

PERSONAL POINT OF VIEW REGARDING THE EVOLUTION OF ORGANISATIONS AND THEIR MANAGEMENT IN ROMANIA IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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***Abstract:** The performance and competition skill of an organization depends greatly on the contents and quality of the management of human resources. In the developed countries this has gained the status of the main field of scientific preoccupations and effervescence.*

The purpose of this essay is to present a personal view regarding the evolution of the human resources management in Romanian organizations. Two important concepts for the future economy based on knowledge will be discussed in this paper, namely: the organization and its evolution in the context of the management of human resources.

The present-day **organization** is a living organism; it is a new form of human expression. The sociological approach of the organization states that it represents a system of groups of individuals, associated on the basis of some common interests, which organize and co-ordinate their activity and resources with the purpose of accomplishing some objectives.

I consider that the organization which will survive to the development of the management based on knowledge will be the one which will adapt the most to changing. The field that the associated group has an interest in may be religion, economy, society. The way of managing and structuring the resources and the activity constitutes a generator for the different classifications of organizations. The objectives get, in turn, avatars; the groups of individuals may associate in order to turn an ideal into reality, to promote an idea, to support the community or obtain material advantages.

The organization we study today is one that is itself the result of some changes turned up at the level of the environment, of the information system, of the society, politics and morals.

In order to survive, the great corporations reinvent themselves all the time. The new organizational realities had to transform themselves to provide the useful applicable instruments for the solving of the new problems occurred. The organization, as an economical and social structure, is provided with an essential component of organism which has to go through an intensive process of learning in order to adapt to the continuous changeable conditions. Thus, the management of human resources should become the supporter of this new trend and moreover, to create the necessary framework.

Unlike before when the area of implication of the organization was limited to the business partners, now the organization involves and acts an active role in the community life, and behaves like the active protector of the environment. There are many organizations that get involved in the community in this way: Connex, Rompetrol, Coca-Cola. The great corporations have special defined missions in order to involve actively in the community life. They want to get beyond the people's psychological barrier who perceive them like simple organizations. The role of organization in society has a new dimension. Even those who through the nature of their activity harm the people's health, for example the cigarette

producers, are the supporters of various programmes through which they actually defend people's interests - for instance: the slogan 'Tobacco affects health seriously'.

The new type of organization has partnerships with all the media it interacts: the clients are approached as partners, the employees are treated as partners. If the pioneers in management called this 'human resources' (people are the most important active of the organization), lately the concept of 'human capital' has started to be used. The focus moved from the interest in the way the groups of individuals organize for an efficient activity, from the salary systems to the management of information and knowledge.

But is knowledge really exploited up to its real dimension within the organizations? I think that at this very moment the organization in Romania not only that is not prepared for a management based on knowledge but it is not even exploiting the employees' knowledge. Why? Because, in the first place, they do not know their employees well, they do not know what really motivates them or what keeps them within the organization.

We all have access to information; all organizations have access to technology. In these circumstances which would be the field where we could talk about a competitive advantage?

People! It is them on which the success or failure of the organization depends on. Depending on how the organization manages to attract the best on the market and how it succeeds in keeping them, it would find its place on the market as having competence or not. Its study should be made from the perspective of some evolutionist processes: selection-retention, the inner mechanisms being those which assure its survival in a competitive environment. It resembles a living organism that has to adapt to the changes turned up to the factors of the macro or micro- environment where it exists.

The companies' capabilities will make the difference on the market, especially the human one: 'human capability'. The notion itself defines the dynamic systems that integrate the actives of the organization. The human one refers to the system of organizing the human resources, to the coordination of knowledge and the individual and team behavior, of the management, so that it contributes with maximum efficiency to the performance of the organization.

The managerial function implies obtaining results with and through the people we lead. Apart from this generic role there are specific roles that management has depending on the position in the hierarchy.

Role is seen as a set of behaviours that society expects from the individuals in a given context. In a social structure the individuals are distributed main roles depending on the hierarchical position, and a set of secondary roles less connected to the regular activity, but without which the respective system would not function at optimum parameters. Thus, depending on the hierarchical position and the major function held within the organization, we can classify management in: the top one, with a decision-making role, the medium one that has to communicate the information between the operational and the strategic, and the operational one that acts taking into consideration the information received from the superior levels and also the exterior environment.

For the perspective of changing, all three levels accomplish the effort of adapting the organization, taking into consideration the information received from outside and processed within, so that they generate the changes imposed by a profitable survival.

The process of knowing what cannot be seen means in fact knowing the organization. It is about those unwritten behaviour of the employees, about the working relationships within the organization. In order to be seen in the evolution of all its capabilities, the organization should be studied in the process of changing that has become a current reality of the economy where most of the organizations evolve. We can observe, in this study of changing, all the

surface mechanisms chosen and directed so that they may lead to the wanted results, and the deep mechanisms created to serve for personal or group objectives.

In a troubled environment, the companies that succeeded in keeping up with the changes are not those which adapted their technology, but those which valued the human capital. The last years' results prove that the managers who discovered, by renewing the systems of managing the human resources, how to raise the level of competence of their employees, how to delegate authority at all levels so that they mobilize people, have succeeded in dealing with challenges and economic crises. Their implication supposed the application of a new style of management whose objective is no longer control, but partnership.

The individual should be treated with respect and his capacities should be trusted. I think that the following years are going to be crucial for the organizations. Why? The employees are getting more and more dissatisfied, they are working overtime without being paid, work is not appreciated, no one is really interested in their needs, the managers are not really interested in their subordinates. This is the context where most of the companies are functioning at present. At the national level, this state of discontent persists in Romania. However, where does this come from?

Within the circumstances of a continuous change from the macro to the micro level, each person manages to deal with this change better or worse. Why? Because they do not know how to manage the process, because they are still resistant to change. Who do the organizations work with? With these persons that are incapable of dealing with change.

What is the context?

- ✓ Technology is in continuous development;
- ✓ The organization is more or less prepared to deal with change, even less the employees that come from such an environment;
- ✓ The concept of 'life quality' is not known in Romania;
- ✓ The notion of spare time is missing;
- ✓ The access to information is at hand to anyone;
- ✓ The employees look for means of training outside the organization, developing new competences about which the organization does not even know ;
- ✓ It has appeared and it is in development the concept of new economy based on the management of knowledge, but without a clear shaping at the organization level.

This is the reality in which the organization has to prove its quality, be it a public institution, a private or a non-governmental organization.

Developing a new vision based on supporting initiative, developing a common vision has many a time given chills even to the most courageous managers. Why? Because somewhere at the subconscious level they are still the disciples of the old system of personnel administration. The human resource is many times seen as a threat. Most of the times managers want subordinates in order to control them. The situation in which the employee should be treated as a partner and the relationship with him/her should be one of collaboration, is still an ideal one, unreachable for most of the firms in Romania.

Particularities of the developing phases of human resources management

Under the influence of the economic, social, and cultural conditions the function of personnel has known more phases in its evolution up to the current status of strategically managing the human resources:

1. the 1930s phase:

In this phase the manager's attention is concentrated on the operational elements, the employees being seen only as an able labour force.

2. the 1940s phase:

The administrative character of the human resources reaches its climax being determined by the need of a better organization of people; it is a period when control prevails as a means of managing relationships, and the human resource is considered a cost for the organization.

3. the 1960s phase:

This marks the appearance of the notion of personnel management, the personnel manager being involved in the strategic decision-making of the organization.

4. the 1980s phase which lasts up to the present

It is the phase where the focus moves on the raising of the human potential and on the social relationships within the organization. The decisions made about the human resources have a great importance both on the economic and social plan.

In presenting briefly the phases in the evolution of the human resources management one can notice the classical approach of the human resources. This is a global approach of the employees as masses present in the organization, referred to as 'labour force', 'manpower'; including the training programmes were conceived only to improve people's productivity.

But there was a need of moving from a global approach of the employees to an individual one.

Within the current context the employee is approached individually, focusing on the development of some individual competences.

This thing was favoured by the economic crisis in the world that let one foresee that the renewal of the management systems of human resources was the only way to succeed. Thus, the professional in human resources must have competences centred on knowing people in order to represent a support for a management adapted to the current conditions. This should be a support for the employees submitted to changes generated by the fast evolution of working technologies, of normalization within the actual context of globalization.

I think that now, more than ever, within the circumstances of moving to an economy based on knowledge, on the background of globalization, there is the employees' need to be treated as distinct individualities, not as masses.

Very important in this process of managing change is the identification of a person that has the capacity of being a promoter of change. It is estimated that it may take one organization up to five years to adapt to change, and that change has to start from the level of the organizational culture.

It has been noticed that the organizations that know how to involve their personnel in the company's problems had better results in a shorter period of time. Defining some key competences and projecting a training programme for their development is very important in the process of managing change.

The new human resources management implies, apart from clarifying the roles, the creation of a favourable climate for the opening towards the exterior environment, the setting of a communication system fit to respond to the employees' participation needs, the stimulation of creativity and the acknowledgement of virtues.

In order to accomplish these objectives, before demanding the employees, the managers themselves have to change their behaviour. In order to follow the change, the managerial team has to understand and believe in it.

The success of implementing a management of leading the human resources depends on the managers' capacity, from all levels of the company, to keep up with change.

Within the present context the professional in human resources has the mission of supporting the company in the confrontations with the future challenges as he/she is the

one that has the necessary knowledge, aptitudes and instruments to find efficient solutions, innovative forms of organizing work and promoting the new relationships among managers. The new objective of this strategic managerial system is the conciliation of the individual goals with those of the organization in order to create new organizations, more successful and more human. The new human resources manager is a source for the employees, an agent of change, an administrative expert and a strategic partner for the organization. He/she has to build a unique strategy of human resources.

Why is the strategy of human resources unique? The changes in the economic environment characterised by phenomena such as globalization, transformation of the consumer's behaviour, growth of competition on the market, which are only a few problems that organizations have to face. How is this possible? They have to improve continuously their performance by reducing the costs, innovating the products, improving quality and productivity.

How can it be done so that the decisions regarding the human resources may influence the performance of the organization? In simple terms, the organizations have to improve their efficiency or contribution to raising the profit. Human resources, as a labour force have been traditionally seen as a cost that should be minimized. Rarely have they been considered sources of creating values. The labour force continues to be the highest cost in many organizations and the reduction of employees continues to be a sure strategy in the restructuring and cost reduction operations.

I think that each organization, when reaching such a point, chooses either value creation or cost reduction.

Competition means distinguishing between reducing the personnel, which is still in Romania the main way of reducing costs, and restructuring which implies a re-dimensioning of the organizational structure, because the new structure is more appropriate for the firm's strategy.

Unfortunately in our country, in the phase of developing the human resources management, which is still at the beginning in many Romanian firms, restructuring is many times done based on totally different considerations, cost reduction being the major one.

The recent theories about business strategies highlight human resources as being the supporters of competition advantages. As I have previously mentioned, all organizations have now access to professional technology, to material resources. But what makes the difference? The human resource, the competitive advantage that a firm can have. The competition may imitate everything they want except for the value brought by the human resource of that organization.

Thus, the human resources strategies may be a special source, an important source of competitive advantages.

There is another powerful advantage. It is hard to imitate. A well implemented human resources strategy cannot be imitated by another organization. In order to imitate it, one should know how all the elements of the system interact. The connection with what means organisational culture cannot be imitated. Also, the politics developed along time cannot be imitated.

A competitor can understand if a system is valuable but it is risky to move towards an immediate implementation moreover when there are limits given by the managerial competence, the culture and interpersonal relationships within the organization.

But what can be done in these conditions? Having a competitive strategy of human resources will make the difference among organizations. How is that possible?

I think that motivating the employees will make the difference. I do not mean only money. People want more: they want acknowledgement, appreciation of their work. Work

itself has received a new dimension in people's life. It makes the object of an exchange: reward given after considering the work done; it has at the same time a social function: the working place offers opportunities of knowing new people, of making new friends. Work is a social status, it offers difference, integration in society. It has an intrinsic value for the individual. Work offers the individual self respect, identity.

The motivational aspects should be re-evaluated by each organization.

Taking all these into consideration, I think that the organization should identify those managers that have this competence.

It is not easy to motivate the others. Perseverance is the one that perpetuates a high motivation. I think that each organization should re-evaluate the motivational strategies. They may be useful instruments in raising the positions' performance and in developing the human resources. At the same time they be some starting points in creating some successful strategies and scenarios for the revalorization of human resources.

If at the beginning of the century the labour force was approached as a mass of physical energy that would produce money, now it has been replaced by machines. Now, the labour force is the one that makes the difference and is capable of bringing prosperity to the organizations. In this context, motivation may support this value through the behaviour it induces.

I think that the management of human resources is not ready yet for the employees' avalanche of knowledge, in the context of moving to an economy based on knowledge. For the immediately following period, I consider that it is vital to re-evaluate the way in which the human resource is seen within the organization.

I also think that it is primary to create a strategy of knowing the human resource. It is very important to know which are the human resource's carrier anchors.

Having answers for questions like:

- ✓ Why does this individual stay in my organization?
- ✓ What motivates him/her?
- ✓ What can he/she, and want to bring in the organization?

will make the difference among organizations in the context of a more and more obvious move to a management based on knowledge.

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