in performing the job.

A job analysis will help the company in recruiting the right caliber of people. Recruited employees will know what their required responsibilities are and the skills and expertise they need to accomplish tasks. This helps reduce inefficient personnel, as they will apply for positions that they can fit.

Atala Limited plans to diversify its business activities in the near future. Thus, a job analysis will thus help identify and provide good information about the requirements of jobs in recruiting new staff for existing and new positions.

4.3.2 Job Description

Job descriptions help organizations describe the functions and duties of a job. In the recruitment process, it spells out the descriptions of jobs to individual for them to know exactly what the job is (Werther & Davis 1989). According to this same author, it is a written statement that explains the duties, working conditions

and other aspects of a specified job to the potential employee. From the investigations carried out, it was noted that the company had no job descriptions for recruitment. There was no job description to specify the actual duties of the job and the working conditions.

In recruiting staff, the company did not provide detailed information about jobs. The purpose of jobs, duties and required skills and qualifications were not made available for candidates. New recruits do not find their comfortable levels in carrying out those functions when they are employed because they have no idea of their responsibilities. This practice was realized to be causing some financial loss to the company but since it is only the Managing Director who makes all decisions, he was so overwhelmed with his responsibilities that, such actions went by unnoticed and uncorrected.

A job description was therefore proposed for the company to clearly define what the job entails to aid in attracting and retaining the right caliber of employees. Appendix 4 shows job descriptions of various positions. Individuals on the other hand will be given information about the job so they know what the company requires of them. This will also provide a good basis for assessing the workload of individual employees, hence determining their appropriate remuneration and motivational packages based on their performance. A job description should contain:

- Job Title
- Location of Company/Job
- Department

- Direct supervisors
- Position type
- Job Purpose
- Duties
- Required Skills and Qualifications

4.4 Sourcing

In Staff recruitment, effective companies source from the internal labour market (current employees) and external labour markets (people who don't work for the organization) based on the company's specific hiring needs and objectives (Jackson, Schuler, & Werner, 2009). Existing employees might have the required skills and abilities to perform that particular task. The company can also encourage effective use of skills and expertise of existing employees to encourage job enlargement and enrichment. Vacancies can be communicated by word of mouth or posted on notice boards in the company. Recruitment from internal labour markets is a cost effective process and it also gives employees the opportunity to develop new skills.

Sourcing from external labour markets is also another method to recruit staff. Some employees of Atala Limited were employed based on personal relationships with the management. This procedure limited the company from selecting from a list of qualified applicants. The company must recruit using recruitment agencies, walk in applicants, job fairs and through electronic media. This method gives the company a wide selection of qualified applicants to choose from.

4.5 Selection process and methods

In Atala Limited, selection of candidates was mainly based on relationships with management and minimal scrutiny of applicants CV. This however resulted in the selection of inappropriate caliber of employees who cannot meet the needs of the organization. To eliminate these inefficiencies, these steps were developed for every selection of recruits, that is top level, medium level and lower level for the organization. After the recruitment processes and methods have been performed, the selection process following can be employed:

4.5.1 Short listing

The first step is to screen applicants based on their application forms and CV using information from the job description, which will provide the basic requirements that are needed to perform the task in question. To prevent biases, at least two people must shortlist the applicants independently. The people short listing must avoid being influenced by the gender, race or names of applicants. They must vet the applicants based only on the selection criteria this is the required skills and qualifications.

Personal emotions should be detached to the selection process as it can influence decisions. It prevents the people from short listing to rely on instincts and personal judgments. Applicants that meet the criteria are grouped and ranked and they are called for interviews.

4.5.2 Interview

The second step is to interview applicants after they have been short listed. The interview continues to be the most popular and frequently used method of selection, even though research studies have found interviews to be poor predictors of future performance in the job (Makin & Robertson 1986 cited in Foot & Hook, 2005). Interviews does not clearly show whether an applicant can perform a job or not but if interview errors such as stereotyping, making assumptions are eliminated it can help in recruitment.

The interview should have more than one interviewer and they must all be trained to work towards the same outcome. The interviewers must plan and prepare for the interview by reviewing application forms properly so they are informed about candidates and possible eliminate the halo effect. If possible, there must be structured questions set to gain information relevant tp the selection decision. Open questions can also be used to test the knowledge of applicants. Possible Questions for interview will be outlined in appendix 5

4.5.3 Tests

After interviewing selected candidates, psychological and work sample tests should be performed. Physiological testing is a method of acquiring objective information about a range of individual's abilities and traits (Foot & Hook, 2005). Psychological testing is used to test maximum performance, reliability and habitual performance of candidates because they cover characteristics such as intelligence, interest and personality. The testing will be in the form of standardized questions where each applicant will answer the same questions based on intelligence, ability,

interest and motivation. Work sample tests will also be performed to further determine the competencies of applicants. Tasks that form part of the job will be given to candidates to perform. Performance of tasks will determine if the applicant is suitable for the job.

4.5.4 References and background checks

References and backgrounds checks should be performed to gather information about applicants. This is the last stage of the selection process. Atala Limited must request references from applicants. A questionnaire to guide referees in providing information can be provided. The references requested must indicate specific area such as skills and qualities. Request for reference will be included in the job description. Background checks such work and history, family must be checked to provide information to support the applicant. The background check should include the following.

- Work history
- Criminal Records
- Health checks
- Information about Family

The recruitment and selection process when adopted will provide Atala Limited with standard procedures that need to be followed for the appropriate candidates to be employed. The steps involves, eliminates possible inefficient candidates at the same ensuring employment of qualified applicants whose objectives are in the interest of the company.

4.6 Recruitment and Selection Plan for Auxiliary Staff

Atala Limited employs staff to support in activities such as cleaning and labour work. These tasks literally do not require any specific skills in completion. Basic knowledge about the job and experience is mostly needed. In recruiting staff of this caliber, the applicant is not required to go through all the standard procedures. Interviews, work sample test and background check are the basic process they need to pass through because much technical expertise or skills is not required.

4.7 Conclusions

Atala Limited is one of the leading retailers of building materials in Ghana that has the capacity and potential to expand its operations nationwide. Ghana in the past years has seen rapid growth in infrastructure development and economic development. In view of this most firms are changing their structures, strategies and methods to keep up with new development. For Atala also to increase its market share and sustain its competitive advantage, it needed a revamp in its structure and human relationship management.

The objective of this project was to improve the organizational structure and to develop a staff recruitment and selection plan in the company. The recommendations provided, will contribute to the success of the company in the near future because competent staff will be recruited to motivate the firm success and also strategic decisions will be made.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview questions for Managing Director and Operations

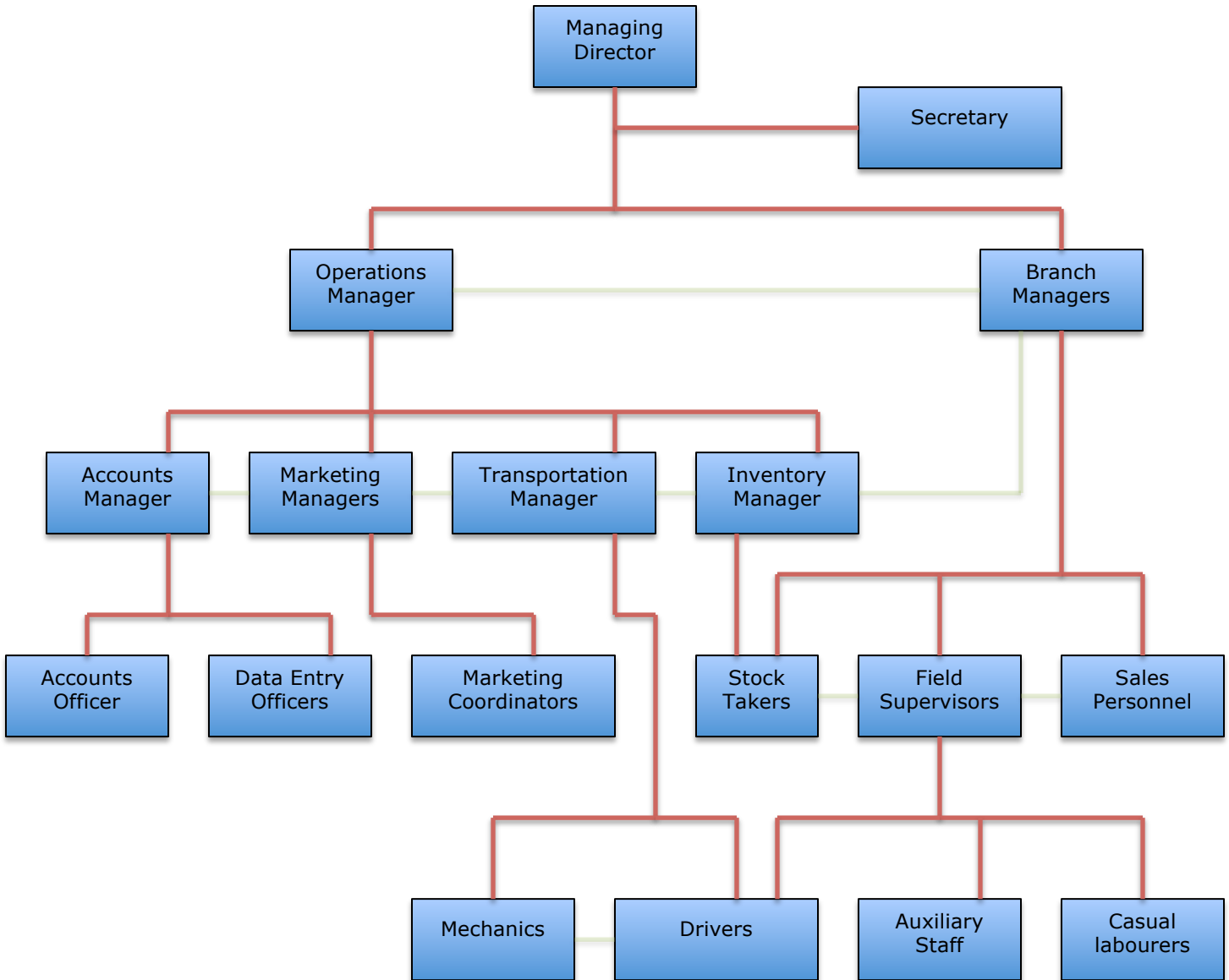
Manager

1. What is the line of authority in the company?
2. How are decisions made in the company and who makes them?
3. Can you describe the process of how decisions are made?
4. How are these processes effective?
5. Are there any challenges faced during decision-making?
6. What are the processes in recruiting employees and are all employees required to go through?
7. Do they think their staffs are performing above or below par?
8. What are the general challenges they face

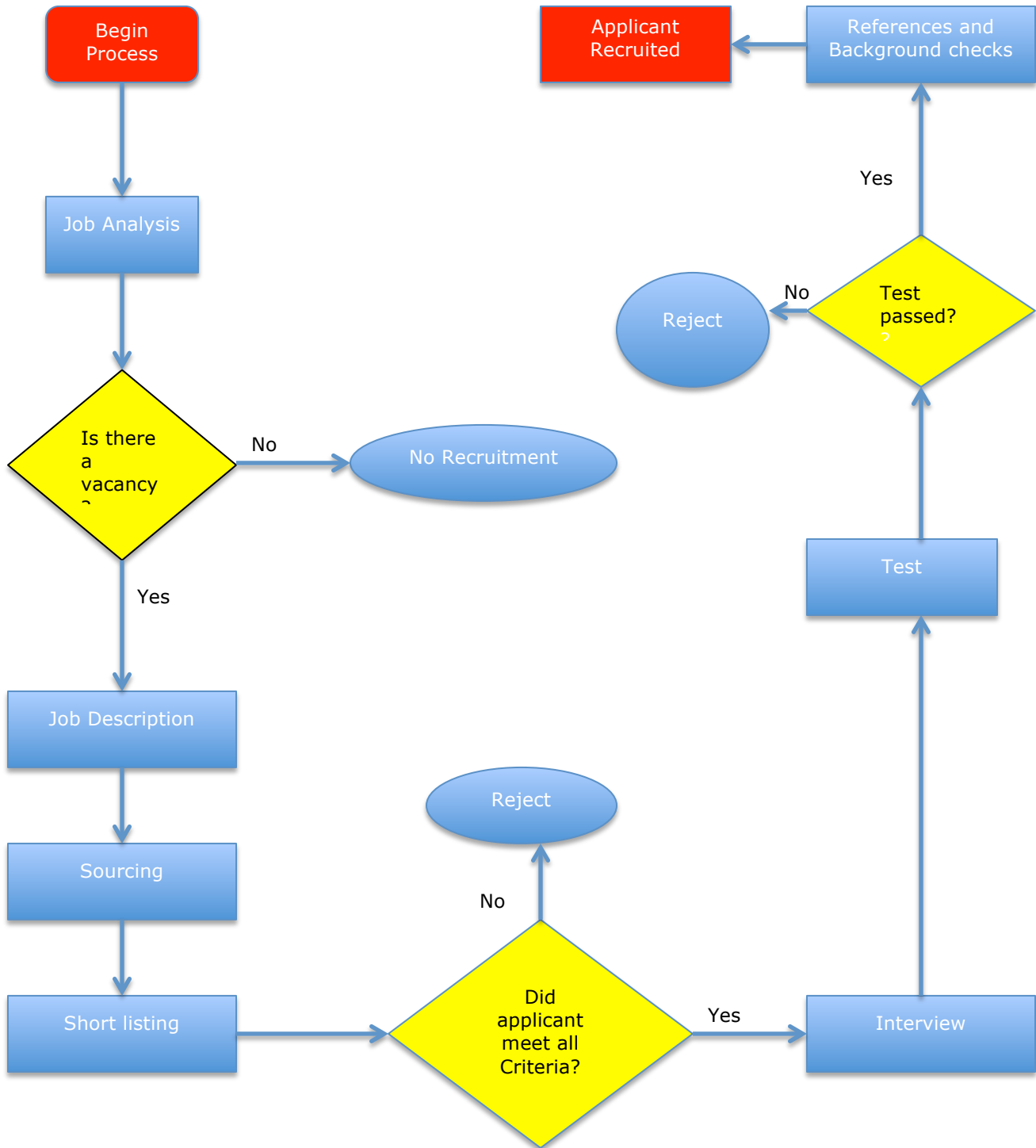
Appendix 2: Organizational Chart

Key: **Connectors for Authority**

Connectors for Communication



Appendix 3: Flow chart for staff recruitment and selection plan



Appendix 4: Sample Job Descriptions for various roles

Job Title:	Sales Personnel	Reports To	Branch Managers
Location	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
<p>Job Purpose: Serves customers by selling products; meeting customer needs and retaining existing customers.</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining existing and Developing new relationships between current and potential customers • Providing best solutions to satisfy consumer needs and wants • Receiving and responding to customer enquires via telephone and emails. • Negotiation on price and specifications of buyers • Give expert advise to customers on products and special promotions • Recording sale orders and other information on orders • Recommends changes in products, service, and policy by evaluating results and competitive developments. • Resolves customer complaints by investigating problems; developing solutions; preparing reports; making recommendations to management. • Provides historical records by maintaining records on area and customer sales. • Making accurate, rapid cost calculations, and providing customers with quotations <p>Required Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • High Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Applications • Minimum of 2 years working Experience • HND degree and 1stdegree in Business (preferred), SHS Graduate with 5 years working experience 			

Job Title:	Accountant	Reports To	Operations Manager
Location:	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
<p>Job Purpose: Handling all task relating to accounting and reporting to management regarding the finances of the organization</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and examine financial reports, financial statements and accounting records • Act as agent for the company to Internal Revenue Agents and Tax Agencies • Preparing and filing reports to VAT, SSNIT, IRS • Implement Financial Policies and Procedures • Prepare annual financial statements and work with external auditors • Ensure a strong system of internal control over financial reporting is maintained <p>Required Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • High Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Applications • Minimum of 4 years working Experience • BSc Business Administration, ACCA qualifications, masters degree in accounting will be ideal 			

Job Title:	Marketing Manager	Reports To	Operations Manager
Location:	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
<p>Job Purpose: Responsible for generating and developing new business ideas</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining existing and Developing new relationships between current and potential customers • Developing new business relationships and contact potential clients • Ensuring all Sales opportunities are captured and explored • Respond to Tenders and LPO's from other companies • Act as purchasing/procurement officer for the organization. • Plan marketing strategies to increase the company's market share and size • Responsible for developing and executing market programs to increase brand identity and awareness <p>Required Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • High Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Applications • Minimum of 3 years working Experience • 1stdegree in Business Administration (marketing option) 			

Job Title:	Transport Manager	Reports To	Operations Manager
Location:	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
<p>Job Purpose: Responsible for acquiring servicing and maintenance of company's' vehicles.</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure company vehicles are in good working condition and well maintained • Purchasing of new vehicles, tyres and vehicle parts • Drawing up schedules for hauling of goods from manufacturers • Needs to ensure that all regulations are met to ensure drivers and passenger safety. • Writing reports and determining revenue generated by all vehicles • Hiring, managing, controlling, directing and supervising all drivers and mechanics in the company. • Ensuring that drivers are licensed, trained, certified and tested according to regulations by DVLA <p>Required Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • Minimum of 3 years working Experience • 1st degree or HND • Must be willing to perform night duties • SHS graduate but with 7 years experience • Knowledge on car mechanics • Must know how to drive and possess and drivers license 			

Job Title:	Branch Manager	Reports To	Managing Director
Location:	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
<p>Job Purpose: Responsible for the overall supervision of operation activities at various branches.</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining customer Relationships and provide assistance to customers by resolving customer problems or complaints and providing optimal solutions • Maintaining and keeping stock of supplies and inventories • Providing a positive working environment for maximum employee performance and productivity • Communicating and manage marketing programs • Ensuring employee safety and conduct regular meetings to solve issues on board • Manage store revenue, including cash handling, cash deposit and reconciliation with the bank • Managing all store operational issues at the branch <p>Required Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • Minimum of 4 years working Experience • Master of Degree in business Administration • High Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Applications • Knowledge of the Building and Construction Industry • Ability to work with pressure • Strong leadership skills 			

Job Title:	Operations Manager	Reports To	Managing Director
Location:	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
<p>Job Purpose: Responsible for smooth operation of various processes in the company and ensuring company's goals are achieved</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with finance departments to obtain necessary approval for the budget from Managing Director • Improve operational processes and policies to obtain maximum efficiency • To act as the General Manager in the absence of the Managing director • To supervise overall activities in the company. • Play significant role in long-term planning to guide the company to achieve operational excellence • Creating work schedules, giving directions to employees on tasks and provide working environment that promotes positive energy, creativity and teamwork • Handlings all issues regarding operations in the company and making effective decisions that ensures smooth running of the business • Coordinate with all departments in the company to increase productivity • Is responsible for the day-to-day running of the company of and the monitoring all activities in various departments and branches. <p>Required Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • Minimum of 5 years working Experience • Masters degree in Business Administration • Must be willing to perform under pressure • High Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Applications • Knowledge of the Building and Construction Industry • Strong leadership skills with experience and dedication 			

Job Title:	Secretary	Reports To	Managing Director
Location:	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
Job Purpose: Responsible of administrative duties			
Duties:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attending the meetings of the company and rendering all necessary secretarial services in respect of meetings and advising • Maintaining the registers and other statutory records • Rendering proper returns and giving notifications required to be given to Registrar General • Carrying out such administrative and other secretarial duties as directed by the Managing Director 			
Required Skills and Qualifications:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • Minimum of 3 years working Experience as a Secretary • BSc Business Administration or degree or HND from a secretariat institution • High Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Applications • Knowledge of the Building and Construction Industry 			

Job Title:	Managing Director	Reports To	
Location:	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
<p>Job Purpose: Responsible for planning, directing, controlling and organizing activities to accomplish set objectives</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and deliver on the Company’s Strategic plan in the most effective and efficient manner • Responsible for the overall performance of the company and day to day and management of the company’s business • Managing resource efficiently and effectively to achieve maximum performance and productivity. • Responsible for new business development • Develop and maintain an annual Board-approved plan for the development and succession management • Formulation of policies and planning recommendations as well as deciding courses of action in operations by staff <p>Required Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • Minimum of 7 years working Experience • Master of Degree in Business Administration • High Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Applications • Knowledge of the Building and Construction Industry • Ability to work with pressure • Strong leadership skills with dedication and experience 			

Job Title:	Inventory Manager	Reports To	Operations Manager
Location:	Accra	Position Type	Full time
Job Description			
<p>Job Purpose: Responsible for proper keeping of inventory and ensuring that materials are available at the right time</p> <p>Duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking of inventory and sales levels to avoid shortages. • Keeping records and monitoring supplies of inventory • Evaluation of suppliers to ensure goods received are of good quality • Must organize inventory efficiently and effectively to keep cost under control • Inspection and checking all deliveries to ensure quality and right quantity • Maintaining security and safety of inventory • Controlling and distributing inventory to various branches <p>Required Skills and Qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Excellent written and Communication skills • Minimum of 3 years working Experience • High Proficiency in the use of Microsoft Applications • Knowledge of the Building and Construction Industry • Ability to work with pressure • Dedication and experience • SHS graduate certificate with 6 years working experience • First Degree or HND certificate holder 			

Appendix 5 Possible Questions for Interviewing Applicants

1. Why do you want to this Job?
2. I see you are working with another company. Can you tell me why you want to leave?
3. How do you think your past experience has prepared you for this job?
4. What do you know about this company?
5. Are you prepared to work in the interest of the company?
6. Tell me about yourself
7. What is your greatest weakness
8. Are you qualified for this job and what can you do for the company?
9. How long do you expect to remain employed with this company if we hire you?
- 10.Can you describe any supervisory experience you have had
- 11.What are your salary requirements for both long and short term?
- 12.How would your colleagues describe you?
- 13.I see that you have no significant experience in the type of work involved in this position. How will you cope?
- 14.What would stop you from accepting this job
- 15.Are you talking to other organizations?
- 16.Why are you looking for a change of employer now
- 17.How does this position fit into your career goals?

