

TEAM SPIRIT DEVELOPMENT: AN INTELLIGENT WAY FOR AN EFFECTIVE HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

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Nowadays business organizations must face two major challenges: to cope with the demands of the continuous changing environment and also to be environmentally sustainable. The complexity of the business environment imposes to the management of each organization to renew the traditional practices in order to manage the changes. The most suitable strategy may be to guide the human resources towards knowledge, meaning to reach its complete development, because human resource is the hub for the other resources.

The reality shows that the present technological development is outstanding, and this environment influences continuously the organizations. Inside the organization people have attitudes and behaviours according to the increasingly dynamic internal and external environment, so the human resources management must consider and propose policies which, managing these rapid evolutions, allow a better position of the firm in its business environment, position based on a superior performance. Actually a new relationship between person and organization appears being marked by the following characteristics:

- innovation ability becomes a priority
- quantity/quality rapport changes, the quality becomes the rule
- quality relies on creativity, which reconsiders the human resources contribution
- learning becomes the key-concept of a modern

organization whose main feature is high technology and quality services .

« Electrica Transilvania Sud » Subsidiary endeavours to implement a strategic human resources management , which is closer to the total commitment management through some of its policies. The strategy of human resources development starts from the idea of increasing the intellectual capital of the organization and also its contribution to business growth through capital increment appending in a more sustained rate than before. We consider the team spirit development a suitable way to stimulate people’s knowledge and creativity, and this happens because within a team people interact , they share knowledge and support each other while working, and so they get better results than working alone.

For strategic purposes, human resources management must start from the business strategy of the subsidiary which must be supported through strategies on fields and specific policies, also according to external environment constraints and to internal coherency demand. Figure 1 represents a scheme of this idea.

Actual actions are oriented towards future, towards change and one of them refers to employees’ performance appraisal.

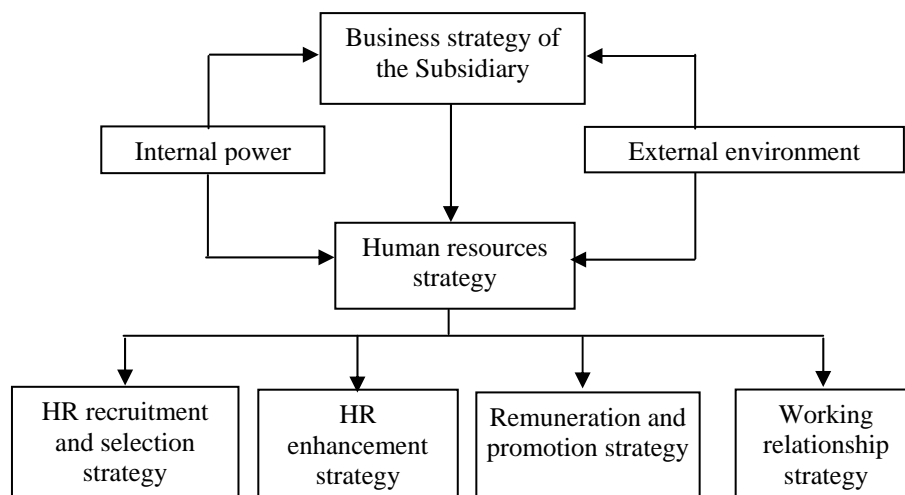


Figure1.

**CHAPTER 1
 PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL**

At the moment inside “Electrica Transilvania Sud” Subsidiary there is a procedure for employee’s performance appraisal which uses two formats for

professional activity assessment: Reference Points of Professional Activity (filled in by the employee) and Performance Appraisal Sheet (filled in by his boss). Trying to make the assessment more objective and shaded, depending on the purpose, “Electrica Transilvania Sud” studies the possibility to introduce the Assessment Centre pattern in the organizational practice. Assessment Centre represents an evaluation method

which is based mainly on the behaviours demonstrated by the participants during the sessions consisting of: group exercises, tests, simulations, interviews.

During the activities where the candidates face different but relevant challenges, their behaviours are studied. This indicates how many of the essential dimensions of the job or those needed in a team activity are covered by the candidate.

The behaviours aimed to highlight the team spirit may be:

- listening and acceptance of others opinions
- acceptance of diversity
- innocence assumption
- support and encouragement offering
- acknowledgement of other team members' interests and accomplishments.

From the perspective of the present paper, Assessment Centre is a technique which we intend to use in order to study the compatibility of the members of a team and to optimize its constituents.

CHAPTER 2 HUMAN RESOURCES ENHANCEMENT

The strategy for human resources development starts from the following desideratum:

- the policies must assure a stimulating frame for the employees to learn and develop professionally and personally.
- the development must be done so as to assure the demand of abilities not only now but also in the future.

This way we want to obtain not only the **organizational performance** but also **personal satisfaction**, as we know that motivated employees who completely use their potential bring huge earnings for the organization.

The analysis of the competences and abilities needs was made starting from the “Electrica Transilvania Sud” business plan until 2011, and this process generated the guidelines to be followed in training and abilities development, meaning: consumption forecast, electric power sale and new clients attraction, contracts negotiation, clients and market analysis, communication, customer care, ANRE relationship management, bargaining, strategic management for operations.

An important part of the team spirit development strategy concerns the managerial development. The purpose of this activity is to enhance the leadership of first line and medium level management, ability proved by:

- establishment of challenging and ambitious goals
- strategy setting to support firm competitiveness
- usage of modern management systems
- organizational culture shaping according to future interest of the organization
- structuring and restructuring of the organization according to priorities
- profit optimization

Figure 2 represents the connexion between the system of performance appraisal and the system of remuneration and on the other hand its relationship with human resources development strategy through personal development plans.

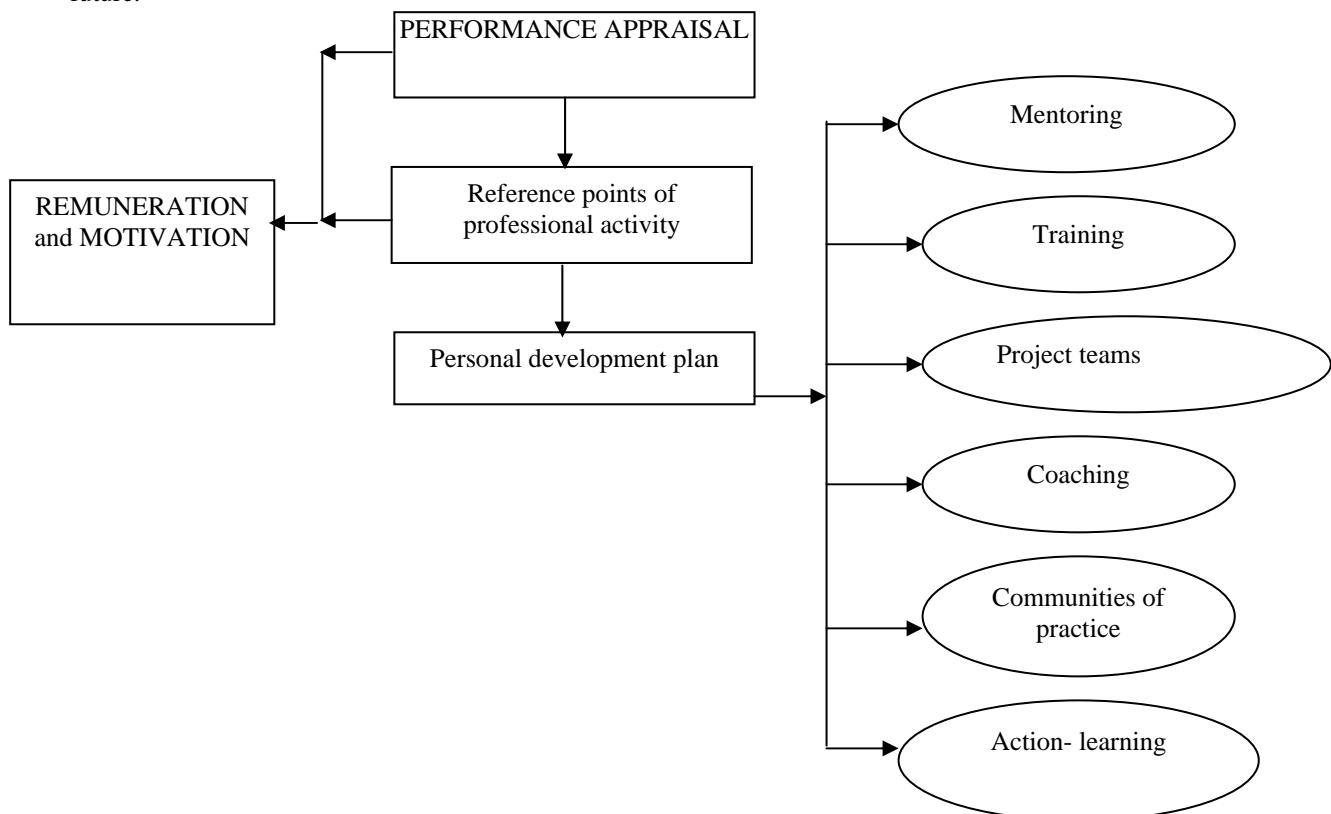


Figure 2.

Coaching, mentoring, team project inclusion, training or informing activities inside practice communities represent actual ways for personal development, which can be used separated or in a mix suitable for each individual.

This mix can be settled during the performance appraisal annual meeting when the employee talks with his manager about his „Reference points of professional activity” sheet where he had to define the training and development areas and activities he suggests for the future. From this starting point, during the discussion, they will draft a development plan for the employee concerning the following period. We present further on a draft of semi-structured development plan.

Development objectives	Actions. Date of carrying on	Support (Who?)	Certification /Diplomas obtained

Now, a few words about communities of practice, a term introduced as a specific one by Etienne Wenger, organizations theorist, who explains their activity this way:

„As people follow the same project in time, they develop a common practice, or with other words, they develop identical methods of working and of associating things, which enables them to reach their shared goal.”

A community of practice has got three specific features:

- mutual commitment of his employees
- a liable initiative
- a shared index of routines, implicit behaviour rules, experience, knowledge, practical methods of working.

Communities of practice, also named learning networks, theme groups or technical clubs, have in common the experiential learning which means horizontal sharing of knowledge mainly through working together in permanent/temporary project teams. Therefore, their function is based on communication, on common experience and as attitude, on a strong feeling of belonging to the organization and on their identification with its accomplishments. They are informal networks of an organization – alliances, friendships, informal communication channels and a system of relationships which change and accommodate better to new situations than official structures.

They are a reality in our organization, so our strategy intends to use them in order to learn and to practice the team work, which doesn't only suppose to do things together but also to shape behaviour and to improve ourselves through the support offered by the team. Interaction based on trust and open-mindedness is essential for a community of practice so we focus on those programmes which can bring people together and help them change tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge by interaction and stimulate them to reproduce behaviours desired by the organization. We wish to promote the following behaviours: involvement in solving problem process, cooperation, responsibility, initiative, trust, open-mindedness, flexibility.

These behaviours must and can be facilitated by the already existing networks in communities of practice of Electrica Transilvania Sud, out of which we can mention: operating station electricians, dispatchers, clients-contact working personnel, HR professionals, accountants and others. Through some activities – unstructured by the organizational policies - usually performed by communities of practice such as: information demand, benchmarking, reusing the completed works (such as business plan of Electrica Tansilvania Sud), discussion of the changes and their consequences, solving the current problems, the information keeps moving, structures itself and changes into institutionalised science, or if you like into intellectual capital. **Organizational effectiveness depends mostly on how we succeed to capitalize our employees' knowledge.**

In addition, in order to enhance interaction and increase the effectiveness of the learning process, Electrica Transilvania Sud will implement organizational policies, meaning structured activities, which will capitalize these communities potential: teambuilding, action-learning, project teams, training based on role-play, simulation and on group exercises. All these aim to consolidate the team spirit directly resorting to the participants' responsibility, so as to be successfully reproduced in their day to day work.

Mentoring is another policy which aims to personal development and to motivate the employees included in this programme.

Mentoring is based on the special relationship between mentor and his disciple, which has as main purpose to help the disciple:

- to solve different problems from his activity field, offering choices and support to make a decision
- to draw up drafts or projects for conferences, symposiums, or to graduate different levels of learning
- to improve the quality of his work finding technical solutions, indicators, new methods of monitoring the processes and reporting etc
- to find forms of training and renewing
- to improve his general thinking and to enhance the extent of his knowledge
- to develop positive attitudes and self-confidence, to take initiative and responsibility in his activity.

After volunteer people will be included in the programme, both categories of participants, mentors and disciples, will be evaluated with a set of methods consisting of psychological test, interview and resume along with accomplishments analysis.

CHAPTER 3 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT EFFECTIVENESS FEED-BACK

On Porter's opinion there are three elements which create the sustainable competitive advantage of an organization: innovation, quality and cost supremacy and all three depend on the quality of the human resources of the organization, meaning on some of its characteristics such

as: superior performance, productivity, flexibility, innovating spirit, high quality services offered to the clients. The organization will be different from its competitors through:

- having high quality human resources
- developing and protecting the intellectual capital of the organization
- functioning as a “learning organization”.

Human resources management is completely involved in this process and although it is difficult to write a mathematical equation between human resources management practices and profitability of the firm, studies show that there is a causal connection which I reproduce as follows in figure 3:

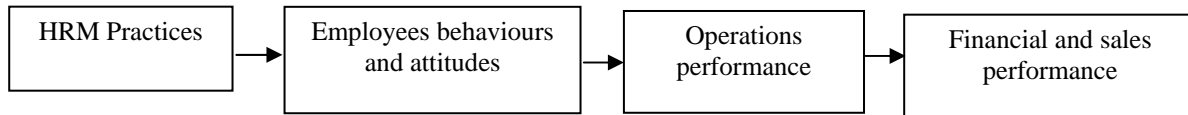


Figure 3.

Modern analysis for the effectiveness of human resources management must therefore go beyond traditional approach, from the point of view of the costs and fluctuation, focusing on the impact of the human resources management upon business, from the angle of profit and enhancement of the company image. In addition, the human resources manager must use a business language, argue and convince the general manager with numbers about this impact.

At Electrica Transilvania Sud we have recently introduced in day-to-day practice a board table which contains quantitative and qualitative indicators for the HR Department which speak about issues like: attracting the suitable people, involving and motivating the employees, developing employees, separation from human resources, performance, productivity etc.

In table 1 I present an excerpt of this management instrument.

Table board					
Nr. crt.	I ndicators	Codification	U.M.	Planned value	Achieved value
	AT ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL				
1.	Added value/employee				
2.	Profit/ employee				
3.	Costs/ employee				
4.	Sales/ employee				
5.	Return of investment				
	EMPLOYEE'S BEHAVIOUR				
6.	Fluctuation rate				
7.	Absenteeism rate				
8.	Number of complaints/ employee				
	AT HR DEPARTAMENT				
9.	Average time for hiring on a vacant job				
10.	Days for professional training/ employee		Days/ employee		
11.	Time to solve complaints		Days		
12.	Price of professional training/ employee		Lei/ employee		
13.	Prices with labour force		Lei		
14.	Number of employees in HR department/ total number of employees				

Table 1

Monitoring these indicators enables us to have strong arguments in front of top management for one or the other policies of human resources management and will optimize the decision making process in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

We expect that generally the human resources management strategy to be better vertically integrated (to support firm’s business strategy) and to enhance internal coherence (its practices to support each other).

Instead of a prodomo pleading we have chosen in the end a logical scheme which this organizational approach is based on. It shows synthetically that any decision regarding the adoption of an organizational policy for managing the human resources starts from the question: "Does it bring value to the business?"

A positive answer is the beginning of a planning, implementing and evaluating process which will contribute not only to people's development but also to business value enhancement. (see figure 4)

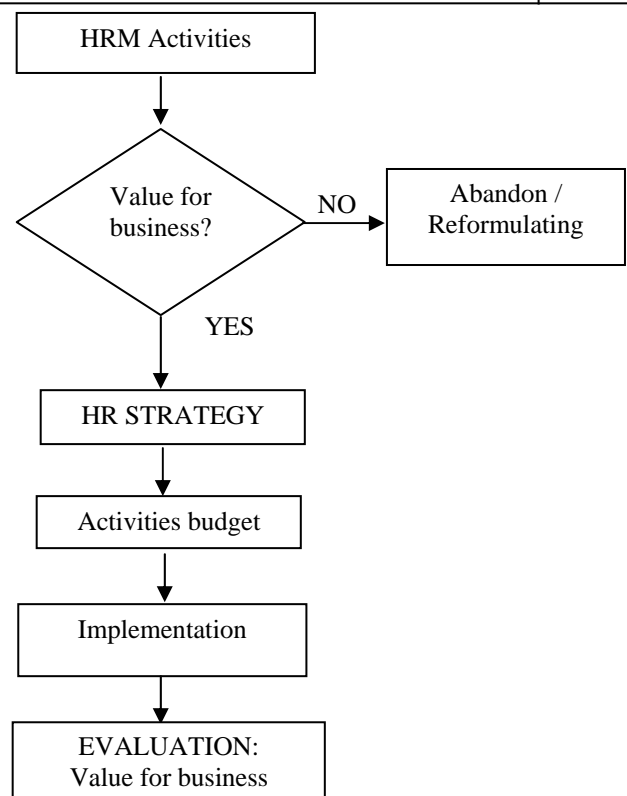


Figure 4.

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