**Case Study: eSkills Recruitment**

**CHAPTER 1**

**CASE STUDY**

“eSkills Recruitment” is a human resource search and selection specialist in the IT industry. The company has 15 offices nationwide and offers various services to their clients and job candidates, including recruitment, resourcing, outsourcing, employee relations, executive searches, change management, occupational health and safety, career management, training, and skills refreshment/updating courses. The theme is “The ‘it’ recruiter for IT” and the owners are proud that the offices are up-to-date with the latest in technology. The management of eSkills has been thinking of becoming more environmentally aware as an organization, and are considering introducing some new company policies. This will be the first time they have undertaken a corporate-wide approach to environmental activities and they believe that this may require a whole new strategy. They are willing to commit time and resources, but they are uncertain about what is occurring in the different offices and believe that they need more information before committing to this new strategy. Therefore, they have asked the Business Professor to arrange for a group of students to undertake a research project with the aim to discover the current environmental activities undertaken in the eSkills offices and the attitudes to changing the company policies. You are one of the students in this group meeting with the manager to discuss these issues and define the scope of the research.

**CHAPTER 2**

**CASE STUDY**

The management of eSkills Recruitment has asked for a research project to discover the current environmental activities undertaken in the eSkills offices and the attitudes to changing the company policies. The specific purpose of the project has been assigned to you. That eSkills has asked for could be seen as quite general in its focus, however, so think about how you can refine the topic. Is there sufficient interest from the offices? What types of environment activities can be done? Will changes in recycling or waste disposal cost extra money? Are changes worth pursuing? What will clients or candidates think about the potential changes - if anything?

Are there other research questions that could be asked?

What do you see as the main advantage and disadvantage of each potential project?

How interested and able are you to undertake each alternative?

**CHAPTER 3**

**CASE STUDY**

The management of eSkills asked the Business Professor to arrange a group of students for the research project. It is identified that both the Manager and the Business Professor would be supervising this project. In her class, the Business Professor announces that there is an opportunity for students to work on this project for extra credit.

What are some of the questions that you should ask yourself before volunteering to work on the project?

What types of supervisor would you most want and why?

What issues would you want to include in any supervision agreement?

**CHAPTER 4**

**CASE STUDY**

The Business Professor was asked to arrange members of your class into groups of between three and five students for the research project. Your class comprises a range of full- and part-time students, but you have not worked with any of them in the past.

How would you go about selecting your group members?

Explain why you would, or would not, want a group contract?

**CHAPTER 5**

**CASE STUDY**

The research project wants to discover the current environmental activities undertaken in the eSkills offices and the attitudes to changing the company policies. You are planning on surveying each office manager and relevant staff to find out what they think about the idea. Given you will be undertaking surveys, there is human intervention and thus you have to get ethics approval.

What types of ethical issues might you need to consider?

One of your group works part-time for a competitor HR company. Does this raise any new ethical issues? How would you deal with them?

**CHAPTER 6**

**CASE STUDY**

Because the purpose of the research project is to discover the current environmental activities undertaken in the eSkills offices and the attitudes to changing the company policies, set out a plan of the process you will undertake to answer your research questions. You can progress the project only after you have had this checked by the Professor and the management of eSkills to make sure that the project will address the problem they have in the way that they want. Thus the research plan is essential before the research can really begin.

Develop three alternative research problems, taking a descriptive, a causal, and an exploratory approach to the research topic.

List the activities that you believe need to be undertaken for one of the alternatives and develop a draft Gantt chart that includes timelines to help keep the project within the allotted time.

**CHAPTER 7**

**CASE STUDY**

Before interviewing any of the eSkills staff, it is important to start by undertaking a review of the current literature that might be relevant to project. This is part of your secondary data gathering, but also grounds your topic in appropriate theory.

What sorts of keywords would you use to develop a concept map for examining the question (some topics that might be included are environmentally aware offices, office recycling, and office waste management).

Identify an appropriate industry or governmental site that has information that would be of some assistance.

**CHAPTER 8**

**CASE STUDY**

When trying to discover the views of office managers and relevant staff, decide on the type of data-gathering technique that you will use. At some stage you will have to make contact with the managers and staff to discover their views, but should this be done using qualitative or quantitative research methods, or both?

Are there any secondary sources of data that you can think of that would be valuable to assist in this project?

Identify two alternative qualitative and two alternative quantitative ways that you could look at this project and explain the benefits and disadvantages of each to eSkills.

What type of research do you think would best suite eSkills’ needs, and why?

**CHAPTER 9**

**CASE STUDY**

Qualitative research can help in exploring the general views of what staff think about establishing new environmentally aware policies. This may be the main research approach or might assist in refining ideas to be pursued in the quantitative phase of the research (if required). Your group has decided to begin this process by undertaking a focus group with staff members.

Identify the issues you want to probe in this focus group.

Do you want any specific job roles in the groups?

Do you think you should have personal interviews with specific staff and why?

**CHAPTER 10**

**CASE STUDY**

From the qualitative research results, a number of interesting views were identified. Two of the issues are critical to eSkills: (1) that staff generally thought that undertaking more environmentally aware activities in the office was a “great idea”, but (2) they were also concerned that it would result in more work for them with no benefit. You also found in your qualitative research that general staff and the managers seemed to have some different views on these issues, primarily that the general staff were more interested in the environment than the managers. The manager of eSkills wants to know how representative those views are. The next step is to write and distribute a very brief survey to be used to gather a large enough number of responses to be statistically analyzed.

Explain what type/types of analysis you could use to explore further the issues identified above.

Identify whether there are any statistical requirements of the data to allow them to be examined using the proposed techniques.

Design questions that would allow you to explore these issues.

**CHAPTER 11**

**CASE STUDY**

Once the results of the qualitative and quantitative methods used to gather the attitudes to the introduction of environmentally aware activities to the office have been analyzed and interpreted, you can start thinking about recommendations. This is a good opportunity to again sit with the group and the supervisor to discuss the results and determine the main views from all of the staff, and, in turn, what the group will be recommending to the management of eSkills. The results of the two stages have shown that most staff and managers believe that not enough is being done in form of recycle paper, inks, and cartridges, and that there is generally a positive disposition toward the proposed policy changes. The empirical results did confirm that for some staff, they did not care significantly about the environment to make major changes that would cost excessive funds.

How might you draw these results into recommendations?

What additional research would you suggest that eSkills do before making a final decision about changes to the company’s environmental policies? (They do have some additional money and time to fund additional research, if needed.)

**CHAPTER 12**

**CASE STUDY**

You have collected all the data and analyzed the results for eSkills. These suggest that there does appear to be an interest by staff to do more for the environment in the office in the form of recycling and waste disposal. While some staff think eSkills should not undertake costly activities if there is no benefit to the company or staff. This has led your group to recommend that eSkills seeks to make specific changes to their office environmental policies. You plan to highlight that they need to look at their waste disposal strategy if they want the staff to be involved. Now you need to develop your report and presentation. You know how important it is to communicate your findings clearly.

How do you think it is best to report on the focus group responses?

If you are going to look at differences between general staff and managers, what type of charts do you think would be most effective?

Develop hypothetical tables with captions/titles and labels to present the data.

**CHAPTER 13**

**CASE STUDY**

The project is almost complete, but it must be written as a report to be given to the management of eSkills. The entire group must work together on this! Each member will be in charge of designing and writing certain sections.

Develop the table of contents for your report to eSkills’ management. If the whole document has to be 45 pages, how long would each section be?

If you were writing an academic report, would the sections change? Why?

**CHAPTER 14**

**CASE STUDY**

The day has come to present the final report to the management of eSkills. The written report has been printed up and will be given to the management team with an oral presentation of the main findings. Different parts of the presentation have been given to each group member, and the PowerPoint slides were prepared to include the main tables and graphics.

Think of three questions that audience might ask and develop an answer.

If you have a group presentation, how will you allocate responding to questions?

**CHAPTER 15**

**CASE STUDY (EPILOGUE)**

The final report was presented in both written and oral forms, and you were congratulated by the Business Professor and eSkills Recruitment’s management team for your work. The manager even recommended that you present your report to an annual meeting of all eSkills’ office managers, which resulted in their offering one of the team a part-time job. eSkills has used the information to assist them in introducing a new company policy on environmental awareness, plus an award system to encourage environmental awareness. Overall, it was an ideal learning experience for the students and had valuable insights for the client: the elusive win-win situation.