
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY IN FAMILY BUSINESS

(Prof.ssa Giulia Flamini & Prof. Rocco Palumbo)

Course positioning

Human Resource Management Strategy in Family Business is a course included in the Business Administration curriculum of the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration & Economics.

Pre-requisites for the course

None. However, basic understanding of Organization Theory and Organizational Behaviors topics is recommended.

Course description and learning objectives

Human resources management (HRM) as systems of practices are adopted to manage people in organizations and influence employees' competencies, behaviours, and performances.

In the last 25 years, HRM studies moved from the assumption that the HR function has an administrative role exclusively to the awareness that HRM has a central and strategic role to achieve a viable competitive advantage.

An increasing attention toward HRM systems increased when Huselid (1995) proved a significant relationship between the sophistication of HRM practices and the market value per employee, opening a new bulk of studies dedicated to further investigate relationships between HRM and performances.

Research places a particular emphasis on the impact of various and different combinations of HRM practices (e.g.: workforce planning, training and development, recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, career planning management, compensation, internal communication, and job design), which are expected to greatly affect individual and organizational performances. Under this assumption, an

organization should consistently configure its whole HRM system to ensure long-term survival.

Such considerations are valid for any organization, and thus family firms are not an exception. Family businesses show distinct core competencies that result in unique sources of competitive advantages. For many family firms, the dynamics and complexity of the contingency dimensions have increased. Therefore, the effective responsiveness to the required strategic and organizational changes is a key concern. Family firms could survive thanks to particular cognitive interpretations of the fit between their strategies, organization variables, and contingent dimensions. Under this assumption, family firms should consistently configure their whole HRM system to ensure their long-term survival. HRM practices in family firms affect employee outcomes, which consequently influence organizational outcomes, thereby affecting firm outcomes.

The course covers the principles of Human Resource Management and their effects on family firms. The focus of the course is how a family firm can cope with strategic and organizational changes by leveraging the adoption of an aligned bundle of HRM practices. Teaching activities will have a twofold concern: on the one hand, attention will be paid to unravelling the main issues related to human resource management; on the other hand, it will discuss how a family firm can cope with strategic and organizational changes by leveraging an aligned bundle of HRM practices.

Specific attention will be paid to the relationship of family firms with the external environment, as well as to the influence of the organization's strategies, culture, and size on the organization's design and strategies for managing people.

The course is structured in 3 different sections:

1. Introduction to systemic and strategic human resource management (9 lectures by prof. Rocco Palumbo);
2. Introduction to the peculiar traits of family firms (2 lectures by prof. Giulia Flamini);
3. Critical application of Human Resources Management in Family Firms (7 lectures by prof. Giulia Flamini).

The course will make the student able to understand the organizational functioning of family firms and to familiarize with the basic concepts to design, implement, and change the human resource management of family business. Lastly, yet importantly, the course helps students to become aware of the uniqueness of family firms and how a fitting arrangement of HRM practices can boost their ability to survive their environment.

The goal of the course is to provide theories and tools and develop skills for the analysis of family business dynamics with a particular focus on HRM. This will enable us to develop the ability and expertise to analyse, elaborate and solve complex organizational problems. Alongside conventional teaching methods, the discussion of best HRM

practices and case studies will be used to advance individual and collective learning experiences.

By the end of the course, attending students will have understood how:

- The arrangement of proper human resource management practices in family business can help improving organizational performance and viability;
- Models, theories and concepts concerning organizational dynamics and human resource management systems can be applied to promote the effectiveness of individuals and groups in family firms.

Furthermore, the students will be encouraged to develop:

- Tailored skills for the analysis of both organizational variables and human resource management practices, which are particularly relevant for “to-be” managers of family firms;
- A richer and more complex "representation" of organizational behaviors in family business; this will allow students to effectively contribute to organizational development and excellence.

Teaching Methods

Lectures are characterized by the transfer of knowledge and the strong interaction within the classroom; analyses of situations, problems, and business cases facilitate learning participants.

Regular attending students are strongly recommended to participate in all the lectures and all the business cases' preparations and presentations.

The course uses readings, lectures, cases, individual and team assignments, and class discussions to meet its goals. Case assignments provide an essential foundation for class discussion and must be completed before each class session. At the end of the syllabus, the class schedule lists the due dates for cases and other assignments. Lectures highlight key points from the readings and provide additional information to supplement the lessons. Cases offer you the opportunity to apply what you have learned to real-world issues and scenarios. Because each of you brings unique perspectives and experiences to the class, participation in class discussions and activities is essential to your learning and other class members. To further enrich your learning, you will also be matched with a BAE Teaching Assistant.

Required Textbook

- Schuman, A. M., Sage-Hayward, W., & Ransburg, D. (2016). Human resources in the family business: maximizing the power of your people. Springer.
- Noe, R. A., Hollenbeck, J. R., Gerhart, B., & Wright, P. M. (2019). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Education.

Additional Textbooks

- Zellweger, T. Managing the Family Business: Theory and Practice, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2017: ISBN: 9781783470709.

Other learning sources

- Flamini G., & Gnan, L. (2017). A forty years' literature review on HRM in family businesses: re-shaping the research agenda. 77th Annual Meeting of Academy of Management in Atlanta
- Giulia Flamini & Luca Gnan (2019). The Role of Awareness in Designing Human Resources Management Practices in Family Firms: A Configurational Model. Chapter 15 in Handbook of Research on Entrepreneurial Leadership and Competitive Strategy in Family Business edited by José Manuel Saiz-Álvarez and Jesús Manuel Palma-Ruiz. ISBN13: 9781522580126 | ISBN10: 1522580123, EISBN13: 9781522580133, DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-8012-6.
- Flamini, G., Gnan, L. (2019). Configurations of HRM practices in family firms: goals and organizational performances. 79th Academy of Management (AOM) in Boston.

We will post the slides on the course website after each lecture.

The slides do not represent a support for an effective and successful preparation to the exam of the course. They represent only a help to facilitate the transfer of the knowledge to students during the lectures.

Case Discussions

Regular attending students are expected to be fully engaged in the entire learning process. This means that regular attending students are expected to:

- 1) prepare the assigned readings of the cases prior to each class;
- 2) prepare as a group work a PowerPoint presentation on the case, based on the specific assignment;

3) come to class prepared to participate and to discuss in order to enhance the learning of the individual and the class.

On the web site of the course, for each case, students can find the relative case assignment. Please read carefully the questions before the session and use them for preparing the PowerPoint presentation.

Each student will be involved in the class discussion on the cases and tie the assigned reading for the session. The objective is to bring all class members into the discussion. The cases are designed to integrate the concepts from the case into the context of the course. The preparation and the discussion of the cases do not exclude the study of the theoretical concepts useful for the discussion of the cases themselves and for the passing of the exam of the course.

With the cases' discussions in CLASSROOM, each student will develop:

1. The ability to set the parameters for the problem (key concepts from the case).
2. A depth of knowledge about the case subject (understanding of material, good response to the observations of others).
3. The ability to tie-in case with other course concepts.
4. The ability to get others involved in the discussion.

To discuss the cases effectively, students should:

- Be prepared with facts and specific quotes from the case.
- Be prepared to make a comment, ask a question, or make a reflection about the case.

During the discussion, students should:

- Take a position on a question or a point.
- Ask clarifying questions.
- Help keep the discussion moving and on track.
- Help draw others into the discussion.
- Integrate theories and content from other cases.

During the discussion, students should not:

- Be unprepared and show your lack of knowledge.
- Monopolize the discussion.
- Make irrelevant comments.
- Be insensitive to other's desire to speak or to their opinions.

All the regular attending students are kindly invited to build up work groups (MINIMUM 3 PERSONS – MAXIMUM 5 PERSONS). Each work group should prepare a PowerPoint

presentation for each case. Into the first slide, the names of the students belonging to the group should be reported.

The structure of the presentation should follow the following outline:

1. One or more introductory slides aimed at describing/reporting the story, the characters, all the necessary elements to clearly define the context and the boundaries of the case.
2. One slide mentioning the questions of the assignment and underlining the learning goals of the case.
3. One or more slides reporting the answers to each question of the assignment.
4. One or more slides reporting the final remarks on the case.
5. One closing slide about the lessons learned after the group discussion of the case.

How to prepare the PowerPoint presentation of the case?

Introduction – short presentation of case, short description of the problems and situations that should be coped with the discussion.

Diagnosis – Problem setting of the context and of the situation. Description of the main facts and elements connected with the concepts and models of the course. What went wrong and which actions/situations, instead, were right? Which elements could be considered for the diagnosis?

Solution – Students should provide a possible solution to questions/problems related with the case and a viable and clear indication on how to approach the situation and how to solve it. The entire proposal should represent a consistent action plan in terms of behaviours and expected results.

Conclusions – Conclusions should not be longer than 300-500 words and should provide a description on how the situation and the problem characterized the case, on how Organizational Behavior schemata might help to solve the case, and what the proposed solution might generate in terms of organizational consequences.

Lessons learned – At the end of the presentation elements/suggestions/advice that we “take home” from the case discussion should be clearly identified and reported.

NOTE: During the case discussion, students should explicitly address the context and the different situations with concepts related with organizational choices in family firms and with models and theories of this course.

Case Discussions’ Class Participation

We believe that the best way to learn, especially about organizational choices in family firms, is to actively participate in your education. In this class, “participation” is defined in terms of quality contributions to class discussion and exercises. There are four prerequisites for successful participation:

1. Be here on time and prepared. If you're not here, you can't contribute much to class discussion. If you need to miss class for a predictable reason (e.g., job interview, athletic competition), please notify us at least 24 hours in advance so that we can make arrangements for any in-class exercises and so that you can obtain the materials distributed during the class. Of course, we realize that in some cases unforeseeable emergencies arise. Although we will not directly penalize you for non-attendance, be aware that multiple absences will indirectly hurt you by preventing you from participating in class, thereby lowering your participation grade. To contribute to class discussion, you must come to class having carefully prepared all assignments (i.e., readings, cases, exercises).
2. Be brave. Everyone in this class is smart, interesting, and has unique life experiences to share. You will get the most out of this course if you ask questions, voice opinions, and express your thoughts to one another. If you feel uncomfortable talking in class, please send me an email or set up an appointment to talk with me early in the semester. We will do everything we can to accommodate each of your individual circumstances, but we can only do so if they are brought to our attention.
3. Be courteous. Successful participation includes treating your classmates in a respectful and professional manner. Listen carefully to the comments and questions that your classmates voice. You may learn something new from their perspectives, and you will be able to avoid simply repeating something that another classmate has said earlier in discussion. Also, it is perfectly acceptable for you to voice disagreement with an opinion provided by another student. Open debate often leads to the most thoughtful and informative class discussions. However, please voice your disagreement in a kind and considerate manner.
4. Be engaged. This class is "unplugged." Once class starts, all electronics (e.g., computers, cell phones, tablets, etc.) should be turned off and put away. If you need to use a device because of a language or disability issue, you need to secure permission at the beginning of the class. The misuse of an electronic device (e.g., surfing the web or texting) will adversely affect your grade.

In order to facilitate the visioning of its own PowerPoint presentation in classroom, each work group should take a personal computer with PowerPoint installed and an available VGA connection.

By the 8pm of the day before of the case discussion, all regular attending students should send the case presentation prepared to the course's Instructors.

Policy for Late Assignments

As in the business world, work must be received on time in order to receive full credit. You are always welcome to hand in an assignment before its due date if you know that

you will be busy as the due date approaches. If you think that you will not be able to complete an assignment by the stated due date, please speak with us in advance to make alternative arrangements. Our policy on late assignments will depend on the specific circumstances surrounding the problem, and thus may differ from student to student. Providing advance notice about a late assignment will minimize the penalty you receive on that assignment, but does not guarantee that there will be no penalty for turning the assignment in late.

Scheduling of lectures

Students are advised to check the correct course scheduling on the course website and register themselves in the course newsletter to access all related communications.

Exams

The exam is an oral test and it includes some questions directly connected to the course textbooks. You may be asked to discuss the models and the theories presented during the course. You will be asked to interpret some real incidents and to focus your attention to some specific theoretical issues.

Emails, Office Hours & Feedbacks

The teachers of the course make office hours by appointment to be agreed via email.

- Prof.ssa **Giulia Flamini**, (Department of Management and Law)
E-mail: giulia.flamini@uniroma2.it
- Prof. **Rocco Palumbo**, (Department of Management and Law)
E-mail: rocco.palumbo@uniroma2.it

We are committed to responding to emails within a day. If you do not receive an answer within this period, please send the email again.

Attendance

An active attendance and a constant participation in classroom are suggested. Formal classroom monitoring rules for attendance will be introduced.

NOTE: Attendance to the first class session is mandatory. Important information about the course and the instructor's expectations are given during the first session. If you know that you will have to be absent for one session, please contact your instructor to ensure that absence from a particular session is acceptable.



Class Schedule

Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
Introduction to systemic and strategic human resource management			
1	Introduction to Human Resource Management	<p>In this lecture, we analyse how HRM practices can help organizations to survive and create value. After an introduction of role and activity of HRM Department, we will discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How HRM can help the organization to be competitive and how the today's challenges influence HRM • The role of HRM in the formulation of organizational strategy and how integrate the functions of HRM with the formulation of competitive strategies <p>The importance of specific competences for the HRM managers</p>	<p>Noe, et al. (2017). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage. Chapter 1 1-53</p>
2	HRM practices (1)	<p>This lecture introduces basic concepts of HRM practices. During the lecture, we present and describe the basic characteristics of four particular HRM practices: planning and recruitment, selection and placement, training and performance management. In particular, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss how to align a company's strategic direction with its human resource planning • Determine the labor demand for workers in various job categories • Discuss the advantage and disadvantages of various ways of eliminating a labor surplus and avoiding a labor shortage • Describe the recruitment policies that organizations adopt to make job vacancies more attractive • List the sources from which job applicants can be drawn, their relative advantages and disadvantages, ad the methods for evaluating them 	<p>Noe, et al. (2019). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage. Chapter 5-6-7-8.</p>

Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
3	HRM practices (2)	<p>This lecture introduces basic concepts of HRM practices. During the lecture, we present and describe the basic characteristics of four particular HRM practices: planning and recruitment, selection and placement, training and performance management. In particular, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the basic scientific properties of personnel selection methods, including reliability, validity, and generalizability • Discuss how the characteristic of a job, an organization, or an applicant affect the utility of any test • List the common methods used in selecting human resources • Discuss how training, informal learning, and knowledge management can contribute to continuous learning companies' business strategy • Conduct a needs assessment • Evaluate employees' readiness for training • Design a training session to maximize learning 	<p>Noe, et al. (2019). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage. Chapter 5-6-7-8.</p>
4	HRM practices (3)	<p>This lecture introduces basic concepts of HRM practices. During the lecture, we present and describe the basic characteristics of four particular HRM practices: planning and recruitment, selection and placement, training and performance management. In particular, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose appropriate evaluation design and training outcomes based on the training objectives and evaluation purpose • Identify the major parts of an affective performance management process • Identify the five criteria for effective performance management systems • Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of the different sources of performance information 	<p>Noe, et al. (2019). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage. Chapter 5-6-7-8.</p>

Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
5	HRM practices (4)	<p>During the lecture, we present and describe the basic characteristics of four particular HRM practices: employee development, compensation, benefit, internal communications. In particular, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how employee development contributes to strategies related to employee retention, development of intellectual capital, and business growth • Discuss the steps in the development planning process • Discuss current trends in using formal education for development • Relate how assessment of personal type, work behaviours, and job performance can be used for employee development • List the main decision areas and concepts in employee compensation • Describe the major administrative tools used to manage employee compensation • Discuss how pay influences individual employees, and describe three theories that explain the effect of compensation on individuals. 	<p>Noe, et al. (2017). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage. Chapter 9-11-12</p>
6	HRM practices (5)	<p>During the lecture, we present and describe the basic characteristics of four particular HRM practices: employee development, compensation, benefit, internal communications. In particular, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the fundamental pay programs for recognizing employees' contributions to organization's success • Discuss issue related to performance-based pay for executives • Explain the major provisions of employee benefits programs • Explain the importance of effectively communicating 	<p>Noe, et al. (2017). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage. Chapter 9-11-12</p>
7	Leadership	<p>During the lecture, we will delve into a topic which is essential to augment the contribution of employees to organizational performances, emphasizing the importance of leadership for the purpose of employees' development and commitment. In particular, we will analyze:</p>	<p>Noe, et al. (2017). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage.</p>

Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The style of leadership; • The implication of leadership styles on individual and collective behaviors; • The side effects of leadership. 	Chapter 9-11-12
8	Organizational power and conflict management	<p>During the lecture, we will analyze conflicting dynamics within the organization and topics related to power management. More specifically, we will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The definition of power; • The understanding of triggers of conflicts; • The HRM practices which can be implemented to fix conflicts. 	Noe, et al. (2017). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage. Chapter 9-11-12
9	HRM practices and Firm performances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial performances • Organizational performances Mutual gain approach	<p>During this lecture, first, we describe the different distribution and presence of HRM practices in family firms. We evaluate the impact of human resource management practices on the organizations and even on the family business. Afterward, scholars developed a considerable bulk of studies to promote the test of positive relationships between HRM and performance. In particular, we will analyze why HRMP are important for all type of organizations not only from firm perspective but also even from employees' outlook.</p>	Noe, et al. (2017). Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage Chapter 10
Introduction to the peculiar traits of family firms			
10	The nature, importance, and uniqueness of the family business	<p>The goal of the lecture is to explore the nature of the family business. We begin with a series of formal definition of family business and then we explore introductory concepts for describing and analysing what is a family firms and their importance in the global economy. In particular, we will explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions of the family business • The distinction between family and nonfamily firms • Definition of family business by type of family involvement, 	Zellweger, T. Managing the Family Business: Theory and Practice.

Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
		The theory of Circle models of family influence	
11	Strategic management in family business	<p>We will present the potential sources of competitive advantages and disadvantages, which will be important for the strategic positioning of the family firm. More specifically, we will explore how the particular goals of family businesses impact in the strategic decision. After we will examine different approaches to explain the source of competitive advantages and disadvantages for family firms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Typical strengths and weakness of family firms • Socioemotional Wealth • Agency perspective • Resource-based perspective • Organizational identity perspective • Institutional perspective • Paradox perspective 	<p>Zellweger, T. Managing the Family Business: Theory and Practice. Chapter 6 116-194</p>
12	<p>Innovation and Change in family business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family business life cycle • Family first, business first <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professionalization & Managerialization 	<p>We will present how change and adaptation are essential prerequisites for prospering and surviving in today's dynamic marketplace. As with any other type of firm, the ability to handle change is critical for family business. However, in light of their focus on tradition and their longer-term business outlook, family firms find dealing with change to be particularly challenging and pressing task.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Firm life cycle • Family Succession • Change management in family firms • Meanings of "Professionalization" and the practical implications in family business 	<p>Zellweger, T. Managing the Family Business: Theory and Practice. Chapter 8 312-361</p>



Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
		Meanings of “Managerialization” and the practical implications in family business	
Critical application of Human Resources Management in Family Firms			
12	HRM in family firms	<p>During this lecture, we explore the field and evolution of research on Human Resources Management (HRM) in family firms since this topic has become crucial for their survival and success. Specifically, we investigate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• what international research know about the HRM topics in family firms• Which are the trends• Family employees• Nonfamily employees• The relation between family employees and non-family employees	<p>Flamini G., & Gnan, L. (2017). A forty years' literature review on HRM in family businesses: re-shaping the research agenda. 77th Annual Meeting of Academy of Management in Atlanta</p>

Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
HRM IN FAMILY FIRMS			
13	Investigating the effects of professionalization in HRM in family business	<p>In this lecture, we explore the role of formal and informal HRMP in family business and how the role of family or non-family HRM professional could add a particular meaning and power to HRMP. We investigate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal HRMP • Informal HRMP • Family HR manager • Nonfamily HR manger • Stewardship culture • Professional culture 	
14	HRMP configurations in family firms The Administrative configuration	<p>In this lecture, we explore how the HR function may perform a strategic role in family firms. We analyse how the strategic role of the HR function implies a shift from a deterministic and mechanical approach to the study of organizations to a more psychological and organic one.</p> <p>We analyse how a family firm should coherently shape its own HRM system to warrant a long-term survival and we explore the possible advantage of adopting different practices in family firms. To exploit the roles of complementarity, congruence, and synergy, we describe the firm's HRMP choice from a configurational perspective.</p> <p>After we will describe the firs possible configuration: the Administrative configuration.</p>	<p>Giulia Flamini & Luca Gnan (2019). The Role of Awareness in Designing Human Resources Management Practices in Family Firms: A Configurational Model.</p>

Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
15	The Shared configuration and The Professional configuration	<p>During this lecture, we will present the second possible configuration: The Shared configuration. Family firms that presents a dynamic and complex environmental dimensions search for organizational identity and affective commitment, where the personal relationships collaborative behaviours became the core objective of HRM.</p> <p>After, we will present the third configuration: The Professional configuration. Family firms are in a relatively stable and complex environment have need to manage people through rules, complex procedures, articulated plans, aiming at the highest standardization of processes and efficiency. The professional configuration provides professionalization in functions/divisions and tries to incorporate and develop managerial skills.</p>	<p>Giulia Flamini & Luca Gnan (2019). The Role of Awareness in Designing Human Resources Management Practices in Family Firms: A Configurational Model. Chapter 15 in Handbook of Research on Entrepreneurial Leadership and Competitive Strategy in Family Business</p>
16	The Integrated configuration	<p>In this lecture, we will present the fourth configuration: The Integrated configuration. In a complex and highly dynamic environmental dimensions, family firms have to emphases on both efficiency and effectiveness in direct response to business needs. Family firms search for organizational identity and affective commitment, creating an integrated environment where they manage both the personal relationships of individuals' working together, showing collaborative behaviors, and the functions or the divisions of the organizational structure.</p>	<p>Giulia Flamini & Luca Gnan (2019). The Role of Awareness in Designing Human Resources Management Practices in Family Firms: A Configurational Model. Chapter 15 in Handbook of Research on Entrepreneurial Leadership and Competitive Strategy in Family Business</p>

Lecture	Topic	Subtopic	Suggesting Reading
17	Family Business case	FIBRA CASE	Yedder, M. B. (2018). Human resource management in family business succession: victim or saviour?. Journal of enterprising culture, 26(04), 401-421.
18	Performance and goals of HRMP configurations in family firms	<p>During this lecture, we will explore, first, the configurational perspective. WE WILL lend a systemic viewpoint from which to project HRMP composition and we will claim that the positive performance evolves from a bundle of interrelated HR practices, which together form an internally consistent whole. After, we will explore the organizational value of different configurations of HRMP in family. Moving from coordination theory, the lecture proposes and investigates the four HRMP configurations and analyses their functional goals in the achievement of organizational performances.</p> <p>In particular, we will answer to the follow questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do family firms configure their HRMP? • Which organizational goals do they combine? • Which organizational performances do they achieve? 	Flamini, G., Gnan, L. (2019). Configurations of HRM practices in family firms: goals and organizational performances. 79th Academy of Management (AOM) in Boston