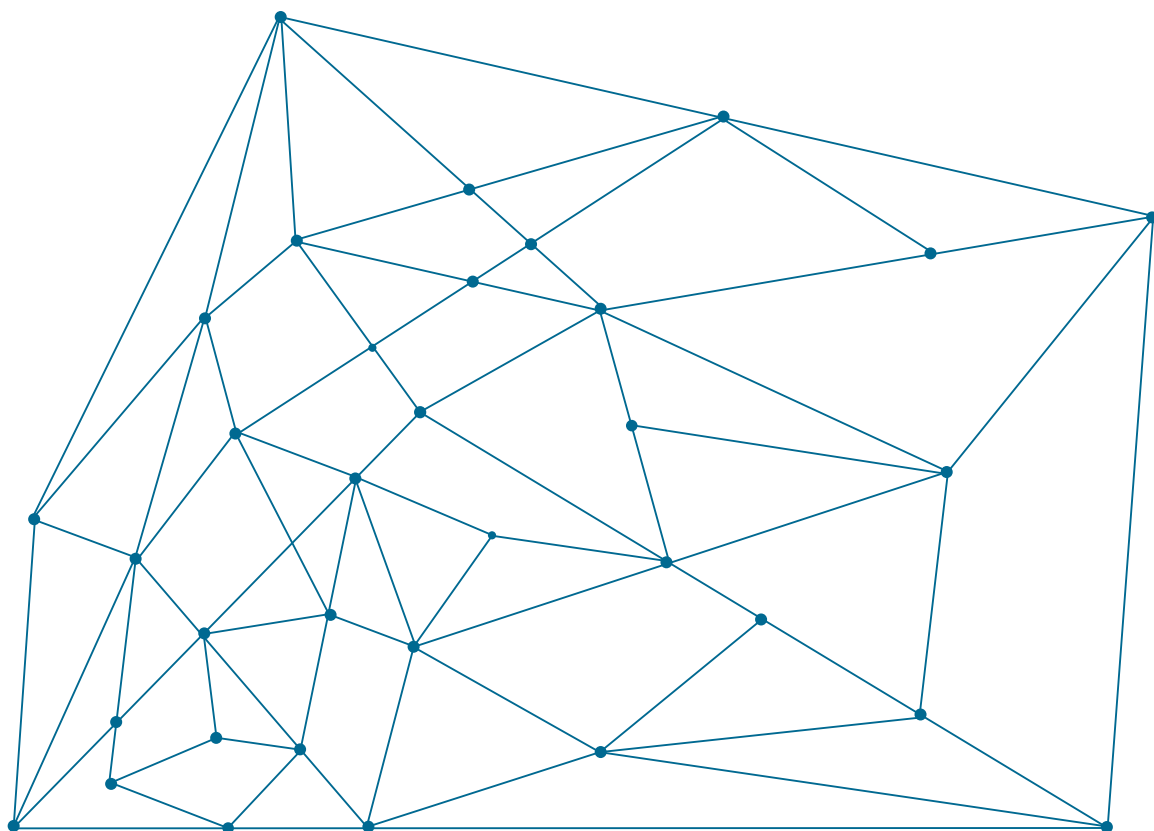# CHALLENGES OF MODERN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

The monograph entitled the *Challenges of Modern Human Resource Management* was prepared by the staff of the Institute for Marketing and Development of Organizations at the Poznan University of Technology's Faculty of Engineering Management. Their inspiration derived from long-standing research into human resource and competence management which is also currently supported by human resource management departments in small and midsize enterprises.

Those relations have been built and developed for many years under the Poznan University of Technology's initiative Akcelerator Wiedzy Technicznej® AWT® (Technical Knowledge Accelerator). The initiative has been the starting point for many projects aimed at e.g. improving the competencies of future job candidates. Some of them include *The Wielkopolska system for monitoring and forecasting* (2010-2012), no. POKL.09.02.00-30-155/09, priority IX, Development of education and competencies in regions, action: 9.2. Improving the attractiveness and quality of vocational education, funding: the state budget, the European Social Fund; *Time of professionals – Wielkopolska vocational education* (2012-2015), no. POKL.09.02.00-30-155/09, priority IX, Development of education and competencies in regions, action 9.2. Improving the attractiveness and quality of vocational education, funding: the state budget, the European Social Fund; *Time of Professional BIS – professional Wielkopolska* (2016-2022) no. RPWP.08.03.03-30-0001/15, priority axis 8: Education, action 8.3. Strengthening and adapting vocational education and training to the needs of the labour market, sub-action 8.3.3, funding: the state budget, the European Social Fund.

The key beneficiaries of that long-term cooperation include the Wielkopolska Province Government whose structures guarantee the continuity and durability of solutions developed in the mostly systemic and long-term projects.

The aforementioned projects provided the stimulus for the development of the Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network which focuses on strengthening relationships and cooperation with enterprises with a significant impact on the functioning of the regional (Wielkopolska) market as well as often the global labour market. The long-standing exchange of knowledge and experience between science and practice within the network inspired the authors to present modern trends and solutions in the area of human resource management. They are shown based on the original research conducted to a significant extent jointly by all the authors of the book.

The monograph starts with Magdalena Graczyk-Kucharska's article *The traditional and modern approach in human resource management.* The first chapter characterizes selected traditional aspects of human resource management. Subsequently, it presents the evolution of the function of Human Resource departments and emphasizes the strategic role of HR for enterprises. Finally, it touches upon the

latest solutions in human resource management. In particular, it emphasizes issues such as talent management, analysis of the effectiveness of e-tools, transfer of competencies, exchange of HR professionals' knowledge and experience in a network of cooperating entities.

The second chapter authored by Maciej Szafrański and entitled *Complex nature of competencies* makes it possible to better understand the need to perceive competencies from different perspectives. The chapter focuses on three of them, i.e. the quality, resource and marketing approach. The quality approach presents competencies as features. The resource-based approach refers directly to the title of the book and suggests earlier in the chapter that only competencies and possibly other features of the human being should be treated as a resource, instead of the human being himself. The third, marketing-based approach presents competencies as products and elements of products.

Chapter three *Traditional and modern methods and techniques of competence management in an enterprise* by Małgorzata Spychała emphasizes the essence of employee competence management by defining and characterizing the key objectives of a competence management system. The chapter identifies employee competencies and characterizes the methods and techniques used to assess and develop them. In an interesting and synthetic way, it presents the systematics of modern methods and tools for competence management in an enterprise, at the same time comparing modern and traditional competence management methods, techniques and tools in the scope of identification, assessment and development of employee competencies.

Chapter four *The influence of modern technologies on employee recruitment* by Marek Goliński characterizes the conditions for the implementation of modern technologies in human resource management. Additionally, it defines technical and organizational conditions in the process of implementing innovative solutions, e.g. in the areas of training, recruitment, talent management and employee relations management. It also presents an example of a recruitment path based on modern technologies and defines types of e-recruitment. In the end, it focuses on the directions of development of new technologies, including the issues of privacy and data security on the Internet.

Chapter five *Recruitment and communication tools tailored to employees from generation X, Y and Z* by Małgorzata Spychała and Magdalena Graczyk-Kucharska addresses intergenerational differences and consequently different communication channels and tools which should be incorporated in an effective recruitment process. Virtual social worlds are among the modern tools for reaching young generation Z. The chapter also presents activities which should be undertaken in the organization to improve the effectiveness of communication between generations. Some of them involve clear specification of the expectations and needs of each generation as well as engaged listening to employees from different generations to improve internal communication systems.

The following chapter *Organizational culture vs Employer Branding in attracting and retaining employees* by Magdalena Graczyk-Kucharska, Małgorzata Spychała and Marek Goliński begins with the presentation of the genesis and the definition of the term Employer Branding (EB). Subsequently, it presents the outcome of the authors' own studies which resulted in a list of EB activities and their impact on the enterprise. In connection with the fact that Employer Branding is used to create the employer's brand image and is determined by organizational and corporate identity which are deeply rooted in the culture of the organization, the last subchapter discusses building EB based on organizational culture.

Chapter seven *Talent management in an enterprise* by Małgorzata Spychała discusses one of the important HR problems which will be faced in the coming years, i.e. how to acquire talent for organizations. Therefore, the chapter characterizes the key talent management stages in an organization and presents methods of developing talent. It points out to good practices in organizations in which talent is managed and presents the benefits of the implementation of own talent management programs in the company. One of the main obstacles to successful talent management is the lack of sufficient commitment to improving that process on the part of top executives. Other problems with that respect were also signalled in the chapter.

Chapter eight *Human resource planning and competencies of the future* by Magdalena Graczyk-Kucharska emphasizes the change in competency requirements on the labour market due to progressing automation of processes, including information processes. The chapter adopts the paradigm of the evolution of the employee in the direction of controlling robots which cooperate with them. It points out the necessity to plan the demand for future competencies in the context of the accomplishment of strategic goals in enterprises. The chapter describes the human resource planning process and the requirements which should be made in that process in organizations of the future. Based on own studies, it also presents employee features whose development is necessary for further effective development of every organization. Moreover, it points out to technical and social competencies which will be required as key competencies in the future in the coming years.

In chapter nine *Networking in continuous improvement of competencies,* Marek Goliński and Maciej Szafrański addressed the general idea of networking and selected conditions for the emergence of social networks. As an example of such a network, they presented the Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network (WEEN) within which the main emphasis is put on competence management in the region. The chapter synthetically presents the genesis of the WEEN, its purpose, thematic scope and structure. Subsequently, it shows a model of managing knowledge about competencies in the network also as an example of the measurement and assessment of acquired knowledge about competencies in the group of students and employers within the WEEN.

Final chapter ten by Magdalena Graczyk-Kucharska, Małgorzata Spychała, Marek Goliński and Maciej Szafrański presents good practices in human resource management in enterprises which cooperate within the Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network. The presented case studies were developed based on materials and information sent and shared by the employees of those companies and published with their knowledge and consent.

It is worth pointing out that the monograph touches upon only part of the issues connected with human resource management in contemporary organizations.

The authors hope that the book will be of interest to practitioners, academics, local government officials, heads of schools and entities providing vocational training, representatives of employer organizations, people interested in the labour market, senior year high school students and other readers who want to expand their knowledge in human resource management or continuously improve their competencies looking for sources of knowledge which can support the process.

Magdalena Graczyk-Kucharska, Maciej Szafrański

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Chapter 1

Magdalena GRACZYK-KUCHARSKA[*]

THE TRADITIONAL AND MODERN APPROACH IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

1.1. THE TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

M. Amstrong emphasizes that **human resource management** is the development and implementation of a personnel strategy integrated with the overall strategy of the organization, as well as making sure that culture, values and organizational structure, and the quality, motivation and commitment of the members of the organization, fully serve the achievement of its goals (Amstrong, 1996, p. 9; Sołtys, 2013, p. 57). The opportunities offered by efficient human resource management provide good conditions for the effective management of the business. For that to happen, it is worth analyzing the evolution of functions in departments responsible for human resource management.

The **functions** performed by Human Resource (HR) departments can be considered from several perspectives. The first one is the activities expected by employees as to what functions should be served by human resource departments. Responsibilities actually carried out by HR departments are the focus of another perspective. Company managers usually have their own idea about what role human resource departments should play, what role they should complement and in what processes they should be involved. One of the negative perspectives which impact the assessment of HR functions and therefore also HR departments are myths and popular beliefs which have been widespread for years in the general perception of often modern, well-managed and very well-functioning human resource management departments.

How is the human resource department perceived? What functions does it perform, what functions should it perform, in what functions should it support different departments in the organization? One of the frequent opinions is the belief that HR department employees are only responsible for compliance with regulations, administrative work and formalization connected with certain job positions in organizations (Szumowski, 2010, p. 201). In the traditional approach, HR departments are perceived as those responsible for the recruitment process, the conclusion of the contract and training.

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The theoretical approach lists **five basic functions of human resource management** (Listwan, 2006, p. 54):
– HR planning,
– HR selection,
– development and motivation,
– employee departures,
– function control.

Fig. 1.1. The "Traditional" HR model.
Source: own compilation based on Szumowski, W. (2010). Nowy model funkcji HR. Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, (137), p. 210

In principle, HR professionals perceive their role in the organization as attracting, retaining and motivating employees. For many companies, the starting point for the developing HR department was provided by the traditional model (Fig. 1.1) of personnel administration where the emphasis was put on the functions of HR and payroll administration. At that stage, no thought was given to advanced tools, including IT tools, supporting the functioning of HR departments or professional development of employees while the employee assessment system or career paths did not exist at all.

1.2. EVOLUTION OF THE FUNCTION OF HR DEPARTMENTS

One of the first activities undertaken by organizations that went beyond the functions of HR departments in the traditional approach was the **start of work on developing HR tools and systems**. The key activities at that stage included the

development of recruitment systems (chapter 4) based on the job competence profiles (chapter 3), the *Assessment Center* methodology, the employee assessment system and the modernization of employee rewarding and incentive systems.

The next stage in the development of the functions of HR departments was a **systemic approach** to human resource management and an attempt at generating synergies in the implemented HR tools, improving the efficiency of their use. At that stage of the evolution of HR departments, the staff of human resource departments are characterized by full professionalism in using their tools, understanding business models and capitalizing on the opportunities connected with them, as well as building partner relations with the management of the organization and their superiors. The HR department becomes an **important partner in building the organization's value** in the long term. It shifts from performing operational activities to strategic roles and functions.

Over the years, one of the undeniable positive changes in the functions and activities carried out by HR departments is the improvement in expectations and understanding of training and self-development initiatives in a significant number of employees of each organization. Many employees also understand the benefits of activities connected with periodic employee assessments which are often the basis for increasing remuneration, planning training programs and further career paths in the organization. Initiatives regarding employee opinion and satisfaction polls, iterative measures and any individual employee programs are also usually very positively perceived by employees.
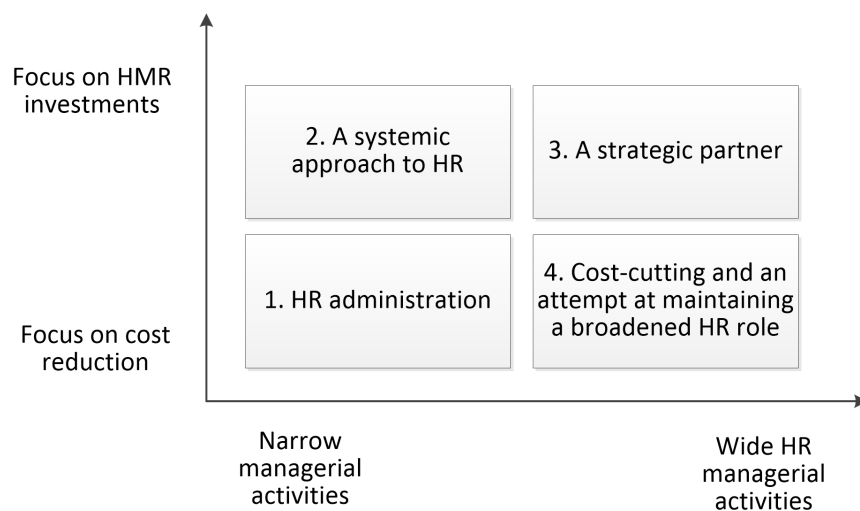
Fig. 1.2. Model of HR development and regress cycle in enterprises.
Source: own compilation based on Woźniakowski, A. (2012). Ewolucja funkcjonowania i zadań działów HR: nowe wyzwania dla dyrektorów HR. Zarządzanie Zasobami Ludzkimi, 2, p. 141

In times of economic crisis, the minimization of costs incurred by the company, including costs in HR departments, is a frequently noticeable effect. In turn, in times of economic boom, HR departments have bigger budgets which allow them to make numerous investments in HRM and increase the role of human resource departments in organizations. Changes in HR departments are slowed down not only by economic recession but also by the availability of skilled staff and other resources, including the company's financial resources. Figure 1.2 presents a model of HR development and regress cycle in enterprises.

The key factors accelerating the growth in the role of HR departments in organizations included the increase in demand for specialized employee competencies (chapter 8) which were an indispensable resource for efficient implementation of processes in the enterprise (chapter 2). Other factors included e.g. administration of employees' remuneration and benefits, the need to adjust operations and organization of work to the norms and guidelines legally regulating employment relations and the labour law or protection of employees against discrimination (Dessler, 2008, p. 12).

The functions and tasks carried out by HR departments change not only due to the environment and economic growth but first and foremost due to the **growth of the organization**. Enterprises are established, function and develop in a turbulent environment. The environment of each organization is characterized by high dynamics, high complexity, various interactions and relationships between entities, a fact which results in the necessity to operate in conditions of high uncertainty. The life cycle of a company shows that it needs to adapt to the changing environment, taking into account and having to solve problems at various stages of its development (Golik-Górecka, Skonieczka, 2018, p. 49). Scientific literature presents many models of lifecycles of companies. However, the most important of them are based on three phases (Smith, et al., 1985):

I.   The founding of the company,
II. Growth,
III. Maturity.

In the context of developmental phases in the organization, HR departments play complex roles (Fig. 1.3). Starting from the **first stage** of founding the company and the first activities connected with entering the market, HR departments mainly work with human resource administration and formalization of the scope of work. They organize the work of employees in the organization and maintain work order and discipline.

In the second phase, i.e. during the growth of the organization, first planning activities are undertaken. Among other things, the tasks are connected with planning the number of employees, functions or ensuring proper employee competencies which are necessary to carry out processes in the enterprise so that it could achieve its goals. The proper implementation of the recruitment and selection process (chapter 4) which is preceded by an analysis of the demand for competencies at specific job positions, such as planning training programs and other activities

connected with staff improvement becomes a key activity at this stage of the organization's development.

Keeping work order and discipline	Making sure employees have proper competencies			
Formalization of the scope of work	Planning employee numbers	The necessity to properly execute the recruitment process and selection and HR improvement	Designing a management system supporting the managers of the organization	Designing, improvement and maintenance of HR systems
HR administration	Function planning			
I		II	III	Growth of the organization

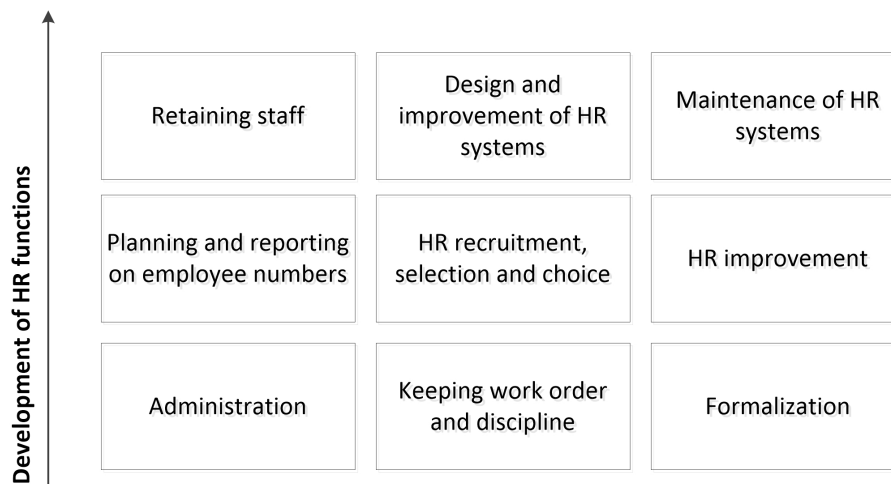**Fig. 1.3.** Evolution of the function of HR departments in the context of organizational growth.
Source: own compilation based on Szumowski, W. (2010). Nowy model funkcji HR. Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, (137), p. 210.

The third, last stage, is the company's maturity when long-term and strategic activities are planned and undertaken. Employees of HR departments become advisers to mangers and are involved in creating the company's strategy, e.g. in the context of designing, improving and maintaining HR systems and designing the management system supporting the management of the organization.

1.3. THE STRATEGIC ROLE OF HR DEPARTMENTS

The role and position of human resource departments in the future is an important issue not only for theoreticians but also for experts and HR practitioners. Human capital, building structural capital[1] and company goodwill strengthens HR departments in building their strategic role. Despite the fact that managers are increasingly aware of the expanding functions of HR departments, the habits developed by company directors, as well as market changes and economic crises, often

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[1] Including processes, IT systems, brands, patents, licenses, copyrights, trademarks, infrastructure, strategies and organizational culture.

do not make it possible to easily resolve matters which are important to the development of HR departments.

Among significant and negative macroeconomic factors which hurt the condition of HR departments are the economic slowdowns that took place in 2001-2003 and 2009-2010 and the still fully unknown effects of the global ban on leaving homes and free movement introduced during the so-called "lockdown" in the year 2020. The forced leaves, downtime, numerous layoffs, increased unemployment – all of this lowered the budgets of HR departments and caused a reduction in many projects. The programs which were to be developed at that time in companies include the expansion of modern tools for managing employee competencies, planning career paths, HR strategies, development of talent support programs (Woźniakowski, 2012, p. 138) (chapter 7), development of systems connected with employer branding (EB) including organizational culture (chapter 6), development of processes supporting newly hired employees (onboarding), or improvement of recruitment processes.

During the period of strong economic growth, many companies strengthened their HR departments again, at the same time undergoing a complex evolution of operational models connected with human resource management (HRM). These changes started from simple human resource administration, moved through the stage of developing tools and systems supporting HRM, to reach systematic human resource management. They involved acquiring the ability to analyze dynamic relations between the company strategy and the organizational culture, the employment structure and employment plans, as well as the model of work performance management (Woźniakowski, 2012, p. 138).

One of the most common limitations in the development of HR departments is the barrier of managers' awareness and the fact that they are used to traditional HR functions and stereotypical thinking as well as the limitation in the availability of the organization's resources. The strategic function of HR departments (Fig. 1.4) can be implemented with properly effective organization of information acquisition processes and ensuring effective internal communication. Before the HR department begins to take on advisory functions for the management board and supports the building of the company's strategy, taking into account the plans and the availability of human resources, it must develop ways to effectively **obtain information** both from the environment as well as from within the organization. The strategic role of HR will be complemented by change management focused on flexible decision-making in the context of implementing a new strategy and assessment of the effectiveness of activities taken (Szumowski, 2010).

The HR department must make sure that (Brockbank, 1997, p. 66):
– it employs people of proper competencies and qualifications,
– employees who stand out are promoted,
– whenever justified, selected employees are transferred or dismissed,
– awards and bonuses are adjusted to short-term business results,

– selected employees have specialist knowledge, including technical knowledge, to enable the achievement of the organization's goals.
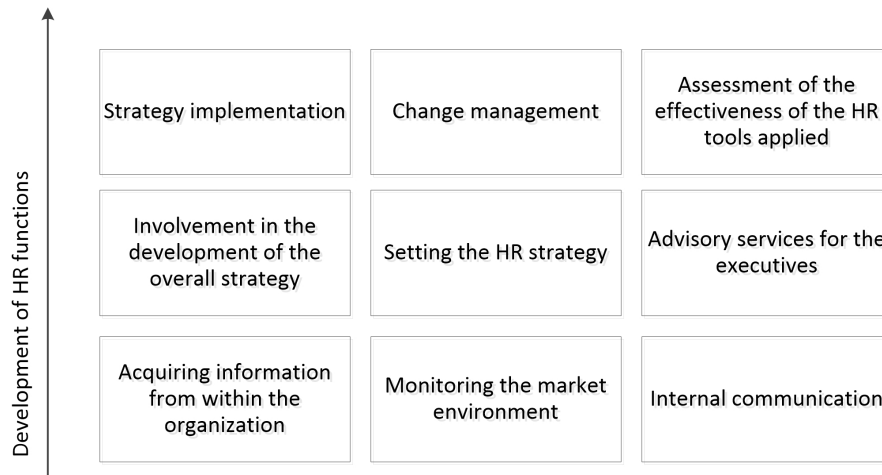
Fig. 1.4. The HR department as the strategic partner and change animator.
Source: own compilation based on Szumowski, W. (2010). Nowy model funkcji HR. Prace Naukowe Uniwersytetu Ekonomicznego we Wrocławiu, (137), p. 210.

Every organization functions as a system of combined vessels. Every decision taken in one department has a direct or indirect impact on other departments. Thus, it results in the pace and efficiency of performance of specific tasks which affect the achievement of the organization's goals within the specified time. None of the processes implemented in the company can be carried out without human involvement. Even the processes which are fully automated had to be designed and implemented by man. Selected employees supervise their correctness and effectiveness. Others conduct periodic checks of the machines, maintain them and make sure they continue to operate effectively. The analysis of the potential of implementing process automation as well as efficient organization management is also based on the availability of the organization's competence resources. An appropriate *"mix"* of skill resources and levels of their mastery at different levels of the organizational structure in the company is key to agility, flexibility and efficiency in the operations of each organization. That type of resources, competence resources, is expected to be provided by human resource departments. Therefore, human resource management must not be limited to operational activities only. Instead, HR professionals should be involved in building the long-term human resource planning strategy which is in line with the organization's developmental plans. In such a situation, employees of HR departments can manage the change and make the best decision for costs, organization and time in the planning of:

- training programs meant for retraining employees for other positions in the given department or, e.g. new production lines where new or more advanced skills will be required from a specific employee,
- employment,
- employment reduction.

Every entity strives to create a unique potential of resources which are valuable, rare, difficult to counterfeit and properly organized. Resources are the basis of the competitive advantage of the company. Apart from the group of tangible and intangible resources, an independent group is formed by skills. They are the ones that enable effective use of organizational resources to generate new, often innovative, value. It is for that reason that the role of HR departments cannot be depreciated in organizations. HR departments provide and are expected to provide access to competencies that are necessary to achieve the organization's objectives. Without properly organized processes, including communication (chapter 5), which are well suited to the resource (also financial and tooling) capacities of the enterprise, it is not possible to fully capitalize on all the skill resources of each of the employees of the organization. In such a situation, opportunities arising in the environment which can help improve the competitiveness of the enterprise could remain untaken.

1.4. A MODERN APPROACH IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

The authors of relevant literature indicate that technologies and talent management are two areas that can influence new directions in the development of human resource management (Alexander and Wijaya, 2020). Information technologies make it possible to improve work and employ a systematic approach to collecting, storing, retrieving and disseminating data. Over the past two years, especially in English language literature, HRM has been more and more often referred to in the context of information technologies, with the area being called the *Electronic Human Resource Management* (E-HRM). HR departments are increasingly using electronic tools and systems supporting them in the flow of and remote communication at various stages of performing human resource management functions. It applies to both the selection of candidates, recruitment and training, career path development and activities connected with onboarding new candidates. In this context, it is important to properly secure data at various stages of recruitment and selection of candidates, as well as at the stage of data storage in accordance with current legislation.

Johnson (2016) presents changes in the functions of HR departments over the decades. The authors point out that until 1940, all work in HR departments was manual. In the years 1960-1970, people began to look for tools supporting minimization of data redundancy. In the following decade, i.e. 1980-1990, they started

merging the functions of various departments, including those responsible for accounting, finance, HR or production. At that time, HR departments began to adopt a strategy of analyzing data and planning human resource needs in organizations. In the years 1990-2010, employees were empowered and the 'ownership' of their data was transferred to the Directive on the protection of employees' privacy in the European Union. Data and the way they are managed in the context of new technologies have recently been of key importance, also due to the European General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the resultant activities for the adaptation of technical and IT measures, organizational measures, procedures connected with data deletion, implementation of the transparency principle, documentation for the protection of personal data and data processing procedures in accordance with the law and reporting violations, compliance with the information obligation and other processes, including profiling. Tools supporting HRM should not only support the achievement of the organization's goals but they should also be used in accordance with the law, including regulations on the protection of personal data.

In the literature (Brockbank, 1997), significant attention is paid to achieving common goals in the context of E-HRM and organizational targets. They include:
– tool support with the use of information systems in achieving HRM goals,
– improving the efficiency of administrative processes in HR departments,
– improving the quality of customer service in processes implemented by HR departments, including newly hired personnel and employees of enterprises.
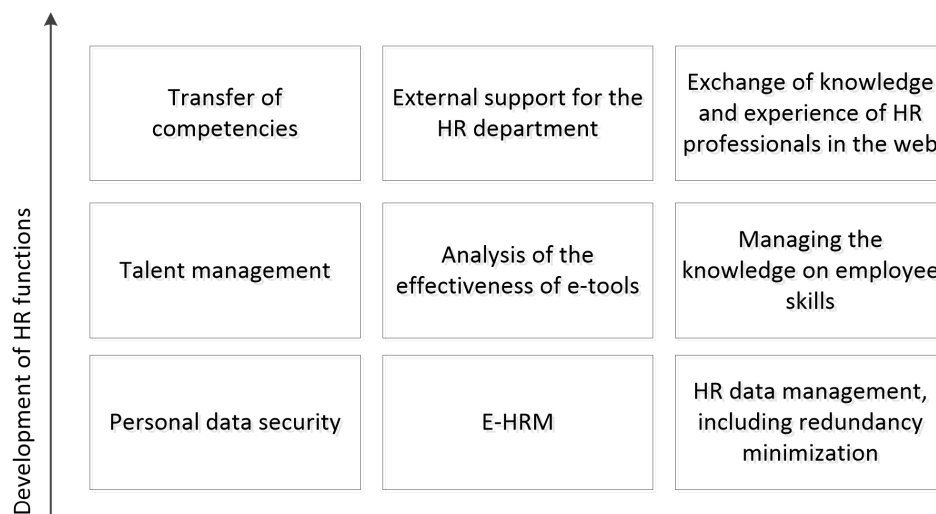
Fig. 1.5. The development of functions in the future of HR departments in the strategic view.
Source: own compilation

IT tools (chapter 4) can be used in many functions exercised by HR departments, e.g. (Al-kasasbeh, et al., 2016, pp. 10675-10676) in e-recruitment, e-selection, e-pay, e-learning, e-employee assessment, and e-communication. It is also worth paying attention to the broader context of the human resource management information system relative to information systems. The term information system has its roots in the broader field of information systems and was originally defined as a system used to acquire, store, manipulate, analyze, search and distribute information concerning the organization's human resources. The human resource management information system is more than just computer hardware and related HR software. Those systems are connected with hardware and software, however, they also include the people involved in HR processes, forms, principles and procedures, as well as data (Kavanagh, et al., 1990, p. 29).

The assessment of the effectiveness of the applied e-tools is among the current and significant activities carried out by HR departments (Fig. 1.5) in the context of decision-making support systems. Many information systems are being launched on the market (Johnson, 2016, p. 534), supporting HR departments in recruitment, managing the database of candidates, "onboarding", communication with candidates, employees or potential job candidates. IT tools can also help in monitoring completed training programs, analyzing the employee's current competence profile or determining the employee's personnel strategy, understood as the choice of a competence development plan. All tools are designed to support ongoing work in human resources departments, however, the selection of these tools and measuring their effectiveness is the responsibility of the employees of HR departments.

One of the modern functions which should be implemented by HR departments is the management of knowledge about employees and the transfer of competencies between employees from the older and younger generation. The management of knowledge about employees refers to the company's recognition of competencies as a resource which may be used not so much in the context of the studied profession but within the meaning of a resource that can be used in many departments also at a specific time. Such an approach is connected with employee rotation at many job positions which can be motivating for further employee development. It helps to minimize employee departures from the company and monotony at work.

Meanwhile, the transfer of competencies between employees is conducive to the exchange of knowledge, skills and attitudes between generations. It is extremely important from the point of view of the ageing society and the extinction of some professions on the labour market. It is particularly true for industries with high specialization and increasing automation, such as steel mills. Ensuring the transfer of competencies is all the more important if it is not possible to develop specific skills at different levels of education, e.g. at the secondary or higher education level. Those restrictions may be due to the fact that candidates for a given field of study are not very much interested in the given profession. The reasons for that insignificant interest can be connected with difficult working conditions in the profession, inadequate remuneration relative to the employer's requirements or the

lack of a specific field of study in the place residence or surrounding areas. Competencies in enterprises are most often transferred through appropriate mentoring systems which are often connected with training programs and internships in the companies. In mentoring programs, unskilled employees acquire specific competencies which are often rare in the labour market. It usually happens under the guidance of experienced specialists and experts in the enterprise.

Apart from the strategic role of HR departments which should be exercised in modern enterprises in the maturity phase or entities which aspire to be smart organizations, the development of employees of human resource departments should also be ensured. One of the possibilities to develop the skills of HR professionals is to apply systemic solutions implemented in enterprises, e.g. career path planning, training or other forms of staff improvement. Next to strategic activities, the modern approach to HR departments also refers to obtaining information from within the organization as well as monitoring the market environment also in the context of competencies required in the future (chapter 8). Such analyses, together with case studies in other enterprises, including benchmarking, can shed new light on existing corporate problems in the field of human resources and inspire the creation and implementation of solutions that are innovative for the company. Recent studies also show that HR departments execute their functions better and are more effective if they are supported and monitored in the implementation and effectiveness of their activities (Intindola, et al., 2017, p. 1799). The support can be provided periodically through audits or online expert consultations (chapter 9).

The Wielkopolska Education-and-Economic Network (WEEN) is one of the good examples of the exchange of knowledge and experience in a network in the area of human resources. The entities involved in the WEEN network include key enterprises, labour market institutions and educational entities, including the Poznan University of Technology, whose common goal is to improve the competencies of potential employees in Wielkopolska and to develop and adapt skills to the needs of the local labour market. WEEN is an initiative of cooperating entities which receive mutual support in taking on challenges in the context of improving human resources. The exchange of knowledge and experience is often based on innovative solutions and inspirations which are the basis for the implementation of possible changes in separate organizations. These innovations are often defined as organizational and social activities which employers are eager to share, as presented in Chapter 10 as a description of good practices exercised by WEEN participants. Organizational innovations must be understood as new or modernized organizational systems while social innovations mean changes in motivational techniques. Other areas of companies' innovation, i.e. product, technological and marketing novelties, are often a mix of enterprise know-how. These innovations are the assets of the institutions that belong to the network and it is for these reasons that the organizations are reluctant to share them in detail as part of good practices within the WEEN, which is also understandable to all network participants. In exchange for sharing knowledge regarding their effectively functioning solutions for

organizational and social innovations, the institutions belonging to WEEN receive a lot of inspirations. They can be transferred into organizational innovations, for example referring to the talent management method in the enterprise, communication between employees, undertaking change management activities, or other traditional functions performed in HR departments such as recruitment or employee evaluation. The transfer of competencies, exchange of knowledge, as well as other functions and activities carried out by HR departments cannot happen without understanding the various meanings of competencies as has been characterized in the next chapter.

Chapter 2

Maciej SZAFRAŃSKI*

HETEROGENEOUS CHARACTERISTIC OF COMPETENCIES

2.1. DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO COMPETENCIES

Figure 2.1 presents coal. What does it have to do with competencies? Almost nothing but they have at least one property in common. Coal and competencies can be perceived in a variety of ways. Several examples of different approaches to the two objects of our cognition have been presented in Figure 2.1.

	Competencies	
− chemical element − basic building block of organic matter − raw material − tool of political game − source of energy − drawing tool − gemstone,...		− human features − features of the collective − resource − product − ability − source of value − object of cognition − source of entertainment − risk factor...
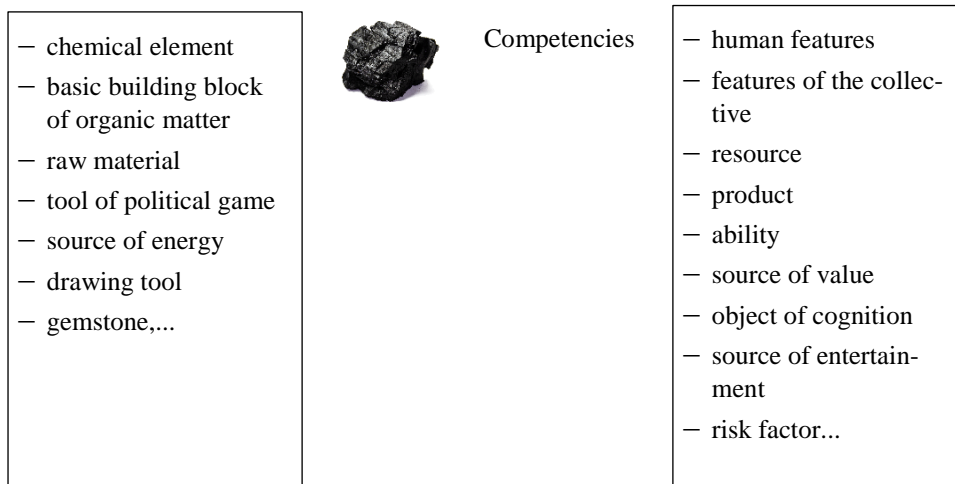
Fig. 2.1. Different approaches to coal and competencies.
Source: own compilation

Competencies are important both from the point of view of an individual human being and from the point of view of groups or teams of people. Therefore, they are also important in organizations such as enterprises in which competencies should be managed (see chapter 3). To manage them efficiently, it often becomes

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necessary to look at them from different points of view. It is only then that one can notice their complexity and bring out the potential that lies within them.

The following chapter describes the characteristic of competencies in several selected approaches such as the quality, resource and mof competencies in several selected approaches such as the quality, resource and marketing-based view.

The chapter is an attempt at synthesizing knowledge about competencies in an enterprise. The compendium can help companies disseminate it among employees and help understand why a multifaceted look at competencies is useful in **competence management** which is also known as **competence-based management** (Brockmann, et al., 2008).

2.2. A QUALITY-BASED APPROACH TO COMPETENCIES – COMPETENCY AS A HUMAN FEATURE

The adoption of the quality-based view of competencies leads to the conclusion that they are features. **Quality** understood as a set of features (Mantura, 2010, p. 47) can be attributed to every object of cognition such as a star, car, coal and even man because as an entity it can also be an interesting object of cognition, i.e. research, observation, analysis, etc. We will never be able to fully acquire all the knowledge about any item for a simple reason – every object of cognition has infinitely many features which also change frequently over time. The problem was described in more detail by W. Mantura (1990, p. 43). Most often, we are interested in **significant features**, and if we speak about significance, we are beginning to enter the field of **axiology** or the science of value. Those who would like to know more about the issues addressed by it are recommended to read the study edited by P. Duchliński and G. Hołub (2011). We often limit our cognition to a subset of features which we combine with the area of our interests. That is why if we are interested in the thermal properties of coal, we are more likely to study how it will behave when we burn it in various ways and we are not interested in how it will look after polishing. A jeweller will focus on completely different characteristics of it than a power plant director. The same principle applies to other objects of cognition, including human features. A doctor will be interested in the blood test result, a boxing trainer will focus on endurance, strength, agility, and a representative of the HR department will look into employee competencies. If we are interested in a homogeneous subset of features, quoting A. Hamrol (2005, p. 21) we can call it **characteristics.** Thus, by describing the competencies of a person in an enterprise (a candidate, employee, trainee, apprentice), we create their characteristics in the scope that interests us, i.e. their suitability for work at a given position. In connection with the fact that we have an innate need and ability to categorize, group and classify various phenomena, we try to search for features which are more or less connected to one another. Thus, we divide competencies into different subsets. And

this is how the very popular division of competencies into knowledge, skills and other competencies was shaped. Table 2.1 presents several proposals of such a view of competencies.

Table 2.1. Competencies as a set of knowledge, skills and other competencies

Division of competencies treated as human features	Source
Characteristics of employees, most often represented by Knowledge, Skills, Abilities (KSA) and personality traits needed to do the job properly.	McClelland, 1973
A set of features of a given person composed of motivation, personality features, skills, self-evaluation connected with functioning within a group and knowledge which the person acquired and uses.	Whiddett and Hollyfird, 1982, p. 13
Employee competencies include their interests, talents and predispositions, education and knowledge, experience and practical skills, internal motivation, attitudes and behaviours which are important in their professional work, health and psychophysical condition, having the formal right to act on behalf of a given organization, values and ethical principles.	Oleksyn, 2006, p. 39
Knowledge and skills but also more abstract types of competencies, i.e. patience, perseverance, flexibility and self-confidence.	Dubois and Rothwell, 2008, p. 38
Knowledge, skills and attitudes which are reflected in action.	PARP, 2011, p. 29

Source: own compilation.

Sometimes competencies as features are referred in literature to objects. For instance, Carolous et al refer them to mobile phones (2019). Examining the results of the use of smartphones as social actors (SASA) which talk to their users and assume the role of assistants, they assign them gender, courtesy and competencies. Although the smartphone software only imitates a consultant, it causes the same responses in the interlocutor as if they were talking to a real person. Thus, the interlocutor perceives the speaking application as a human being. The researchers conclude how the competencies attributed to phones affect interlocutor satisfaction.

Assigning human traits to objects is also quite popular in marketing research (see for example: Szafrański et al., 2019) because it makes it easier for the respondent to assess the phenomenon they are asked about. It is one of the projection methods (Kaczmarczyk, 1996, p. 262) used to examine the image of products or brands and make decisions about how to position them.

2.3. A RESOURCE-BASED APPROACH TO COMPETENCIES – COMPETENCY AS A RESOURCE IN THE COMPANY

Competence management which will be defined in chapter 3 is part of **human resource management** which was described in chapter 1. Before the resource characteristic of competencies can be explained, it is necessary to clarify the role of the human being in an enterprise. A problem appears as a result of the use of the term "*human resource management*". Is it about man being perceived as a resource or the fact that every human being has some resource at their disposal, e.g. competencies? From a business standpoint, there is not much doubt because what every organization wants is efficient achievement of goals, therefore everything that is within and without the organization and is useful to the achievement of its goals is a resource, which means that it can also be a human being. However, adopting such a narrative involves human objectification, which is unethical if one adopts the philosophy of humanism and the anthropocentric view of reality. The philosophy of humanism should prevail over business philosophy for every human being who loves themselves and accepts being human, leading to the conclusion that in economics, and also business, the human being cannot be treated as a resource. Therefore, organizations should separate the notion of the human being from the notion of a resource which the human being can only be the carrier of. Therefore, every human being has some resources that they can share with other people, in particular teams of people or organizations.

Competencies are one of the resources that the human being has at their disposal. They can be exchanged for other goods such as money, items, activities, time or other competencies. It is a special resource because the human being has a very significant influence on their acquisition. Not everyone can be an oil tycoon, not everyone can be born into a royal family, and be rich just because of that, but every
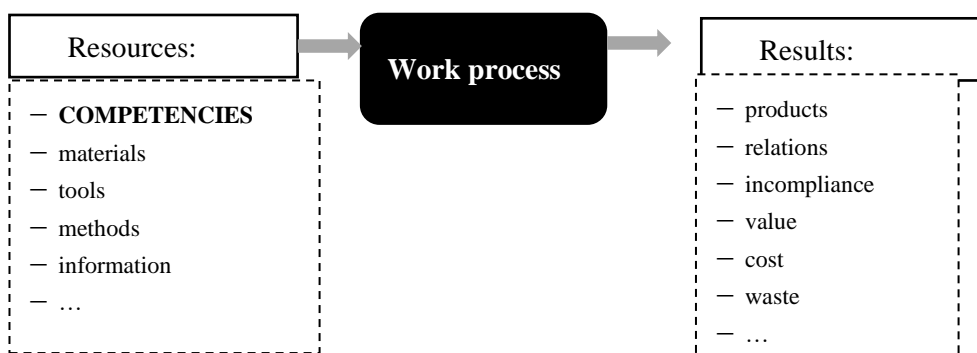
Fig. 2.2. The place of competencies as a resource at the entry to the work process in an enterprise. Source: own compilation

one can acquire competencies and use them for their own or others' needs, in particular by offering them on the labour market. Competencies are needed in enterprises at the entry to work processes just like other resources (Fig. 2.2).

In an enterprise, competencies can be approached in reference to:
– a single employee (table 2.1),
– a team of employees (Khedhaouria and Jamal, 2015),
– the entire organization (Vendrell-Herrero et al 2019).

Therefore, we can speak of **individual or collective competencies.** Individual competencies can be of endogenous (talent) or exogenous origin, resulting from the process of socialization and education (Więcek-Janka and Szafrański, 2017, p. 373).
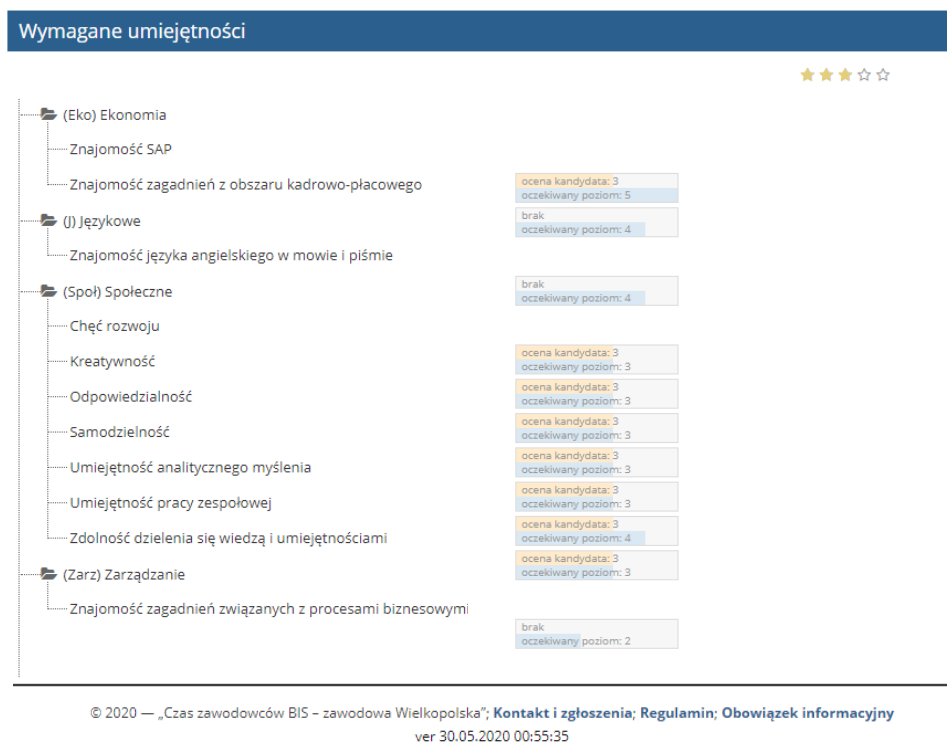
Fig. 2.3. An example of a mechanism for developing a job offer with selected required skills and a specific expected level of those skills.
Source: www.system.zawodowcy.org

Just like any other resource, competencies need to meet **requirements**. Therefore, it is worth defining those requirements before the employee is hired. They

are often described in the form of a **competence profile** at the job position (see chapter 3). Then, through the application of various recruitment methods and tools (Szafrański, et al., 2017), the organization looks to find an employee whose competencies will meet the requirements. Thus, a direct reference to quality management can be found in the recruitment process (Mantura, 2016). The **reference (design) quality** of the set of competencies at the job position is described, and then, as a result of a designed process of "*control of supply of competencies*" offered by the candidate or employee, **compliance** of the **actual quality** with design quality is examined. That compliance may apply to both the set of competencies (whether the employee has or does not have all the competencies described in the competency profile for the job) and the level of individual competencies (if the employee already has the given competence, to what extent they have mastered it). The platform available at www.system.zawodowcy.org (Fig. 2.3) is an innovative tool for the support of that process. Its wider description has been presented in chapter 4.

As has been mentioned above, **knowledge** is one of the categories of competencies. It is always attributed to the human being. That thesis stems from the classical definition of knowledge which is understood as the "*obvious, true belief*" (Chisholm, 1994, s. 173). Beliefs can only be held by a being capable of thinking and the human being is the only such creature on the Earth. Therefore, if a person's belief is accompanied by the features of obviousness and truthfulness, then it is knowledge.

In **teams**, i.e. in groups of people who have at least one common goal, a continuous exchange of knowledge, i.e. **sharing knowledge** (Dupuy, 2004) is beneficial for achieving the organization's goals. Because employees do not always want to share knowledge or they do not know how to do it or they do not know that they know something, they cannot share covert knowledge. Proper **knowledge management** in the company is extremely important (Evans, 2005).

Whenever possible and financially sound, it is worth **codifying** knowledge, i.e. systematizing, archiving and sharing it based on established principles. Seemingly, codification makes knowledge detached from the human being. If we look at humanity as a social system which functions in time which moves towards infinity (potentially it is possible), then as individuals we are a part of the whole social organism which goes beyond the existence of one generation. Although we have not met or will not meet most of them, we also use the knowledge they shared. A parent transfers their knowledge to the child and even when they die, the child continues to use or take it into account. Despite being dead, Einstein continues to share his knowledge with us thanks to the fact that it was codified. Each of them could say "*Non omnis moriar*" or "*Not all of me will die*". The consolidation of knowledge in companies can look the same. The fact that a person has left the organization does not have to mean that knowledge has been detached from them. Codified knowledge remains but that person is still its author, holder and carrier.

Skills which are sometimes considered a subcategory of knowledge (**the knowledge "how?")** are another category of competencies (Organization for Eco-

nomic Co-Operation and Development, 1996, p. 12). Those competencies are even more difficult to share or archive because, even more clearly than knowledge, they are only revealed in **action**. It can be seen particularly well in service work or customer service processes. Not always can one surgeon be replaced by another and not every salesperson achieves the same level of sales results.

In work processes, competencies are revealed in action and their **value** accumulates in the developed products. Products are the carrier of competencies. When we look at a pyramid in Egypt, it takes our breath away. We know that it was designed and built, together with a big team, by someone of extraordinary competencies. The more we learn about the pyramid, the more we learn about the competencies which were necessary to build it. Therefore, the pyramid is a carrier of accumulated competencies as well as the source of knowledge about them. As with the use of knowledge bases, drawings, films, we also code knowledge of competencies with the use of products. They are records of past (in the case of products) or present (in the case of services) activities of man.

2.4. A MARKETING-BASED APPROACH TO COMPETENCIES – COMPETENCY AS A PRODUCT

If competencies are considered a resource, it means that somebody needs them and somebody else supplies them. The mutual need of exchange leads to the emergence of the **competence market**. As a subject of market exchange, competencies begin to show the features of a **product**. Similarly to other markets whose existence is conditioned by exchange processes, there are factors which force entities to deal with competencies in a way that makes it possible for them to be sold or bought. Enterprises develop realized or unrealized **competence marketing** systems (Więcek-Janka and Szafrański, 2017). And it does not matter whether they are called this way or not, whether they are managed or not. They are simply there. They are special marketing systems in which marketing activities are focused on supporting the sale of competencies (not the person!). The greater the awareness of the competence exchange process in the enterprise, the more efficiently and effectively it can manage competence marketing.

The concept of competence marketing is not widespread (Więcek-Janka and Szafrański, 2017, p. 373), among other things because in enterprises competencies are associated primarily with human resource management (HRM). In some businesses, there is no doubt as to the fact that competencies are a product. Transfers of footballers among clubs can serve as an example. The value of the athlete is assessed through the prism of his effectiveness which is an outcome of his skills and experience. On the other hand, job placement agencies base their business on employee competencies which are the subject of exchange.

Special varieties of competence marketing include marketing focused on the exchange of personal competencies which can be referred to as **personal competence marketing** or **personal competence profile marketing**. It is a system that can be developed and improved by a job candidate, a freelancer, a sole proprietor or a micro-enterprise in which the competencies of one person, usually the owner, are of key importance to the business. In such a marketing system, a **personal brand** can be built to make it easier to communicate with the environment (Power, 2020).

In the case of larger enterprises whose attention focuses on the competencies of many employees, not just one person, for instance the owner, and at the same time these competencies are particularly important for the value of products perceived by customers (a phenomenon commonly found in service enterprises), marketing as a system can develop towards **competence-based marketing**. Competencies will be an important tool for communication with the customers who are to be convinced that the appropriate competencies of the company's employees are a guarantee that they will be provided with products that meet their expectations.

In service enterprises, competence-based marketing can dominate or can be a subsystem of **service marketing** as described, for example, by A. Payne (1996).

As a result of the provision of competencies which often leads to the depletion of another resource, i.e. time, their provider receives the payment. In a narrow scope, it will simply be remuneration. In a wider scope, it will be broadly understood benefits. Since during the exchange process, the parties must know the terms of the exchange and some of the "*competence providers*" can choose from many potential clients on the competence market, all the benefits of the exchange must be transparently presented to them. In connection with the fact that the overall conditions in which they will work are increasingly important to people, the benefit systems connected with sharing competencies are becoming increasingly heterogeneous. They need to be managed and communicated. Therefore, many enterprises develop various **Employer Branding** systems. They are systems of actions aimed at shaping the process of exchanging competencies in an expected way both at the stage of concluding the transaction (until the contract is signed) and when the person is already employed. Some of those actions are marketing activities used to support the recruitment of employees or service providers with appropriate competencies, including:

– designing benefits which meet the expectations of competence providers which are a form of payment for the competencies,
– promotion of those benefits,
– the appropriate reach of the benefits, i.e. benefit distribution,
– valuation of benefits.

Employer Branding has been discussed more broadly in chapter 6.

2.5. THE LEGITIMACY OF A MULTIFACETED APPROACH
TO COMPETENCIES

The multifaceted approach to competencies in enterprises:
– makes it possible to better realize their complexity,
– makes it easier for the employees of all departments to understand that each of them has their own potential and competence limitations,
– opens a discussion on to what extent, in the period in question, it is possible to supplement competencies in the enterprise and to what extent it is necessary to acquire competencies from the outside to achieve the strategic, not only operational, objectives of the enterprise,
– makes it easier to understand the role of sharing competencies, identifying competence gaps and creatively using their previously unused excesses,
– broadens the range of marketing activities in the enterprise and the view on quality management,
– strengthens the integration of all subsystems in the company,
– strengthens human empowerment.

Based on experience and observations resulting from many years of contacts with enterprises, e.g. during projects, it is possible to draw preliminary conclusions that, while it is often noticed in enterprises that every employee is responsible for quality or costs, the impact of employee competencies on the effectiveness and efficiency of achieving goals in the whole organization, not just at the job position, is not yet always appreciated. Moreover, rarely are managers of various departments interested in getting involved in competence management, leaving those issues to HR departments. Even the provisions of such commonly used documents as ISO 9000 do not accelerate the flow of knowledge about the need for a broad look at the problem of competence management in enterprises (PN-EN ISO 9004: 2009, point 9.2 People, 2018).

A focus on human competencies, not generally on the human being, makes it easier to have a quality conversation with the employee about the directions of their development and any possible incompatibilities which often simply stem from competence gaps. After all, they can be minimized or eliminated. There is a completely different quality to the conversation with a manager who says "*You can eliminate the mistakes you make in your work if you spend more time improving the activities that you should be doing as in this video*" than when he says "*Think what you can do about yourself to avoid making so many mistakes*". Such talks are part of the competence management process which is broadly discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Małgorzata SPYCHAŁA*

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN METHODS AND TECHNIQUES OF COMPETENCE MANAGEMENT IN AN ENTERPRISE

3.1. THE ESSENCE OF EMPLOYEE COMPETENCE MANAGEMENT

The dynamic nature of competencies, as well as their adaptation to organizational requirements, make it necessary to continuously identify, assess and improve them (Campion, et al., 2011; Miranda, et al., 2017; Różewski, Małachowski, 2012; Sanchez, 2004; Sampson, Fytros, 2008; Kor, Mesko, 2013; Bratton, Gold, 2007). In the case of a purposeful, systematic and methodical approach to those challenges, one can speak of **competence management** which involves adapting the knowledge, skills and attitudes of employees to the goals of the organization and using them in line with these objectives. Competence management focuses in particular on identifying and locating competencies and encompasses the management of various systems, processes and initiatives to ensure that the organization and its members jointly use their competencies to achieve the organization's operational and strategic goals (Hustad, Munkvold, 2005; Nordhaug, 1993). Competence management allows organizations to identify knowledge gaps which can help assess and improve the demand for human resources and vocational training initiatives (Lindvall, et al., 2002). That information can be used to map the professional development of members of the organization. By developing an effective competence management system, it is possible to significantly reduce the time needed to find specialists in the organization and thus improve its overall productivity (Rus, et al., 2001). In reference sources, competence management was discussed by e.g. Levy-Laboyer, 1997; Hollyforde, Wihddett, 2003; Filipowicz, 2004; Oleksyn, 2006; Dubois, Rothwell, 2008; Witkowski, Listwan, 2008.

The management of employee competencies includes:
– analyzing needs and designing competence profiles,
– a planning and monitoring system – quality and quantity of competencies – ensuring proper competencies in the right places at the right time,
– analyzing and assessing the relationship between the competencies which are needed and actually available and making them compatible,

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  – an efficient competence development system – familiarization, staff development, organizational development, encouraging people to acquire and develop the necessary competencies,
  – other competencies which promote activities connected with human resources (recruitment, incentive programs, career planning, taking care of well-being in the workplace, relations within the workplace),
  – knowledge management systems and IT systems,
  – talent management system (Laakso-Manninen, Viitala, 2007; McCormack, Johnson, 2001; Oleksyn, 2006).

Objectives of a competence management system

Determining proper standards of work on job positions – professional qualification standards and distribution of work

Testing actual employee competencies – selection of people for job positions within the organization and professional development and preparation of a promotion path

Preparation of employees in the organization for existing and future tasks

Improving employee satisfaction levels and their position on the labour market by enabling their professional development – personnel marketing

As best as possible capitalization on employee strengths with the marginalization of the impact of their weaknesses on the organization – identification and taking advantage of talents, strengths and interests

Optimization of relations: outlays on human capital development – outcomes of those outlays – the concept of a learning organization

Fig. 3.1. The main objectives of a competence management system.
Source: own compilation based on Dudzińska-Głaz, 2012, 86-90; Juchnowicz, 2002, p. 89-87

Determining the requirements of the organization is the key element of the competence management process. Employers' communication of competencies expected from future employees on the labour market also shapes the image job candidates have regarding the specificity of the future workplace. These standards

then form the basis for assessing the competencies of people who perform or will perform specific tasks in the organization. On the one hand, this approach makes it possible to attract those who have knowledge, skills and attitudes valuable from the organization's point of view, on the other hand, the focus on competencies makes it possible determine the direction of professional and personal development of employees who will work for the given enterprise (Górski, et al., 2015, p. 13). Fig. 3.1 presents the main objectives of a competence management system.

In practice, modern management of employee competencies requires the use of various methods and techniques. The usually used ones include traditional methods which are applied in human resource management. However, unconventional and very innovative tools and techniques which are used only in the area of competence management have also emerged. What is the difference between a method and a technique? According to A. Czermiński, a method means a procedure, choice of the type of action, adopted for use with the possibility of being repeated in all cases of a given type. A technique, on the other hand, encompasses proceedings intended for a special purpose, element or period (Czermiński, Grzybowski, 1996). They are special activities in the performance of partial works. For instance, they make it possible to collect and order the needed data. They are activities which stem from the selection of the appropriate method and which are conditioned by that method (Apanowicz, 2002, p. 80). Research tools are also used to study competencies. They are "*objects, instruments, technical devices, measuring apparatus used to implement research techniques. It includes everything that can be used to collect and record the studied facts, information and phenomena. While a research technique means an activity, a research tool is an instrument for collecting data from scientific research*" (Apanowicz, 2002, p. 90). Due to their widespread use, special emphasis should be put on research tools such as the survey or interview questionnaire, test, and observation sheet.

The literature devoted to employee competence management discusses many methods and techniques which are divided according to:
– identification of employee competencies – analysis of competencies required at a given job position to perform tasks as well as determination of the list of competencies that will be needed in that job in the future,
– assessment of employee competencies – recognition of the actual competence levels of the employee who performs the given tasks at the job position,
– development of employee competencies – improvement and training of competencies so that tasks could be performed more effectively.

In line with the above division, this chapter will present methods and techniques of competence management.

3.2. IDENTIFICATION OF EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES – METHODS, TECHNIQUES AND TOOLS

D. Dubois and W. Rothwell (2008) believe that **employee knowledge and skills** can be identified by:
– indication of behaviours or measurable results achieved through the use of these competencies while taking the nature of the work into account,
– behavioural indicators – a description of an activity or set of activities that can be expected in a situation where a given person effectively uses their competencies to perform their work.

The selection of competency testing methods depends on the size, industry and the operational scope of the enterprise, the specificity of positions for which competence requirements are determined, the direct purpose of identifying competencies or the budget and time available to the organization (Siodor-Rządkowska, 2006). Therefore, each assessor must first determine the purpose of the study and then choose a method for identifying employee competencies to obtain objective information about knowledge, skills, their involvement in the process of improving organizational solutions and proficiency in the performance of the tasks assigned to them.

Identification of competencies can also refer to responsibilities which will be carried out in the future. Techniques based on the projection of the future consist in analyzing the internal and external conditions of operation and subsequently, forecasts regarding competencies which will be needed in the company are developed. In modern enterprises which focus on dynamics and development of their employees' professional competencies, knowledge and skills necessary to perform future tasks are very often forecasted. It is done through work on the project teams, exercises based on case studies or problem-solving.

At that state of competence management, methods and techniques include:
– method of analyzing personnel documentation,
– technique of examining archival materials,
– method of observing tasks at the job position, including the technique of observing the employee while they perform their tasks,
– method of individual interviews with managers (tools – interview questionnaires),
– method of designing competence profiles (tools – competence questionnaires),
– method of designing the reference model for job positions (tool – questionnaire for the reference model of the job).

The stage of identifying employee competencies is the basis for assessment and then for the development and improvement of competence gaps, which is why it is so important to choose the right methods and tools which will show the actual competence picture in the company.

3.3. ASSESSMENT OF EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES – METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Competencies are the perfect quality measurement of human capital. A person who generates satisfactory results and works in an effective way is a person competent to perform a given task. In order to assess the employee's knowledge and skills, the method should be carefully selected to suit the purpose of the study, measurement methods and sources of information obtained (Smółka, 2008). The evaluation criteria need to be predefined. The evaluation itself consists of comparing planned and expected results due to the application of competencies with current results. Consequently, it is possible to revise the existing arrangements as to whether employees have specific competencies or what competencies are necessary to successfully carry out activities, i.e. perform responsibilities. When evaluating professional competencies, one should **evaluate technical competencies** (the so-called "*hard*" competencies) which are connected with professional knowledge and "*soft"* **social competencies** which correspond to the employees' behaviours in relation to other people. When assessing "*hard'*" competencies, one should, therefore, use the assessment of work effects, understood as testing the achievement of goals in recent years. One can use the analysis of assessments over the past few years, or assess work results on project teams and develop training programs on that basis. Another way of assessing technical competence are quizzes and tests as well as grades awarded during courses and training. When assessing "*soft*" competencies, one should employ methods such as:
– observation at the workplace,
– individual interviews with managers, co-workers, customers or subordinates,
– competence-based work evaluation,
– analysis of critical events,
– simulation games,
– opinions gathered from behavioural conversation,
– psychological test results,
– Assessment Center,
– expert panels as well as self-evaluation of employee competencies.

G. Filipowicz (2014) believes that there are four main groups of methods and tools in organizational practice:
– observational scales and questionnaires (the basis for 180 and 360-degree assessment) – refers to observable aspects of human functioning which are described at all levels using behavioural language,
– competence tests – they assess competence in knowledge – how we should behave) and attitudes – what is our attitude towards the required behaviour,
– behavioural interview as the basis for the HR selection process – conducted in the form of a conversation in which questions about the description of specific competencies are asked; when answering the questions, the employee must refer

to their own past experience; it is assumed that if someone behaved in a certain way in the past, they will behave similarly in the future,

– Assessment & Development Center – a set of various methods, techniques and instruments used to diagnose competencies which may include various types of tests, work samples, tasks, interviews, etc.

In addition to traditional techniques used to assess competencies, several modern techniques can also be distinguished:

– CATI (*Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing*) – a technique based on conducting telephone interviews with the support of computer software,

– CAWI (*Computer Assisted Web Interview*) – a technique of direct interview conducted via the Internet in which the respondent needs to fill in a questionnaire themselves

– CAPI (*Computer Assisted Personal Interview*) – a technique based on interviewing the respondent via mobile devices, i.e. laptop, palmtop on which the answers are saved,

– CASI (*Computer Assisted Self-interviewing*) – a computer-aided survey technique in which the respondent fills in the questionnaire themselves, entering their answers into the computer provided by an employee of the testing organization.

When assessing the technical competencies of employees, e.g. knowledge in the field of automation, electronics, or ability to use Excel, employers use tools such as knowledge quizzes or tests. However, they are not objective tools which test the knowledge and skills of the employees. Why is that? Knowledge quizzes very often only verify the knowledge of some part of a given issue in a given department while tests are not the best tool for checking knowledge of a given area either. Therefore, additional methods should be used to determine the employee's competence level, e.g. observation of the employee at work, simulations, role-playing, structured interviews or case analysis and problem-solving. These methods and techniques make it possible to assess the level of technical and behavioural competencies of employees. They are methods which will make it possible to reliably determine their competence gaps.

3.4. THE DEVELOPMENT OF EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES – METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

The development and improvement of employee competencies consist in changing the scope of their knowledge and skills for them to be able to perform new tasks or perform existing tasks more effectively. It is a continuous process because an employee who wants to face the changes which occur in the company should constantly improve their knowledge and skills (Spychała, Sobczak, 2008). The

improvement of employee competencies will consist of a continuous learning process and is a key factor in the organization's success.

Analyzing the methods of developing and improving employee competencies, one can use a study developed by Z. Malar, (2006), who, apart from traditional methods of improving competencies, also analyzes modern ones. They include the following:

– self-development – learning, self-education, new knowledge resources, new theories and research results,
– learning in the organization – learning through systematic experience and problem solving,
– learning through exchange: dialogue, discussions, negotiations, interviews, communication,
– learning from competitors: tracing, monitoring, public relations, benchmarking, sponsoring, franchising,
– learning from the environment: consulting offices, business schools, media, conferences and symposia.

The author believes that action is the most effective instrument for acquiring competencies (Malara 2006). That view is shared by Sajkiewicz A. who considers coaching and mentoring as well as job rotation (horizontally, vertically and outside of the organization) as the most effective training methods, apart from learning in action (Sajkiewicz, 2008). Coaching is a method based on an independent selection of goals and ways of achieving them. The coach's task is to conduct the conversation with the client in such a way that they themselves find the most accurate solutions to their problems. Mentoring, on the other hand, involves the fact that an experienced employee starts a partner relationship and helps not only in professional development but also in coping with stress or resolving conflicts at work.

The development and improvement of employee competencies can happen through formal, non-formal and informal means. Expanding knowledge at a university is not a sufficient form because one also needs to practice, test one's knowledge, acquire new knowledge and effectively operate in a given job to be able to shape skills. Changing working conditions, technologies, new items and means of work force employees to develop additional competencies which is why training, workshops, internships in other enterprises or transfers are very important to be able to perform new tasks. The role of family and social life in shaping social competencies should also be emphasized as that is where the employee improves their communication, negotiation or organizational competencies (Spychała, Branowska, 2019).

3.5. CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED MODERN METHODS AND TOOLS OF COMPETENCE MANAGEMENT IN AN ENTERPRISE

Next to traditional methods and tools used in the process of managing employee competencies, many methods enable more accurate analysis of employee behaviour in terms of the requirements of a given job and make it possible to organize their work, motivate and improve them. Among the current trends prevailing in the management of employee competencies, one can distinguish networking, e-recruitment and e-reference models of job positions. Each of them has been characterized below.

Networking is a popular method of building a network of contacts relevant to running a business. Networking is aimed at the bilateral exchange of information, advice, mutual recommendations and support. There are many benefits stemming from networking, e.g.
– establishing new relationships with other companies,
– new customers,
– acquiring reliable suppliers and service providers,
– expanding the network of trusted business contacts in various industries,
– getting to know people (their competencies) access to whom is difficult in other circumstances,
– finding talent (specialist employee competencies),
– improved visibility of a given company (person) on the labour market.

Examples of the use of that method include WEEN (the Wielkopolska Education and Economic Network which has been described in chapter 1 and 9) where direct industry meetings such as panels, workshops and conferences are being organized. During the meetings, employers can identify the competencies of potential employees, learn the competency requirements of other enterprises for given jobs, and at the same time develop their own employee competencies through the method of learning from experts and specialists.

E-recruitment or online recruitment or social recruitment is "*a way to implement strategies, policies and practices in an organization, through conscious and targeted support using Web-based communication channels*" (Girard, Fallery, 2010, p. 1). E-recruitment is based on the fact that an unlimited number of candidates on the global labour market have access to the web and can send information regarding the level of their competencies via the Internet. That method creates the opportunity to provide more information about competency requirements on the job position and in companies. *System.zawodowcy.org* through which candidates can be found and preliminarily selected is one of such e-recruitment tools. It is characterized by unlimited availability, significantly reduced time consumption, low cost and high flexibility. Easy contact makes it possible to pre-verify competencies, thus saving the company's time and money. The system's functions are constantly being refined and adapted to the changing needs of users (for more information see chapter 4).

E-reference models of job positions are another modern tool used in competence management. A reference model of a given job position is a set of technical (specialist) and social competencies required in that job in reference to a specific labour market together with the required level of competence. Its main goal is to improve the design of individual models in enterprises by providing a general solution, reducing the costs of model design, and facilitating the management and control for organizations (Spychała, et al., 2017). Therefore, the reference model of a job position enables the rational and economical use of human resources held by enterprises and their better adaptation to changing external conditions (Spychała, et al., 2019). Reference models are not created for the needs of one company only. They are universal and can be used in various areas in many companies, also in the same job positions. As part of the project "Time of Professionals BIS- Professional Wielkopolska", e-reference models are developed for various job positions based on real data from companies from Wielkopolska and posted on an online platform (see Fig. 2).

Selection of job X which is in the group of most popular jobs on the Wielkopolska labour market, in line with the project.

↓

Analysis of responsibilities at a given job position in at least 3 enterprises.

↓

Development of a competency sheet for a given position in at least 3 enterprises.

↓

Assessment of competence levels required for a given job by direct managers.

↓

Comparison of competence profiles (competencies with assessment of levels) at the same job positions in at least 3 different enterprises.

↓

A reference model of a job position

Fig. 3.2. Stages in designing a reference model of a job position.
Source: own compilation based on Spychała, Goliński, Szafrański, Graczyk-Kucharska, (2019), pp. 282-291

The designed reference models enable accurate recognition of competence requirements and unify expectations from candidates for given positions in various enterprises. Thanks to them it is possible to develop specific job advertisements quickly and easily.

Reference models also provide the opportunity to identify and monitor the level of development of a person's competencies, enable selection of training programs and workshops to improve competencies and development of objective criteria for assessing candidates for a given job position in various enterprises.

Table 3.1 summarizes the considerations on traditional and modern methods, techniques and tools for employee competence management.

Table 3.1. Traditional and modern methods, techniques and tools for employee competence management

Areas of employee competence management	Traditional methods, techniques and tools for competence management	Modern methods, techniques and tools for competence management
1	2	3
Identification of employee competencies	**Methods:** – method of analyzing HR documentation – method of observation at the workplace – diagnostic survey method – method of designing competence profiles – method of designing the reference model for job positions **Techniques:** – technique of examining archival materials – technique of observing an employee while they perform their tasks – the interview technique – the survey technique – job interview **Tools:** – interview questionnaires – competency questionnaires – competency sheet	**Methods:** – networking – Assesment Center – psycho-graphology. **Techniques:** – online job interviews – the online interview technique – the web-assisted survey technique **Tools:** – e-Recruiter – e-interview questionnaires – e-reference models – system.zawodowcy.org – projective tests

table 3.1 – continue

1	2	3
	– reference models sheets – Curriculum Vitae and cover letter – job cards – personality tests – talent and skills tests	
Evaluation of employee competencies	**Methods:** – 180/270/360 degree methods – observation method – work performance analysis method – method of observation of an experienced employee's behaviour at work – critical cases method **Techniques:** – ranking – pair comparison technique – normal distribution technique – descriptive assessment – behavioural interview – working sessions with experts **Tools:** – competency tests, – tests of knowledge and skills – practical tests – situational tests – work analysis questionnaires – exercise questionnaires	**Methods:** – networking – Assesment Center **Tools:** – e-interview questionnaires – e-reference models – system.zawodowcy.org – simulation tests
Development of employee competencies	**Methods:** – problem lectures – on-the-job training – job substitutions – job rotation – case analysis – taking part in training in a given scope – participation in workshops – natural social training – self-improvement	**Methods:** – networking – Development Center – Benchmarking – Coaching – Mentoring – Blended learning – implementation of team projects – virtual teams – e-learning with the use of multimedia techniques

table 3.1 – continue

1	2	3
	Techniques: – attempts at performing tasks differently than before, – group discussions – consultations with the superior – peer observation and feedback – observation of actual or simulated tasks – work samples – imitating people who succeeded in a given area. **Tools:** – so-called "paper and pencil" test – psychometric tests – self-assessment questionnaires, – competency profiles	– spatial games – role-playing with the use of IT techniques, – simulations with the use of IT techniques, – counselling, – domestic and foreign study visits, – information discussions, meetings, exchange of views and experience **Techniques:** – videoconferences – simulation exercises – specialist instruction **Tools:** – e-reference models – system.zawodowcy.org – training programs

Source: own compilation.

The presented competence management methods and tools are used at all stages of human resource management in organizations which apply modern technologies. Those stages include recruitment which will be discussed in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 4

Marek GOLIŃSKI*

THE INFLUENCE OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES ON EMPLOYEE RECRUITMENT

4.1. CONDITIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Computerization and digitalization are most often mentioned in the context of enterprise development. The necessity to computerize all departments of the company and the progressive automation of production become a measure of corporate innovation. Changes also occur in human resource management. Currently, the standard accelerating HR tasks involves the use of modern technologies to support the recruitment process, development of employee career paths and building the image of companies. The consequences of widespread development of technology include a change in expectations from job candidates where social, analytical and digital competencies become increasingly important while monotonous, imitative or manual works are being eliminated (Nowastowska, Stroińska, 2019).

Just as the operating conditions of enterprises change, the importance of work in human life, the role work plays in our lives, the way how we perform our responsibilities and the degree of employee involvement transform as well. Such challenges are faced by those responsible for personnel management in the company and the possibility of improving their effectiveness and efficiency depends largely on the use of new technologies. Obviously, a full success in the performance of HR tasks cannot be seen only in full "immersion" in e.g. the Internet. Work in the area of human resource management is based on knowledge of management, knowledge of company strategy, experience combined with creativity and a high level of interpersonal and communication skills. It is only based on such potential and classic methods of personnel management that one should reach for modern technologies.

For several decades, the right selection of candidates for work has been part of building the competitive advantage of enterprises. A wide range of activities and far-reaching specialization resulted in the emergence of a new area of market activity called recruitment marketing in the scope of employee finding (Olszak, 2014). The employee becomes not only a member of the team who works towards the

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common goals of the enterprise, is not perceived only as a resource with specific competencies but also becomes a client of the enterprise who applies for a job. Such a bilateral relationship makes the employee a prosumer, i.e. a person who on the one hand forms some exchangeable value (being an employee of the enterprise) and at the same time is a consumer (by accepting the job offer) (Shafiq, et al., 2020).

Using modern technologies in recruitment, one should remember that just as employment conditions change, employee expectations and the way how they function on the labour market also undergo changes. At the moment, employees expect a different career path than forty years ago. Modern technologies, work with virtual processes and the internationalization of enterprises result in a global movement of resources and unlimited transfer of competencies. Staying with the first employer until retirement is no longer the example to follow. It has been replaced by frequent changes in employment due to greater efficiency in retraining and looking for new professions (Mazurkiewicz, 2019). It stems from a bigger opening to learning, determination in getting to know new technologies and acquisition of competencies. The attitude to work is also different. At the moment, it is not an objective, it is a method leading to the achievement of goals, therefore employees look for flexibility and solutions which will help them reconcile their professional and private lives (*work-life balance*).

Such challenges are faced by companies which, if they want to hire the best employees, must recruit them properly and then offer them the right career path and developmental opportunities.

4.2. TECHNICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL CONDITIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MODERN TECHNOLOGIES IN HR

Regardless of the degree of technological advancement of the enterprise and focus on the company's development, the basic responsibilities of resource management departments do not change. On the other hand, the way how individual tasks are performed changes, sometimes requiring intervention in the organizational structure of the enterprise and involving technical and IT personnel much more often. In addition to modifying the structure of IT resources, the most important condition for implementing modern technologies is to realize the need to use them and to convince the entire enterprise to do so. It is a very important task of those responsible for personnel management, especially since many specialists cannot afford to look ahead because they are still struggling with current problems and sometimes they have not even yet overcome the crises of the past.

The most important areas of HR departments' activity in which support through modern technologies is possible have been presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Selected areas of HR activity in combination
with the application of modern technologies

HR activity area	Possible applications of modern technologies
Training and development	– remote education, especially by e-learning – the use of social networks, – virtual tour of the company
Recruitment	– The Internet as a source of information and a form of contact – the use of recruitment platforms such as system.zawodowcy.org.
Talent management	– acquisition of employees for remote work
Employee relations management	– supplementing direct communication with remote communication (intranet), – newsletters, – online chat as a way to involve executives
Administrative processes	– processing big amounts of information, – payroll processing standardization
Legal adjustments on diverse global markets	– access to information resources, including legislative resources of separate states, – specialist forums

Source: Own compilation.

As part of implementing modern technologies, when it is possible to choose the form and entity which implements the solutions, one can distinguish four basic approaches, ranging from work without IT support to outsourcing.

a) The simplest solution is to do all the tasks traditionally without computers – a method which is archaic enough to have been largely discontinued.

b) Most companies operate with computer software which is standard or dedicated to the specific needs of the company depending on its requirements and financial capabilities. Most are dispersed solutions, i.e. programs and applications with limited functionality, e.g. intended solely for payroll processes or development of recruitment offers.

c) More and more companies are engaging other departments (usually the IT division) to perform or implement selected HR work. In the case of periodic training and improvement courses, they can be employees of other departments who have unique competencies or people of appropriate qualifications.

d) If the task is not very repetitive or requires high specialization, the enterprise can **outsource** the work. If the company does not have an HR department, a whole range of HR works is delegated outside.

Based on the classic approach to acquiring a candidate, it is possible to analyze the path of activities (Table 4.2) involving modern technologies in the recruitment process.

Table 4.2. An example of a recruitment path incorporating modern technologies

Stage of recruitment path	Possible applications of modern technologies
Determining the competency needs for the selected job – reliable presentation of the requirements (job responsibilities, expected performance effectiveness, qualifications) and the benefits offered	– internal job base in conjunction with the required competencies – Integrated Information System – familiarity with market standards describing competence requirements on the market, e.g. system.zawodowcy.org – job advertisement websites – analysis of external secondary sources, e.g. the labour market, – presentation of the company by posting materials about it online
Publication of the job offer – looking for candidates through internal and external channels	– choice of the optimal information channel (internet dominates) – specification of optimal recruitment forms (concurrent) – cooperation with candidate finding intermediaries – cooperation with leaders of individual departments in the enterprise (internal employee evaluation systems) – analysis of social media profiles: GoldenLine, LinkedIn – networking – contact with educational institutions such as schools and universities – analysis of current trends
Collection of candidate submissions, pre-verification – classification and rejection of offers	– adjustment of employees to organizational culture – minimizing the cost of reaching the best ones by capitalizing on the global reach of the Internet
Choice of candidates in line with the chosen method	– remote meetings replacing direct ones and phone calls – remote provision of tests for verification of competencies – verification of qualifications based on job descriptions, - assessment center
Closing the recruitment process – offering the job to the selected candidate, feedback on rejection for other candidates	– remote communication

Source: own compilation based on M. Graczyk-Kucharska, M. Goliński, M. Spychała, M. Szafrański (2019) workshops entitled "Modern tools for connecting the labour market with the employee".

Every department in the enterprise plays an important role while employees of separate departments believe that it is their department that is the most important one. However, the strategic role is played by those whose functioning has a significant impact on entire enterprises and which generate the most important values. The recruitment process which includes **parameters assessing the expected efficiency of departments**, including employees, in the recruitment process must be prepared for such challenges. In such a case, *Key Performance Indicators* which reflect planned business results come in handy. Such a criterion makes it possible to indicate priority job positions and thus provides a guideline to recruiting.

However, the most important challenge in the recruitment process is the **optimization of employment forecasts** which has to reconcile the plans and ambitions of business owners with the situation on the labour market and the economy based on sometimes inaccurate information (for more see chapter 8).

Regardless of the location of the HR department in the structure of the enterprise, or even in the form of outsourcing, human capital management is such an important activity that it should **cooperate closely with other departments** and at the same time play an integrative part in the whole enterprise. Harmonizing HR tasks with other departments is necessary not only at the stage of recruitment but also in order to come up with employee development paths, organize the control and improvement process as well as create an atmosphere that contributes to attracting and retaining the best candidates (for more see Chapter 7).

To improve efficiency and achieve better results based on new tasks that require access to large amounts of information and at the same time support with modern IT tools, HR professionals also have to change. Some examples of "new" HR roles using new technologies have been proposed by Dave Urlich (Urlich, 2017):

– A "*Technical and media integrator*" uses and teaches the use of social media, introduces new technological solutions, adapts modern solutions to increase the organization's activity,
– A "*Compliance Manager*" introduces procedures, knows how to manage change processes, knows the regulations of the law, monitors and interprets them, helps others follow the guidelines,
– A "*Designer and analytical interpreter*" knows how to and likes to use analyzes, streamlines the decision-making process based on data, uses data stored in clouds.

Another role was proposed by Filipczyk and Gołuchowski who specified a "*Change Agent*" as a person who can integrate HR needs and, e.g. university education. An HR manager who notices the areas that require changes, initiates changes, persuades to change, carries out and consolidates changes, was proposed as a person who can improve the education process during university studies, even providing help in writing the diploma thesis (Filipczyk, Gołuchowski, 2018).

Given modern technologies, changes in the very forms of organization of work should also be taken into account in recruitment (Figure 4.1)
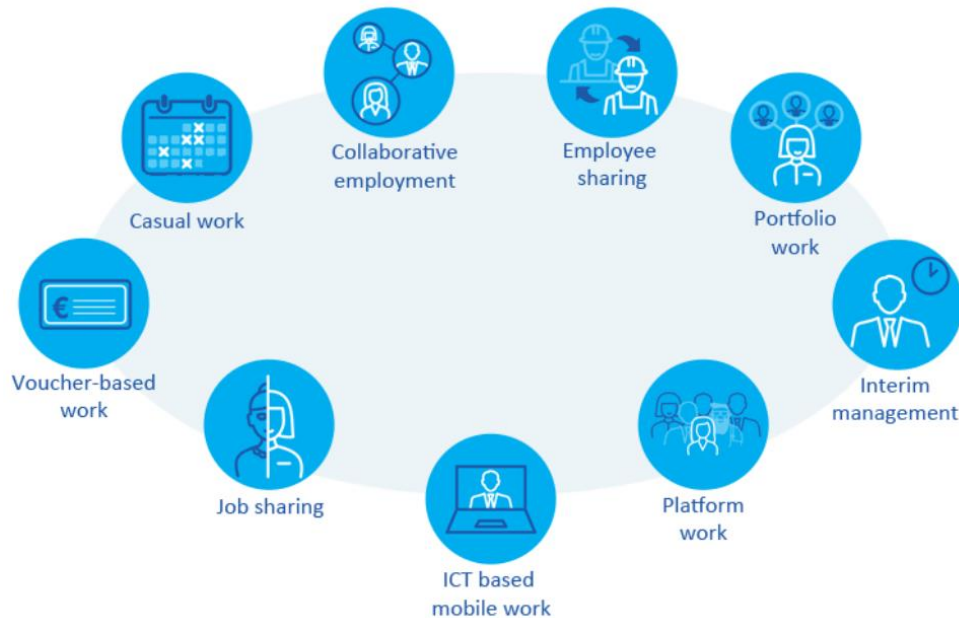
Fig. 4.1. New forms of employment which affect the methods and tools of recruitment.
Source: own compilation based on Eurofound (2019)

Together with the marketing department, the HR department is often a driving force in the implementation of modern technologies which are used to analyze current trends and forecast development which in turn are necessary to develop the company's management strategy, including HR management strategy. Economic development is identified with revolutionary changes in production while the development of robotics, digitization, cognitive systems or artificial intelligence has a very significant impact on the labour market and consequently on addressing competence shortages among unskilled workers (see Chapter 8).

The challenge for today's HR departments is the reconstruction of the company's organizational structure, outsourcing part of the work to other entities, automation of many routine daily tasks, so that employees could take up more effective work, generating greater value of their work which will allow them to succeed on the market in the future.

4.3. METHODS AND TOOLS USED IN RECRUITMENT

The introduction of innovation to the organization and keeping up with changes in the environment applies to all departments in the company. The HR department

is no exception, although due to the need to work with people as the company's sensitive resource, changes to it should not be revolutionary. Out of many HR tasks, recruitment is most often associated with that department, and any lack of success in the recruitment process most often casts a shadow over the balance of achievements of HR employees.

Apart from a properly described job position, a rightly selected form of communication with candidates is key to a successful recruitment process. Currently, the Internet is the most effective way of communicating widely and it has become the basic method of attracting job candidates.

Table 4.3. Types of e-recruitment in conjunction with modern technologies

Type of recruitment	Characteristic feature	Modern technologies	Advantages
web 1.0	One-way communication between the company and the candidate	The company's websites, Recruitment websites	Generating a scale of impact by posting online, on many websites
web 2.0	Analysis of the behaviour of potential candidates by collecting information from social media	Social media Search engines, Blogs Online forums	Development and evaluation of the candidate's profile based on information obtained independently. Preparation of invitations to be mailed to the profiled candidate
web 3.0	Communication between the company and the candidates via membership in thematic forums and portals (wortals)	Social media Blogs Online job fairs Video-recruitment - through the organization of virtual tests	Employer Branding – subliminal impact on candidates who do not actively seek work. Talent searching
web 4.0	"Background" recruitment; use of gamification, crowdsourcing for recruitment purposes	Social media Thematic forums	Basing the message on organized and profiled communities. Networking. Verification of competencies in virtual tasks
web 5.0 plans	Emotional human-machine ties	Reading selected biometric indicators and attempting to interpret emotions	Communication without words. Interaction with the message (Daws, 2016) Completeness of transmitted content

Source: own compilation based on Woźniak, 2014; Fleerackers, Meyvis 2019.

In the use of modern technologies, the scope of information about the candidate and the recruitment method itself do not differ radically from traditional ones. However, the communication channel, which is based on the Internet in a significant part of the recruitment process, is definitely changing. The term e-recruitment started to be used by analogy to the widespread tendency to include the Internet in the functioning of classic solutions. It includes the development of websites and online interactivity and the development of the approach to recruitment can also be presented.

Alongside with the development of communication methods and tools, recruitment methods are also dynamically developing on the Internet.

A. Regardless of its outdatedness, the classic recruitment method, i.e. submitting a paper CV in the company's office, is currently difficult to implement in practice. Sending CVs by email is also becoming insufficient. Today's CVs and professional experience of candidates are sent in the form of **multimedia presentations** with many interactive links to their **personal websites and blogs** or **video files**. It this important to be creative and stand out from other candidates, which is why original forms are gaining importance. An example of this may be **storytelling**, which, as an improvised story from the candidate's life, is meant to convince the recruiter and positively influence the employment decision (Hofman-Kohlmeyer, 2018).

B. **Websites** are the most popular place where jobs are offered and looked for. They can be divided into those of a professional nature (Linkedin, Goldenline), those for mass audiences (Facebook, Twitter) and those recruitment-oriented (olx.pl/Praca, pracuj.pl/Praca, GoWork.pl/Praca, jooble.org). Information about specific offers is very often supplemented with relevant information about the company which in such a case supports the recruitment process. Brokers still play an important role in finding the candidate, especially when the company is looking for specialists - then the **direct search** method is used. **Executive search** is a special case of direct search, making it easier to narrow the quest down to the best candidates (Suchar, 2008).

C. A frequent task of the recruiter was to conduct a detailed interview with the candidate. That activity has also been virtualized thanks to **chatbots**, or computer programs that interact with the user using natural human language. Through chatbots, it is possible to provide information about the company and job offers, personal data is also collected, it is possible to pre-select candidates by screening questions and arrange for a meeting with the recruiter (Berdowska, 2018).

D. Participation in job fairs is still an attractive form of recruitment and, like the other activities, it also takes place in the virtual world. After fairs have been moved to the unreal world, **recruitment videos** play an important part and should generate interest among potential candidates by being based on a suggestive script and message about the organization's values. Videos featuring employees also improve trust in the organization and highlight the values of the company for which it is worth working (Woźniak, 2014).

E. **Image campaigns** are expected to draw the attention of a potential candidate to the company – that is why the form of the message and its originality is very important because they build the image of the employer with a small amount of content. The campaign should encourage the candidate to visit the company. Employers often allow candidates to visit the enterprise combining it with direct contact with the company's employees, which expected is to inspire greater confidence in the organization (Zając, 2014).

F. **Internship and training programs** are becoming increasingly popular as through them candidates have the opportunity to develop useful skills and learn about the realities of the enterprise while the employer can verify the suitability of the future employee. Training and internship programs are often associated with recruitment contests, especially in situations where a specific number of candidates need to be selected from many and new talents have to be discovered (Strzebońska, 2017) (for more see Chapter 7).

G. The **Assessment Center** which combines several forms of testing the candidate while enabling remote recruitment is a thorough method of verifying the candidate. In the cycle of diverse tasks, the professional potential of candidates is verified in conditions similar to the situations they will face in real work. Referring to the customs and habits developed by people who grew up with computer games, it is possible to enrich the Assessment Center with elements of **gamification** at the same time increasing the candidates' motivation to be more involved in the tasks (Kania, 2018).

The employees of HR departments face a very difficult task: they have to recruit the best employees in the face of dynamically changing economic conditions, intense competition and difficult forecasting conditions. In such a situation, the use of modern technologies and continuous updating of methods and tools for recruiting new employees provides very important, even indispensable, support for recruiters.

4.4. DIRECTIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF RECRUITMENT METHODS

Technological progress causes big changes in the labour market. There are legitimate concerns about the reduced importance of man in the manufacturing process and, as a consequence, the maintenance of jobs (Chapter 2). Many jobs involving simple and repeatable responsibilities and processes have already been automated. It is a natural direction, however, most skills are still held by people and despite the development of artificial intelligence, robots will never be able to fully replace human competencies. Building competitive advantage will be based more on human creativity, for instance in the scope of inventing the applications of robots.

Recruitment processes will have to take into account changes in both technology and organizational culture. Regardless of the profession, the importance of social competencies will be increasing. It will be possible to successfully verify the communication skills expected from the candidates, their willingness to cooperate and commitment to work with modern technologies. Already today, employee training programs built on online educational platforms are used not only to improve employee competencies but also play a role in building the company's image. Open **online courses on a corporate cloud server** play an important part in building the corporate culture and popularizing corporate policies. With the use of digital technology, instructional services are provided to employees and job candidates, and assessment systems make a significant contribution to both preparation of recruitment and the process of assessment and promotion (Wang, et al., 2019).

The labour market will be dominated by people who use **social networks** and treat that tool as a very important feature in the job search process, especially through the use of recommendations (Bartakova, et al., 2017). HR professionals will have to use social media in building their company's image in such a way that the employee perceived the organization as an attractive employer and as a *"great workplace"* as well as an organization for which people want to work, not only pursuing economic goals but also building their own and the company's potential for the future (Stacho, et al., 2019).

Social awareness of the use of knowledge from social networks should increase because traditional recruitment methods in many institutions have now been completely replaced by techniques based on the Internet and social networks (Vetráková, et al., 2018). The IT and consulting industry have pioneered the use of modern technologies in recruitment processes for years (Pinho, et al., 2019).

Many recruiters use both LinkedIn and Facebook to increase the amount of information about a candidate still before the interview. The scope of information posted there might be key to invitations to the first job interview (Caers, Castelyns, 2010). To many (especially young) people social media are becoming the leading platform for sharing their opinions, thoughts and information. The digital footprint of those posts is very difficult to delete and can reveal the true personality of the candidate, that is why it successfully replaces traditional tests or surveys. Adding observation of the person's writing style on Twitter to that information might be decisive to the outcome of the recruitment process or promotion of the employee (Alamsyah, et al., 2018).

However, it is worth mentioning as a final note that many concerns are being voiced about privacy and **data security** on the Internet. In particular, the concerns are connected with the risk of unauthorized intrusion into the areas of privacy of contact with other people, the possibility of restricting access to personal data, freedom in making private decisions on personal and intimate matters, the possibility of using biometric identification. Apart from general social concerns, reservations are being raised about the possibility of processing information about employees and potential employees in companies. It applies also to the use of cameras

which in principle should serve mainly controlling functions (Act on the protection of personal data, 2018). With respect to recruitment matters, it is possible to automatically profile employees and make decisions that have legal consequences for them, a fact which involves a high risk of discrimination without the persons concerned knowing about it (Todolí-Signes, 2019).

Regardless of the negative opinions and dangers connected with virtualization and digitization, we are now "*doomed*" to use modern technologies which significantly improve work and provide greater efficiency and effectiveness in recruitment processes.

Taking into account the use of modern technologies in recruitment, the knowledge of preferred methods in the candidate group is of key importance. It is particularly important in the case of bigger age diversity and generational differences as described in detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Małgorzata SPYCHAŁA*
Magdalena GRACZYK-KUCHARSKA*

RECRUITMENT AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS TAILORED TO EMPLOYEES FROM GENERATION X, Y AND Z

5.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF GENERATIONAL DIFFERENCES

Communication between employees has significantly differed over the past few decades. Knowledge connected with intergenerational management, characteristics of customs and habits developed by separate age groups, their approaches to communication and cooperation are among important activities (Brown, et.al., 2015; Stone, Deadrick, 2015) which are implemented by HR departments. Intergenerational tension has been present in organizations for years, however recently there has been a growing interest in this problem (Lieber, 2010, Lyos, et al., 2015, Bennett, et al., 2017), especially in the context of intellectual capital management (Teece, 1998).

As defined by McCrindle and Wolfinger (2010), a generation is a group of people born in a similar period who are shaped by similar social, economic, technical and political factors. According to Howe and Strauss (1992), three **factors** are key to the classification of consecutive generations. They are membership, shared beliefs and behaviours and a common place or situation in history. The key features of consecutive generations vary by region (Bova and Kroth, 2001). Every group of people in a specific part of the world has its own perspective on work. The further part of this charter briefly characterizes the generations known as baby-boomers, X, Y, Z and Alpha. Please note that the periods attributed to separate generations and may differ due to the region of the world and the author's interpretation.

The **Baby-boomers** generation was born in the years 1945-1964. That group is distinguished by the highest level of commitment and the importance of work in their lives (Hoole, Bonnema, 2015, p. 1). Its representatives are ambitious, highly competitive and work-oriented. They attach great importance to involvement in the organization and its development, at the same time being highly likely to work for the same company throughout their lives. The Baby-boomers generation is charac-

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terized by the stability of behaviours, patience, individual work and acceptance of rules and patterns of behaviour (Rosa, 2013, p. 138).

Generation X, also known as the "*Baby Boosters*", includes those born in 1965-1980 who entered their adulthood during the economic crisis of the 1970s. TV was their main source of information. The features which characterize that group include significant scepticism, distrust and substantial sensitivity to any instances of incompetence. They are less committed to the company than Baby-boomers but more loyal than generation Y. People from generation X are workaholics with high work ethics. They recognize the authority of the boss although they are not fond of hierarchy and superiors. At work, they value positive and negative feedback and need team support and a sense of being useful to work effectively. Satisfaction with work is their greatest motivator and they believe that delegation of tasks is crucial for efficient management and achievement of goals (Somblik-Jęczmień, 2013, p. 230).

New generations such as Y or Z, i.e. the group of people born between 1974 and 2000, expect more and more sophisticated technological solutions already in the early stages of their lives. **Generation Y** which grew up with the technology which is available today, i.e. Internet-based communication or mobile telephony, is accustomed to the model where an order is followed almost immediately after being issued. It is assumed that it includes those born in 1977-1997 (Gruchoła, 2016) and referred to as *Generation Y, the Digital Nation* or the "*flip-flop and iPod generation*". That group is classified into smaller subgroups according to whether they entered the computer age as adults or as younger people who do not remember reality without computers. The first group is referred to as *Digital immigrants* and the latter as *Digital natives.* There are still many challenges in teaching digital natives how to use modern IT tools, naturally and every day, exercising a critical approach (Prensky, 2001b, p. 5).

After the Baby Boomers, Generation X, Generation Y (Southgate, 2017; Susani & Natalia, 2018), the time came for **generation Z** who joins the labour market around 2018-2025 and differs from the other groups with their way of life and everyday use of technology. The concept of generation Z was adopted by Schroer in 2008 to distinguish all those who were born after the Millennium (Amiama-Espaillat, Myor-Ruiz, 2017). Reports and literature also employ other references to that group such as "*post-millennials*", "*centennials*", "*pivotals*" (Southgate, 2017) and "*zappers*" (Csiszárik-Kocsír, Garia-Fodor, 2018). Natives of this generation cannot function without the Internet which they treat as an obvious everyday thing which they have known from an early age (Roblek, et al., 2019). Such people aspire to pursue breathtaking careers, immediately and effortlessly and do not accept the vision of long-term career-building by taking small steps. They are characterized by mobility and knowledge of foreign languages, which leads to the fact that they look for jobs not only close to where they live, in the region or even in Poland but also in foreign countries. They quickly adapt to living and working in new countries. Generation Z is characterized by high risk. Its members do not care

about work stability. They desire diversity and run away from routine. They are eager to learn about and discover new things, which is manifested, among others, by their desire to communicate with other cultures, undergo foreign internships, attempt new methods of work and improve established processes. They keep in touch with friends via the Internet, as also indicated by studies conducted by Laza-nyi and Bilan (2017) which confirm that members of Generation Z have a bigger number of friends on average than other, older groups. They are adjusted to tack-ling several tasks at once because it is difficult for them to focus on only one activi-ty. They want to have everything and achieve goals immediately. Their attitude to life is materialistic and realistic. However, at the same time, they can be creative and ambitious. They acquire knowledge mainly from online sources, often creating them themselves without referring to currently existing knowledge in a given area. They spend a lot of time playing online games (Perez-Escoda, et al., 2016). Young people of Generation Z are quite natural in their approach to recruitment based on modern recruitment tools (Derous, De Fuyt, 2016; Dalessandro, 2018), and at the same time, they prefer flexible working hours (Lasanyi, Bilan, 2017).

The youngest generation of people born after 2010 is called the **Alpha genera-tion**. The name of that generation comes from the first letter of the Greek alphabet. Those people will begin to enter the labour market around 2025-2030 at the earliest but it is already forecasted that they will be more educated and technologically advanced. They will not remember times without smartphones and social media such as Facebook (Gruchoła, 2016, p. 8).

It can be seen among employees that the generations which entered the labour market at one-generation intervals cooperate best with each other. It is connected with the critical variable concerning the higher treatment of work relative to private life or vice versa. It is pointed out that people from generations X and Z are regard-ed as workaholics, and when raising children, they wanted to teach them how to respect private time. Therefore, Baby-boomers and generation Y, probably also Alpha, will be the ones for whom the work-life balance is and will be a key factor in their lives, and thus, the people from these generations will better communicate and cooperate in the work environment.

5.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF SELECTED TOOLS OF COMMUNICATION AND RECRUITMENT

In the 21st century, which is the age of digitization of services and information, companies are changing their operational strategy focusing more and more of their attention on the Internet. Over the past few years, there emerged a trend under which the concept of communication is changing from mass communication to targeted communication, understood as an individual approach to the end recipient of the message.

Due to the changing trends and behaviours of the actors of the communication process and the range of tools, the **Internet** offers new functionalities which are desired by users. As an interactive medium, it allows the user to communicate back with the sender or other recipients. In the area of Internet communication tools, an important role is undoubtedly currently played by **social media** which due to the dynamics of development, the nature and scope of activities and the consistent increase in the number of users are an important channel of communication with the environment. The media are used for social interaction in the form of an extensive set of communication tools that go beyond previous social communication. They come in many forms, e.g. **blogs and microblogs** (Twitter, WordPress, Blogger), social media (Facebook, LinkedIn, nk.pl, MySpace), **content services** (Youtube, Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest), **virtual social games** (World of Warcraft), **virtual social worlds** (Second Life) and **social bookmarking** (delicious.com). **Facebook** is one of the biggest and most important services in the world of social media. It is the largest, multifunctional social network which is rich in diverse tools of communication (Kuczamer-Kłopotowska, 2016, 216-227).

Table 5.1. Selected communication tools

Communication tool	Characteristics of the communication tool
Blog platforms	A tool for posting news and information targeted at members of the community where users can post their own comments or supplementations to published articles.
Microblogs	A tool which makes it possible to regularly post very short messages.
Social network	A platform which makes it possible for its users to interact and create personal profiles. It is based on building a network or a community, encouraging membership, exchange of content in the form of text, videos or photos.
Content services	They are used to exchange content, i.e. upload and post multimedia materials such as photos, videos, etc.
Social gaming	A kind of interactive online games which involve more than one person. The user can play with people who are on their friend list on a given portal.
Virtual social worlds	Games which simulate a real society in which the player creates their avatar from scratch and moves in a virtual world. The essence of the game is to interact with many players, modify the virtual world and take part in its virtual economy.
Social bookmarking	It is used for collecting bookmarks to websites within an online community. The bookmarks are organized with the use of metadata, most often tags.

Source: own compilation based on Kuczamer-Kłopotowska, 2016, p. 216-227.

Why are those communication tools so diverse and develop continuously? It is the developing technology, and primarily, the needs of users, the young generation, that lead to the emergence of more and more innovative tools. These tools are used in various areas of company management, also at the stage of recruitment and selection of employees. Next to traditional forms of recruitment, completely different new ones are also emerging, which, in a rational combination, makes it possible to make accurate personnel decisions (see Chapter 4). By taking innovative actions stemming from emerging trends, recruiters have the opportunity to flexibly adapt the recruitment and selection process to the current situation on the labour market and the resources they have (Olszak, 2014). The most popular online recruitment services include www.kariera.com.pl, www.pracuj.pl, www.gazetapraca.pl, www.jobs4it.pl, www.hrk.pl, nasza-klasa.pl, facebook.com, www.goldenline.pl. They provide a lot of useful information and news concerning the current labour market and education, internships and practical training programs. In cyberspace, on professional social forums, people co-create an extraordinary base of experience and information. Some services, e.g. GoldenLine, are tools which "*absorb knowledge and build relations*". They bring together people of very similar interests, worldviews, professional goals (Wieczorek, 2011). In principle, recruitment portals execute their recruitment function in two ways. In the first one, the application is sent through the portal. Such a model is employed by e.g. www.infopraca.pl, www.szybkopraca.pl, www.jobexpress.pl. In the second case, the job offers include contact details and the contact and application sending is done outside of the website. Such a model is followed by www.pracuj.pl and www.jobs.pl.

Modern IT systems also support recruitment management, i.e. quick emission, creation of a database of potential employees, administration of applications, as well as easy and quick correspondence with candidates. Talent Finder and Mr Ted are among the most popular recruitment-support applications. Talent Finder (www.talentfinder.pl) is a modern internet application (ATS - Applicant Tracking System) which guarantees effective management of recruitment processes. Mr Ted (www.mrted.pl) is an international provider of solutions connected with helping organizations optimize the complex processes of acquiring and onboarding job candidates (Wieczorek., 2011).

Networking is another communication tool used during the recruitment and selection process (see chapter 3). It is a network of contacts which is important to broadly understood business, in this case, two types of networks: a network of customers and a network of co-workers. Networking is based on relations which are looked after to enable a mutual exchange of information and advice and mutual recommendations and support (Tullier 2006, p. 23). The bigger the number of contacts, the faster it is possible to reach recommended candidates, a fact which makes it possible to save time and costs connected with the publication of an advertisement in the press or on web portals from the employer's point of view. From the candidate's point of view, it is a much faster and more certain way to find a job

in a trusted organization (recommended by a friend who works/worked there) (Olszak, 2014).

E-recruitment, or online recruitment, is currently the latest and the most widespread method of recruitment. It involves the use of the internet in the acquisition of employees and then their selection. It is characterized by unlimited location, minimal access time, relatively low unit cost, high flexibility and updating of information online on an ongoing basis (Listwan, Kawka, 2010, p. 120). Next to sending resumes, conducting on-line interviews on platforms for audiovisual communication, or sending on-line tests, some meetings with candidates take place in a virtual meeting room (cloud meeting, cloud room) or via an internet messenger which makes it possible to speak to and see the interlocutor (Olszak, 2014).

The characterized communication and recruitment tools should be selected depending on the job positions, industry, form of recruitment and, above all, tailored to the candidates who will apply for the jobs.

5.3. TAILORING RECRUITMENT AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS TO GENERATION X, Y, Z AND ALPHA

The choice of communication tools will depend on how the given generation communicates. Individual generations have been characterized in the first subchapter. This subchapter focuses on the adjustment of recruitment tools to the characteristic features of a given generation and their most frequent way of communication.

Table 5.2 presents communication channels depending on the generation. The table is based on a literature analysis and own research conducted during workshops with enterprises from Wielkopolska - number of companies - 42 (2018 Report: "How to communicate to motivate the millennial generation?"). Members of generation X prefer face-to-face meetings or phone calls. However, they also use newer communication channels such as e-mail or a query sent via a website. **Millennials (Y)** communicate via social media and prefer digital communication to direct communication. They expect their opinions to be listened to and answered which means that companies need to engage in more bilateral talks with their candidates. The younger group of generation Y comprises about 5 million people in Poland. Their buying power is only emerging and constitutes a big potential for business (Kuczamer-Kłopotowska, 2016, p. 223).

According to studies, young members of **Generation Z and Alpha** use the internet on average for 4 hours and 12 minutes every day (Nask, 2019). Watching TV and using their phone or computer at the same time is a popular phenomenon among representatives of generation Z. 55 per cent people under 24 scroll their social media while watching TV (Grabiwoda, 2019). Generation Z demand their questions to be answered immediately. They are more than willing to express their opinions on the web. On the other hand, they avoid face-to-face communication.

Sometimes youth from generation Z have a big problem ordering a pizza on the phone.

Table 5.2. Preferred communication tools depending on the generation

Tools and methods of communication	Generation X	Generation Y (Millennials)	Generation Z	Generation Alpha
Direct communication	***	**	–	–
Phone call	***	**	–	–
Video call		**	***	***
Sms	*	***	***	***
Mail	*	***	**	*
Social media (Messenger, Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Tik-Tok)	–	***	***	***

Key: – uses the tool never or very rarely (once a year), * uses the tool rarely (once a month), ** uses the tool often (2-3 times a week), *** uses the tool very often (every day).

Source: own compilation.

Demographic changes, new technologies, globalization, generational gap and the fact that several generations of employees function on the labour market at the same time – all of that forces contemporary employers to change their approach to hiring staff, and first of all exercise more flexibility. Not only will employers face the struggle of employing the young generation but they will also have to adapt to managing employees who represent generation X (Kroenke, 2015, p. 100). There are three generations currently interacting in companies: older Baby-boomers (mainly leaders, executives), generation X or the so-called generation of success and generation Y while generation Z will join them very soon. Therefore, HR managers and departments face a big challenge regarding a skilful use of the potential of various generational groups and the selection of appropriate tools and practices in human resource management. It also applies to recruitment solutions which are the first stage in the employees' entry to the organization (Kołodziejczyk-Olczak, 2014, s. 29). Table 5.3 presents selected elements of the recruitment process depending on generation BB, X and Y.

Regardless of what generation they represent, employees should be approached individually in the context of their skills, knowledge, predispositions and expectations regarding work. Appropriate matching to job positions helps avoid situations when a person uninterested in development in a given area has to work in it and, on top of that, cooperate with others. The most important thing is respect for the needs of all generations which must work together as part of a single team or office.

Many employers seem to forget that the needs of all those generations differ significantly from one another. A thing which seems attractive to generation Y is unacceptable to generation X. An employer who decides to hire mixed-age employees has to ensure appropriate conditions for interaction but at the same time make sure that the needs of the working generations are catered for (Kroenke, 2015, p. 105).

How to effectively communicate with generation BB, X, Y, Z and Alpha? Which tools to choose so they were tailored to intergenerational candidates?

Table 5.3. Selected elements of the recruitment process depending on generation BB, X and Y

	Baby-boomers	**Generation X**	**Generation Y**
Choice of the job offer carrier	advertisement in daily press, industry papers Advertisement on the internet Advertisement leaflets in public places Verbal message	advertisement in professional press Advertisement on the internet Use of professional recruitment services, e.g. Golden Line, Linkedin	Advertisement on the internet, Advertisement through social media and services Facebook, MySpace; Broad use of modern technologies, own website and industry portals Networking
Examples of candidate selection tools	Face-to-face job interview Psychological tests Knowledge tests Practical work samples Simulations	Face-to-face job interview Phone call Psychological tests Knowledge tests Use of non-standard methods and techniques for verifying efficiency on the job Significant freedom in shaping the AC program and choice of exercises	An online job interview Phone call Computer-based psychological tests/knowledge tests Use of non-standard methods and techniques for verifying efficiency on the job Computer simulations Games and plays involving movement
Providing feedback to rejected candidates	Formal feedback	Specific feedback	Quick feedback

Source: own compilation based on Kołodziejczyk-Olczak, 2014, p. 39-41.
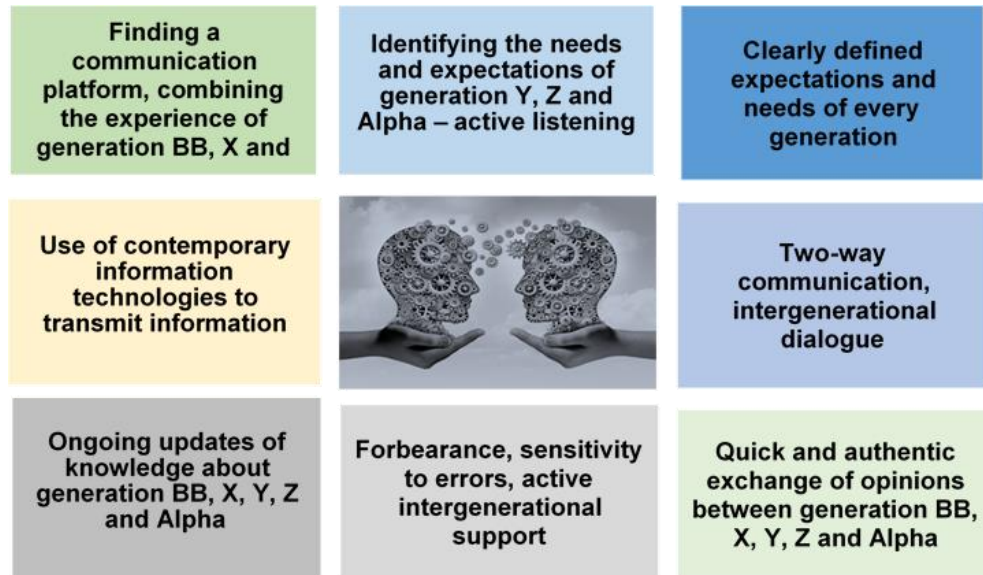
Fig. 5.1. Communication effectiveness among generation BB, X, Y, Z and Alpha
Source: own compilation

Fig 5.1 presents answers to the questions. Representatives of those generations decide themselves which channels they want to use to pursue their goals. If the purpose of generation X is to start an interaction with young people, they need to remember about sensitivity, honesty and active listening. Only then can those generations cooperate and learn from each other. Generation BB and X will learn to use modern technologies from generation Y and Z while young people will improve their specialist competencies and acquire experience under the supervision of older colleagues. To make it possible for different generations to develop and mutually exchange knowledge, first of all, it is important to shape the organizational culture and ensure appropriate Employer Branding.

Chapter 6

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ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE VS EMPLOYER BRANDING IN ATTRACTING AND RETAINING EMPLOYEES

6.1. EMPLOYER BRANDING

The term **Employer Branding** (EB) is used very often in the context of the company's communication with its environment and associated with the shaping of a positive image of the employer. Due to the importance to the company and the context of market activities, Employer Branding is included in marketing activities and due to the form of its impact, it is considered part of promotional methods. However, taking into account the wide scope of the company's activities under Employer Branding and the high dynamics of changes in the tools that are used, no explicit classification of Employer Branding is used as it can be assigned as part of responsibilities of the marketing or HR department or the management board office. One needs to remember about the dual nature of EB which affects both the social as well as the economic sphere, stemming from its reference to emotional and purely pragmatic arguments. For the efficiency of activities followed by HR, the prospective development of the company needs to be taken into account. Considering employee benefits, at the same time, one should incorporate the business aspect which implements ongoing marketing tasks (Kozłowski, 2016).

Simon Barrow who has been addressing the subject of the company's brand since the 1990s is considered the promoter of Employer Branding (Barrow, 1990). Despite being relatively new, the term itself has a long history as caring for the company's image is also part of Public Relations responsibilities. Apart from its historical roots, its development dates back to 1900 when the Publicity Bureau was founded in Boston (Heath, 2006). In the group of PR activities, Employer Branding focuses on supporting communication in the recruitment process, inspiring greater confidence in the employer and initiating more involvement from the candidates. It also points out the significant potential of corporate capital which guarantees the effectiveness of the company's operations (Ambler, Barrow, 1996).

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Employer Branding supports a number of company activities, thus it must seamlessly co-operate with other communication tools and communications sent by the enterprise. Given the diversity of the company's activities in building a good image, coordination of all activities is crucial, especially in the situation when modern human resource management technologies are used when the business owner wants to be perceived as better and more innovative by applying a more modern approach. The basic and long-term goal of building a positive image of the organization as a trustworthy employer is to achieve a competitive advantage in the sales market as well as the labour market. It is done by impacting the behaviour of both the external as well as the internal customer. Just as Employer Branding shapes the image of the employer especially among existing and future employees, Corporate Social Responsibility is a specialization with respect to impacting primarily the external customer.

Similarly to all promotional activities, in particular PR, one can ask the question which companies should implement activities under Employer Branding and whether it depends on the industry or the size of the enterprise. The answer is simple: all companies should engage in EB activities. However, it is more difficult to answer the question of how to do it. Similarly as in the case of advertising, companies which are well-renowned and have a rich and valuable product offering find it much easier to find their place in EB activities. An enterprise which has been on the market for a relatively short time finds it more difficult to provide a potential employee with a job guarantee and comprehensive professional development activities. In such situations, that which the company can offer at a given time and in the nearest future becomes a value. Considering the generational diversity of employees and different wage and non-wage expectations, as part of building an EB strategy, it is important to analyze the characteristics of potential employee groups and plan a wide range of benefits when preparing for recruitment (Berthon, et al., 2020). When planning ways to reach potential employees with information, one should also take generational diversity and the resultant preferred forms of communication into account. Modern technologies provide significant support for enterprises, enable a thorough presentation of the company's offer and characteristics, even inclusion of employees as "brand ambassadors" but in the event of failures, information about them spreads very quickly and leaves an indelible footprint. That emphasizes the importance of making sure that the form and content of communication in EB are right.

Along with the aforementioned need to coordinate activities, communication which is based on *what* should be said is crucial for EB. What content will be of value to the employee and how to ensure reliable information about the company and properly convey the role that the future employee will play in it? Another pillar of proper communication is *to whom* to send the message. Specifying the target group, one needs to distinguish two basic categories of employees, i.e. potential employees who are to receive the job offer which presents the actual scope of competencies sought by the company, resulting from the tasks on the job, and existing

staff whom we want to keep at work and make sure they are committed. Depending on the group of addressees, one can speak of inside and outside EB. This has its consequences in the way methods and tools are selected (as will be discussed further in this chapter), while in the specialist literature it became the basis for the development of specialized models of proceedings (Fig. 5.1).

Employer Branding Models

according to the outside-in concept

K. Backhaus i S. Tikoo model (2004)

G. Martina model (2008)

R. Mosleya model (2007)

according to the inside-out concept

S.J. Milesa i G. Mangolda model (2004)

R. Wildena, S. Gudergana, I. Lingsa model (2010)

according to corporate brand

Vision-Culture-Image – VCI model; M.J. Hatch i M. S. Chultz model (2008)

H.K. Aggerholm, S.E. Andersen i C. Thomsen model (2011)

Fig. 6.1. Selected Employer Branding models.
Source: own compilation based on Dąbrowska, 2014; Backhaus, Tikoo, 2004; Martin, 2008; Mosley, 2007; Miles, Mangold, 2004; Wilden, et al., 2010; Hatch, Schultz, 2008; Aggerholm, et al., 2011; citing: Szafrański, et al., 2019

The third question is *where* to communicate, i.e. based on what media to reach the candidates and employees, taking into account their diversity and at the same time choosing their preferred communication channels. In the case of most job offers and intra-company communications, the Internet is currently the key medium. It is the most effective communication tool which at the same time has a promotional effect in the selection of employees, it supports employee motivation and, in the opinion of competitors, builds a market position in line with the company's strategy (Agarwal, et al., 2020).

Regardless of the adopted EB models and communication methods, it is very important to systematically examine how existing and potential employees perceive the company. This assessment should be based on the features that the company has identified as crucial in reference to the employee (e.g. the salary level, career prospects, sense of one's value for the company, acquired qualifications, job satisfaction) or to the enterprise (identifying with the company's goals, identifying with the principles and culture in the organization, loyalty to the employer). The cyclical verification of information about the company's image, based on primary and secondary studies, will make it possible to improve Employer Branding activities and at the same time strengthen the company's competitive position on the market.

6.2. EMPLOYER BRANDING AS SEEN BY EMPLOYERS

The way how Employer Branding activities are perceived by company employees was identified during 18 meetings with respondents held as part of two *Focus Group Interviews* (FGI). During each FGI, the participants were divided into smaller interdisciplinary teams of the maximum of five. The group interviews were attended by different representatives with ties to the labour market, including representatives of companies which employ more than 150 staff. They constituted nearly 80 per cent of the respondents. The other interviewees represented district job centres and student groups. During a six-hour meeting, they were asked the question "*what does Employer Branding mean to the participants of the meeting?*" The FGI respondents could write down activities that are currently carried out within their organization or which should be implemented when building the company's brand and strengthening activities implemented as part of EB. After individual ideas were developed, a list of all solutions was drawn up which was then individually assessed by each participant on a scale of one to six, assuming that one meant the lowest rating and had the least impact on effective strategy building and implementation of EB activities while six meant the best results. Key EB activities and their average assessment had been included in Table 6.1 which was presented shortly after the areas of EB impact were discussed.

When the test results were being developed, all the listed elements, activities and functions were divided into inside and outside EB (Fig. 6.2).

Under **inside EB**, several areas can be distinguished which when evaluated by the employees impact opinions about it and are disseminated by them. Among these areas, one can distinguish the image of the organization which is built by institutions in the context of activities based on organizational values, security, corporate social responsibility (CSR), as well as with respect to support of education, cooperation with universities and schools, exchange of information via internal channels such as an intranet.

Another area of inside EB is the promotion of employee motivation which is built through an appropriate "mix" of motivators. They include sports packages (e.g. the multisport card), additional private medical care bundles, language training and employee contests focused on innovative solutions. Other groups of incentives include financial awards, e.g. annual prizes for activity at work, jubilee awards, i.e. bonuses to mark the company's anniversary, monthly or annual prizes. It is important to involve employees in the decision-making process as well as in charity and preventive campaigns such as vaccinations or mammography buses. Organizing ceremonial meetings to mark work anniversaries, picnics for employees and their families and sporting events. Employees positively perceive the sponsorship of fruit, drinks and sweets, coffee machines, as well as making sure that fruits are available in the production hall. Ideas to motivate employees to take action

include defining an employee budget for achieving team goals, employee discounts, maintaining permanent staff or company sponsorship.

Table 6.1. A ranking of key EB activities

EB impact area	Classification of activity	Type of activity	Average score
Inside	Image	Caring for safety	6
Outside	Image and communication and promotion	Attractive job offers	6
Inside	Image	Brand	5.7
Inside	Incentive	Picnics for employees and their families	5.5
Inside	Improvement of competencies and career development	Promotion through acquired knowledge	5.5
Inside	Incentive	Including people in the decision-making process	5.3
Outside/Inside	Tools	Contract of employment	5.3
Inside	Image	Organizational values	5.2
Inside	Improvement of competencies and career development	A clear and communicative training policy	5.1
Inside	Employee surveys	Annual assessments	5
Inside	Employee surveys	Surveying commitment	5
Outside	Image and communication and promotion	Open doors in the company for potential candidates	5
Outside	Image and communication and promotion	CAREER website – a Polish website devoted to the company	4.6
Inside	Improvement of competencies and career development	Planning a career path in the company with the HR department	4.5
Outside/Inside	Tools	Reference programs (systems of recommendations)	4.5
Outside/Inside	Tools	Corporate volunteering	4.5
Outside/Inside	Tools	Inside-outside recruitment carried out by the company's resources	4.5
Outside	Recruitment	Professional recruitment process – feedback after recruitment	4.5
Inside	Incentive	Corporate sponsoring	4.3
Inside	Integration and communication	Company meetings and integration, team lunch, employee picnics	4.3
Outside	Image and communication and promotion	Use of social media	4.3
Inside	Employee onboarding	Modern employee onboarding	4.2

Source: own compilation based on M. Graczyk-Kucharska, M. Goliński, M. Spychała, M. Szafrański, (2018) workshops entitled "An employer by choice or Employer Branding".

INSIDE EMPLOYER BRANDING	OUTSIDE EMPLOYER BRANDING
Image of the organization as seen by the employees	Building the image of a reliable employer through availability and effective communication
Choice of motivators	A clear, simple and reliable recruitment process
Methods and tools affecting employee competence development	Recruitment tools
Effective inside communication and integration of solutions	Cooperation with educational institutions
Employee onboarding	Participation in local, regional and countrywide events
Satisfaction polls and annual employee assessments	

Fig. 6.2. Elements of inside and outside Employer Branding**.**
Source: own compilation

Improvement of competencies and career development is an important EB-building element for the employees. Those who build the employer's brand on the labour market should be mindful of long-term planning of employee career paths and maintaining a clear, accessible and understandable training policy. They should also pay attention to improving the soft skills of managers, including leadership training, co-financing development of skills at universities, as well as other training to improve "soft" (social) and "hard" (technical) skills. From an image standpoint, an interesting solution can be organizing or co-organizing conferences, e.g. annual leaders conference, availability of industry magazines for employees, planning promotions through internal recruitment and individual promotion paths.

One of the first activities that build a bond with the organization and have a strong impact on building the image of the company is the way of introducing new employees to the organization. All onboarding activities, from the first e-mail informing the candidate about the successful conclusion of the recruitment process, through agreeing on employment conditions, informing about necessary medical tests, planned onboarding training, to the first visit to the company, organized

meetings, information about the principles followed in the company, work rules and the company work and organizational culture, should be coordinated by one person and communicated to the employee preferably before their first day at work. Colleague support, as well as continuous mentoring from superiors, is desired especially during the first days at work.

Employee surveys are the last area whose results also provide feedback to the employers as well as an assessment of the effectiveness of EB activities. They can be conducted through an individual survey questionnaire (available also online) where employees anonymously fill in the answers to the questions and evaluate e.g. their job satisfaction, work environment, forms of communication, motivators and demotivators, expectations from the employer or the manner and form of delegating tasks. The surveys can also be conducted in the form of group interviews, however, in that case, the anonymity of the respondents is blurred. Lack of anonymity is required during annual employee reviews during which an individual conversation with the employee is held and their individual career path in the organization is planned. Surveys of employees, especially individual conversations, are expected to help find and develop an individual relationship between the employee and the company, as well as improve the organization's internal processes.

The other **EB** area encompasses activities, tools, methods and functions which are part of **outside** impact. Consistent communication and building the employer's image outside the enterprise is key, having the biggest impact on the environment. Job fairs which enable direct contact with candidates were a key tool in this area, having been most often indicated by employers (70 per cent of respondents). An active attitude in social media is also important. Those tools can significantly support the recruitment process and authenticate the company's image on the labour market. Another important element building the external EB is the career tab on the company's website where current information on job openings is posted. One of the forms of external communication emphasized by employers is the organization of open doors in the company and meetings with pupils and students at the company's headquarters, also in the form of classes. The meetings in the company can also be organized in the form of workshops for potential job candidates. The company's image can also be built through local media, advertising in the press, local sponsorship or participation in charity campaigns such as the Great Orchestra of Christmas Charity or the Noble Parcel. From the candidate's point of view, it is important to ensure a consistent image both on the company's website, in social media, advertisements, press and the published job offers.

The recruitment process itself and contact with the recruiter, as well as the provision or absence of feedback from the recruiter greatly affects the perception of the employer, and thus the dissemination of opinions about it. The candidate builds an opinion about the company already when reading the job offer. They pay attention both to the graphic form as well as the realness of expectations on a given job position. Therefore, recruiters should fine-tune the job offer before publishing it and plan the time and place of its dissemination well. Employers should not leave

applications unanswered, especially if the system provides such functionality to recruiters. In such a situation, the candidate can follow its stage automatically and receive updates about the progress of the recruitment process on an ongoing basis. Candidates become upset and perceive the company badly when the system does not show changes in the status of the application and the actual recruitment process for the job has already ended. During recruitment, attention should also be drawn to other key factors which build the company's EB. A friendly meeting atmosphere and the possibility to flexibly change the recruitment location, e.g. if a disabled candidate cannot reach the meeting point, should be ensured during the interview. Communication and feedback after the job interview is key to recruitment. Even the information about an unsuccessfully completed recruitment process with additional feedback truly explaining the reasons for the rejection means that the applicant can perceive the company well. Therefore, often after changing their competency profile and developing specific skills, they do not give up on applying for work at the same company.

Recruitment tools provide support for the recruitment process (see Chapter 4). Modern IT tools support recruitment and make it possible to make sure that the image of the company is well looked after. In the case of job offers, one needs to make sure that they exhibit proper tags, design and visual graphic aspects. Outside EB is also built with the help of other methods and tools used during recruitment such as an employee referral system, employee volunteering, internal recruitment (linked with inside EB in career path planning), internships, training programs. The company's image can also be strengthened by the type of contract concluded between the employee and the business. A contract of employment for an unspecified period improves the employee's safety and has a positive impact on the company's image.

Continuous improvement combined with the Kaizen philosophy contributes to strengthening the image of the organization. Continuous improvement is also connected with education. The cooperation of enterprises with educational institutions contributes to building a positive image of the company. It can be strengthened through e.g. cooperation with the school under patronage classes or at universities through dual studies or implementation doctorates.

Creating the employer image in the context of a responsible employer on the labour market is not an easy task. Every business should adopt its own EB strategy in line with the financial, human, material and legal resources available to it as well as periodic restrictions connected with, for example, a "lockdown" or an economic crisis.

6.3. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE VS EMPLOYER BRANDING

Every organization has its own style of functioning which consists of a number of elements created, accepted and respected by all its members. That set of ele-

ments which distinguishes the organization from others is called the organizational culture (Robbins, 2000). It is a set of values, traditions, beliefs and attitudes that are the essence of everything that is done and thought in the organization. It is powered by a system of rites, rituals, communication patterns and informal structures (Mullins, 2007). Organizational culture manifests in organizational "practices". Among other things, these organizational practices include symbols, rituals, principles, norms of behaviour, heroes, stories, language, procedures and power structures (Hofstede, 1997; Mullins, 2007). Organizational culture shapes the image of the organization as it affects the attitudes and behaviours of its members. It is a binding set of basic assumptions shared by members of the organization which they created by adapting to the environment and which is instilled in new members as the right way of solving problems (Hofstede, 2000). The image of the organization is also defined as the employer's brand which is connected with the employment experience and the answer to the question "*What is it like to work in this company*?", including "*hard*" elements such as salary, and "*soft*" ones such as the organizational culture and values (Martin, et al., 2005, pp. 78-79). Empirical studies (Schein, 1992; Hofstede, 2000; Cameron, Quinn, 2003; Backhaus, Tikoo, 2004; Martin, 2008) show that the type of organizational culture strongly affects various aspects in the company's functioning. At the same time, researchers argue that the perception of a given organization significantly affects its results and is an important factor in its success. Therefore, organizational culture can be used as a powerful tool for minimizing HR-related problems.

Employer Branding is a process of creating the employer's brand image determined by organizational identity and corporate identity which is deeply rooted in the culture of the organization. The employer's image is a source of reputation which affects the attractiveness of the organization to candidates and employee identification with the brand. Those dependencies are presented in Martin's model (Martin, 2008, p. 18-19). In this approach, Employer Branding begins with creating the employer brand image, represented by the bundle of benefits offered by the employer and communicated as a value proposition for the employee (symbolic and functional attributes). That image affects the attractiveness of the employer in the eyes of candidates from the outside and the identification of existing employees with the company and its brand. In the model in question, the image of the employer derives from the organizational identity manifested in organizational behaviour, language, and beliefs of the members of the organization. The corporate identity which, according to G. Martin, the company communicates through its graphic representation, structure, mission and strategy is the second factor which affects the employer's image in the presented approach. Organizational and corporate identity are firmly embedded in the culture of the organization. The image of the employer's brand is a record of what kind of an organization it would like to be. Reputation (which is presented in the model next to the symbolic and functional attributes) is a reflection of what the organization really is as seen by its existing and potential employees. The model in question suggests the impact of the employer's

image on the organization's results. In the case of existing employees, it is a direct influence since identification with the company translates directly into results. In the case of potential employees, better business results are the outcome of improving the efficiency of recruitment processes (Martin, 2008, pp. 18-19).
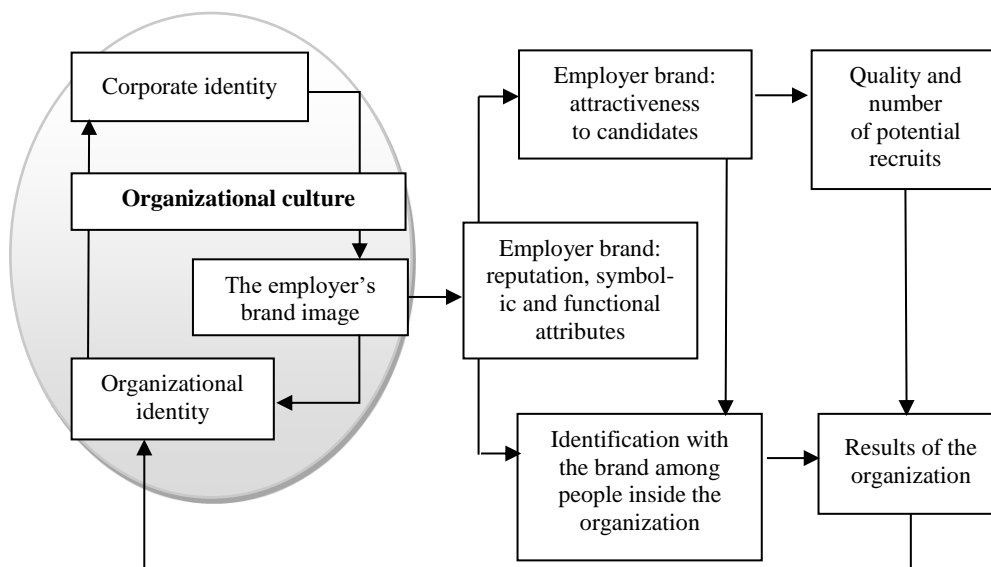

Fig. 6.3. G. Martin's model approach to shaping employer image.
Source: (Martin, 2008, p. 18-19)

Sometimes employer branding activities are aimed at changing the company's organizational culture and organizational identity. If employees accept the company's goals and values, they naturally identify with it. They also tend to stay at the company longer. Employee attitudes and behaviours are shaped by organizational culture.

Positive perception of efforts improves employee productivity. Companies with strong Employer Branding are more involved in joint decision-making processes together with employees, supporting management processes and promoting a positive image on internal and external labour markets. Organizational culture leads to better efficiency and productivity, helps in improving Employer Branding (Keino, 2017) and retaining employees in the company or talent management. Talented personnel are of great interest to organizations, therefore the next chapter will be devoted to them.

Chapter 7

Małgorzata SPYCHAŁA*

TALENT MANAGEMENT IN AN ENTERPRISE

7.1. THE ESSENCE OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

Globalization, knowledge-based economy, the development of modern technology and continuous changes at the workplace mean that companies are at "*war over talent*", desiring to hire the best employees (Tarique, Schuler, 2010). Companies want to capitalize on the above-average knowledge and skills because it is these competencies that are the source of organizational development and the basis for creating a competitive advantage on the market (Aston, Morton, 2005; Ingram, Glod, 2012).

The notion of talent is closely linked to the extraordinary potential of a given individual. Talented employees constitute a small group in enterprises, i.e. 3 per cent of the staff, while in the most successful ones they account for 5 per cent (Berger, Berger, 2011, pp. 5-6). So what are the features, competencies or behaviours that distinguish talented persons? Analyzing literature, we can find a lot of characteristics of talent (Chełpa, 2005; Berger, Berger, 2011; Ingram, 2011; Listwan, 2005; Jabłoński, 2009; Bis, Kruk, 2017). The authors agree that such employees have **above-average abilities**, are characterized by increased intellectual potential and specialized abilities in a given area. Apart from these competencies, they are distinguished by their creativity and original approach to problems and they do not try to avoid risk or unconventional challenges. Their commitment to work is exemplary, they are very hardworking and persistently pursue their goals, by self-motivating and believing in their abilities. The innate abilities of talented employees are very difficult for competitors to copy or acquire.

Talent management is currently **one of the most important global trends** in the area of human resource management. It is being emphasized that talent management solutions will have a major impact on human resource development policies in the coming years in many organizations (Brzeziński, 2016). Talent management adapts to many changes at the workplace (Frank, Taylor, 2004) and is connected with a set of typical human resource management functions, i.e. recruitment, motivating, training and employee development (Heinen, O'Neill, 2004).

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Systems of recruitment and job candidate selection, employee training and development, motivation and remuneration, and employee assessments should be consistent in the context of the goals that the organization wants to achieve in talent management to successfully develop and improve its potential (Fig. 7.1).
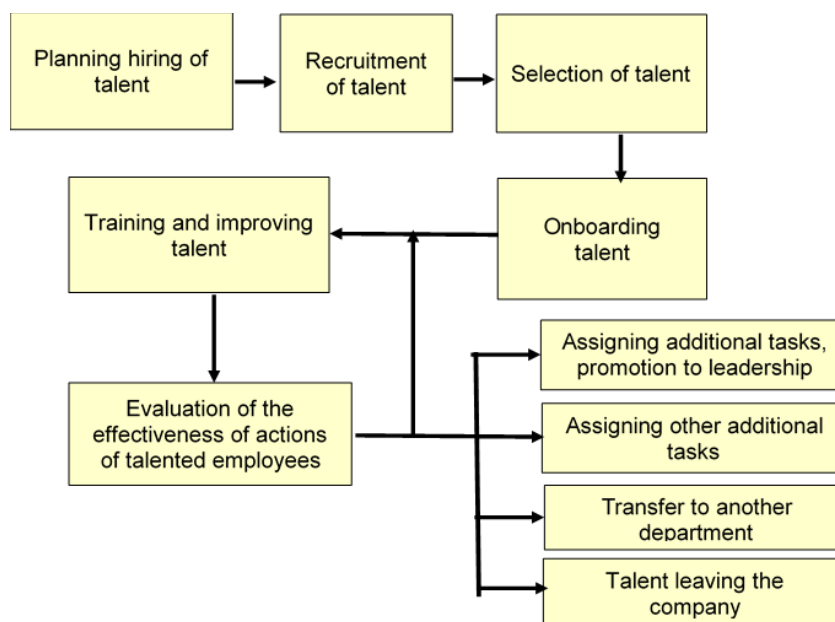

Fig. 7.1. Key talent management stages in an organization.
Source: own compilation based on (Heinen and O'Neill, 2004)

Each of those stages has its specifics and requires certain activities from the organization. The stage of identification, recruitment and selection of talents requires the use of many methods and ways of assessing key features, skills and capabilities of talented staff. Correctly developed and effectively implemented talent management solutions allow the organization to look ahead to correctly identify e.g. the employee competencies which are needed for continuous development and improvement of the organization (Rizwana, Mushtaq, 2016). Some researchers see talent management primarily from the perspective of human capital (Cappelli, 2008) while others perceive it as key to organizational success. Others still see close tailoring of talent management to the business strategy and corporate culture.

Cannon and McGee (2012) consider **talent management as a process** in which the organization identifies and manages the people who are necessary for it and looks after their development with a view to the future. That process includes the following:

– development of a strategy to identify the needs of the organization,

– definition of procedures to measure the competencies that the organization expects and which it already has,
– creation of a number of tools enabling the application of a personalized approach depending on the individual needs of a specific employee,
– identification of ways to attract and retain the people who are necessary for the organization to be successful,
– development of appropriate methods to dismiss those who do not meet the organization's requirements,
– measurement of the effects of the application of the above methods, enabling the organization to continuously update and improve its talent management policy as that will ensure optimal results, currently and in the long term (Cannon, McGee, 2012).

Therefore, talent needs to be identified, motivated, rewarded, their self-esteem needs to build and they have to be provided with feedback in their everyday work (Konecki 2008). First of all, however, they need to be developed in organizations.

7.2. TALENT DEVELOPMENT IN AN ORGANIZATION

Investing in the best, most talented and above-average employees motivates other staff to take action and effort to improve themselves and the organization (Morawski, Mikuła, 2009). As part of talent management, a talent development strategy needs to be planned, selected and implemented to ensure that currently and in the future, the organization has the right number of talented employees to meet its strategic goals. Talent development processes and tools are becoming an important motivator which allows companies to stand out from their competitors and increase their talent retention rate. **Talent can be developed** through:
– self-development and a partner relationship – acquiring knowledge from various sources and more experienced employees,
– active learning – doing tasks in teamwork, exchange of knowledge with other employees, creation of new knowledge during various projects,
– training programs and courses – improvement and development of knowledge as a result of organized activities carried out by employees of the company or by persons from outside the organization,
– formal training of employees – participation in lectures provided by universities and other institutions,
– reallocation of talent among other branches of the company, especially foreign ones (Huk, 2014).

Talent should be developed through **self-development** as well as mutual assistance of employees. Personalized training programs are tailored to the specific needs of a given employee manifesting above-average skills. In such a case, an

individual development plan is prepared for them or the employee chooses the subject and form of training themselves in consultation with their coach.

What kind of developmental activities can be applied in organizations? Table 7.1 presents examples of developmental activities for talent, trying to answer the above question.

Table 7.1. Examples of developmental activities for talent in organizations

Type of talent improvement	Examples of developmental activities
Self-development	– implementing independent ambitious projects – access to specialist magazines and literature – freedom of action and autonomy in decision-making
Partner relation	– mentoring – coaching – contact with outstanding employees – the roles and functions of the talented employee as an in-house trainer, instructor, expert, adviser, mentor of newly recruited employees or a representative of top executives
Active learning	– work on project teams – Development Center – involvement in international projects – Assessment Center – simulation methods (management games, exercises, case studies, etc.)
Training programs and courses	– individual training programs and workshops – e-learning – involvement in workshops, action learning – manager and specialist conferences
Formal employee education	– participation in university lectures organized especially for a given company – attending MBA programs
Talent reallocation	– rotation among different branches of the company – moving through all job positions – foreign internships

Source: own compilation based Huk 2014, Wyrzykowska, 2013, Maliszewska, 2005, Morawski, Mikuła, 2009; Jarosławska 2011; Kopera 2016.

When analyzing the diversity of talent development activities applied by various organizations, one can notice their **individual nature**. The company should shape

conditions conducive to the development of talented employees, taking into account their diverse values, ambitions and expectations. The competencies of talented employees can be improved formally, i.e. through universities or MBA programs, non-formally, i.e. via training or workshops, or informally through self-improvement. In the formal development of talent competencies, companies should apply **new, activating methods** of working with a talented employee as traditional skill development methods may not be enough. Competence improvement methods should be tailored to the needs of the talent. Therefore, first, the competence level of these employees should be tested and then a development program should be devised.

7.3. TALENT MANAGEMENT IN POLAND

Employees with sophisticated competencies and the biggest potential are referred to as "*talent*" or "*talented employees*". Special development programs are created for them, the purpose of which is for them to acquire new knowledge, develop their competencies and properly shape talent management culture. Training and development programs are focused on providing talented employees with the opportunity to accomplish various tasks, take on new challenges and gain practical experience. Many Polish companies develop talent management programs. Table 7.2 presents descriptions of such programs for selected Polish companies.

Table 7.2. Examples of Polish companies which employ talent management systems or their elements

Name of the company	Description of talent management activities
Bank Millennium SA	There are Development Programs for employees of the greatest potential: specially tailored training programs are focused on the development of key competencies. The development is supervised by a mentor who is a Board Member. A Development Forum is organized twice a year especially for them.
BRE Bank	Individual Development Programs are established for the best employees selected during the annual assessment. They also receive their own training fund for the completion of developmental initiatives.
Carlsberg Polska	Key employee development programs are in place, succession plans are made, talent is recruited and developed at all levels in the organization. The idea of the programs is for talent to set an example for others with their attitude.

table 7.2 – continue

Name of the company	Description of talent management activities
GSK Pharma	A "*Talent Management*" program has been implemented; career development includes e.g. taking up job positions slightly in advance which is an additional motivator to quickly fill the competence gap and learn faster.
ING Polska	As part of the "Talent Management" program, after talent is identified based on an Individual Development Plan, implemented activities include coaching, training, widening responsibilities or assigning new tasks, changing jobs. There is also an international talent base called ING Talent Track.
Lotos SA	Selected programs are in place: Individual Development Paths Program, Reserve Personnel Program, GRADUATE program, LOTOS Academy. Masterfoods. Talents are found in the annual assessment process, according to the ability to learn and the effectiveness of task implementation. Development is ensured by e.g. assigning new tasks and participation in international projects.
PKN Orlen SA	Under the "*Young Talents*" program, employees with special potential are identified and then trained in general management. There is also the PKN Business Academy, called the mini-MBA, whose graduates are offered individual development plans.
Polska telefonia Cyfrowa Sp. z o.o.	For the best employees whose competencies and commitment to projects and tasks were evaluated as outstanding by the superiors, there is the "*XL Talent*" program which encompasses training programs, studies funded by the company or internships at the company or abroad, participants follow an individual development plan tailored to their specific needs.
Sygnity (ComputerLand + Emax)	Talent is identified and divided into two groups: young enthusiasts and experienced employees. The "*Master-Apprentice*" program is in place, encompassing training programs, involvement in innovative projects, including foreign ones, involvement in Strategic Business Units.
Unilever	As part of the Business Leaders Development Program, the best employees are identified based on competencies and existing results and achievements, and for each person a development plan is created, encompassing training programs and the Development Center.

Source: J. Tabor, study report „Zarzadzanie talentami: wyzwania, trendy, przykłady rozwiązań", E-mentor no. 2 (24) / 2008.

The table above shows that enterprises are implementing talent development programs to attract the best candidates for work, prevent the loss of the most valuable employees, develop new managerial staff and focus their development activities on the best employees. Analyzing the examples above, one can conclude that there is no single universal "*talent management*" program. Every company has a different organizational culture and a different strategy of development. Developmental programs differ from one another and are tailored to the existing and future needs of the company (Balcerzyk, Smal, 2017). Talent management programs should encompass diverse solutions and avoid focusing only on e.g. training programs.

The decision to implement a talent management program in an organization is based on the following factors (Kaczmarska, Sienkiewicz, 2005):
- desire to improve the effectiveness of the entire organization,
- possibility to acquire talent from the outside market environment,
- the need for internal shaping the development of a successor group,
- the need to shape the commitment and loyalty to the company in high-potential employees,
- effectiveness and efficiency of the training process,
- expanding the range of motivational tools.

I. Dudzik (2018, pp. 69-74) carried out a detailed analysis of research reports released in 2006 and 2015 by the company House of Skills and in 2010, 2013 and 2016 by HRM partners SA with respect to talent management programs over the last decade. The author emphasizes that the way of thinking about talent is changing. It is still a person who achieves outstanding results and has unique competencies but above all, it is someone with a clear focus on development. Business owners' mentality and approach to talent programs themselves have changed. More and more surveyed companies have talent programs in place and want to launch more and more editions of them. It proves the growing effectiveness of those processes and benefits they generate for organizations. Moreover, TM programs are targeted at a growing number of employees which means that they lose their exclusive nature. The focus of talent programs is also shifting towards the achievement of specific goals and business needs. From a tool meant mainly to reduce employee fluctuation, it has become a tool that allows the company to retain talent and gives it the opportunity to capitalize on their potential by engaging them in various projects. The concepts of the programs are clearly evolving, becoming more diverse, practical and demanding (Dudzik, 2018, pp. 69-74).

In many companies, talent management programs are ill-adjusted to talented employees or none are in place. Therefore, companies should specify their needs and expectations well. They should know who they need, what they can offer, how they want to develop their teams and what programs they can offer to their employees. Only by considering the needs and expectations of both parties can organizations benefit from talent management.

7.4. BENEFITS OF TALENT MANAGEMENT

What kind of benefits can be derived from talent management in an enterprise?
Those advantages can be approached from the point of view of an individual,
a team and an organization.

Table 7.3. Benefits of talent management in an organization

Benefits for the talented employee	Benefits for the team	Benefits for the organization
More respect for talent on the part of managers	More commitment from other team members	Optimal use of employee potential in different areas of the company
Employee involvement in joint decision-making processes	Building integrated and goal-oriented teams	Building a learning organization whose employees share their knowledge and experience
Perceiving employees as equal partners in operations	Improving the effectiveness of information exchange among team members	Thorough identification of talent competency profiles
More commitment from the talented employee	Improved team member competencies by imitating talent	Improving the effectiveness of information exchange among different areas of the company
Providing employees with feedback about their quality of work and performance	Team members can learn from the best employees	Building a system of information about outstanding employees and their achievements
Adjustment of employees to jobs matching their competencies	Improved creativity and innovativeness on the team	Improved assessments of employee potential and experience
Appreciation of the best employees	Clearly set and communicated goals within the team	Long-term building of competitive advantage in the organization
Higher employee loyalty levels		Development of key competencies in the organization
Faster employee adaptation to new responsibilities		Continuous talent monitoring
more openness to changes and challenges		Employer Branding
higher employee innovative abilities		Building a strong organizational culture

Source: own compilation based on (Heidrick, Struggles, 2011; Lawler 2008, Wellins, et al.,
2004; Kontoghiorghes, Frangou, 2009; Pochopień, 2018).

Benefits of talent management can be analyzed from the point of view of HRM stages. In the context of achieving specific strategic goals at the planning stage, proper identification of what kind of talent the organization needs is the benefit. As part of recruitment, the organization focuses on acquiring the right employees and builds retention programs to keep the best ones. Talent-identification activities have a positive impact on their retention. Another stage involves actions focused on the establishment of developmental programs and career paths for talented employees. Activities focused on the development of talent also result in retaining them. If talent stays in the organization, it is most often connected with their job satisfaction which usually depends on developmental opportunities perceived by the employees (Rizwana, Mushtaq, 2016).

However, the organization may not always implement a talent management system because there are obstacles that prevent the development of talent.

7.5. OBSTACLES TO EFFECTIVE TALENT MANAGEMENT

There are numerous obstacles to effective talent management. Seven most important ones have been identified based on studies by McKinsey Quarterly (Guthridge, et al., 2008, p. 51) (Fig. 7.2).
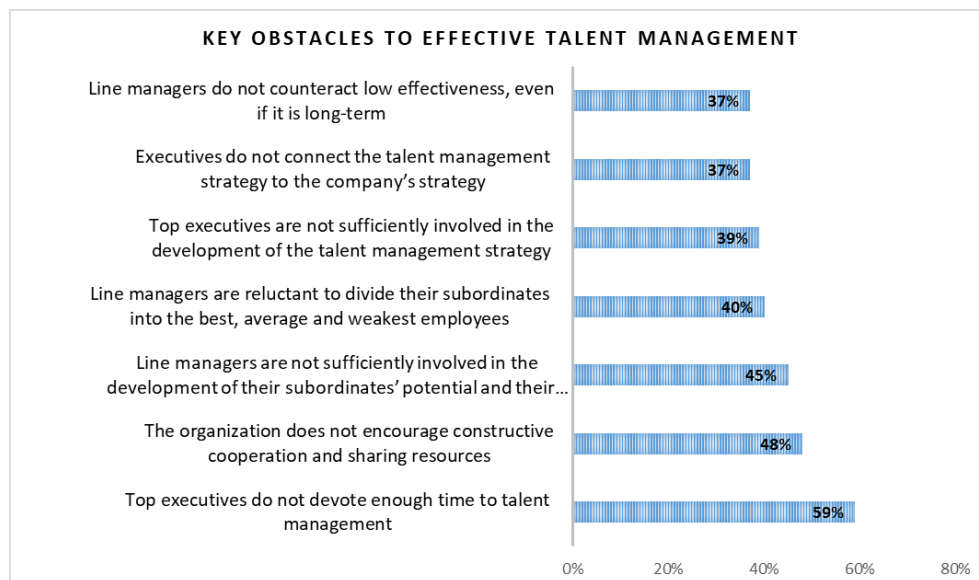

Fig. 7.2. Key obstacles to effective talent management.
Source: (Guthridge, et al., 2008, p. 51)

Analyzing the chart, one can conclude that the lack of involvement both on the part of top executives as well as line managers is the key problem. If top executives do not develop an effective talent management strategy, it is not possible to recruit, identify and retain talented employees in the organization.

The strategy of cooperation and knowledge sharing in the organization is another very important factor. If the organizational culture encourages competition instead of cooperation, effective talent management will not be possible. Every employee should have their developmental plan, especially an employee referred to as a "talent". Therefore, treating all employees equally when it comes to development programs and incentive systems makes talent discouraged and bored. It is important, therefore, that employees identified as "*talent*" could see the talent management system transparently. Incorrect allocation of invested resources can lead to unwanted fluctuations, lowered morale and a decrease in efficiency, especially in groups of the best employees (talent) and those who exceed the expectations of the organization under the adopted evaluation criteria (Berger, Berger, 2011, p. 6).

To sum up, only an organization which is aware of the skills that it needs to implement its strategy, knows how to identify them and fill any gaps, can skillfully manage talent. Talent management requires thorough preparation and substantive knowledge which will enable the achievement of the planned goals for the entire organization as well as individual employees. In particular, this applies to informed and transparent activities undertaken in this area for both managers and employees. Among such activities is the creation of a talent management culture where managers should focus on promoting values such as creativity, respect for employee achievements, the mutual trust of employees, their commitment, loyalty and identification with the organization. An organizational culture which promotes such values significantly supports talent.

Every organization which wants to be successful needs talent from various areas of its operations, not just from the top executives. The task of talent management professionals is to come up with tools which make it possible to identify and develop these talents in the existing employees of the organization as well as those who can join it in the future.

Chapter 8

Magdalena GRACZYK-KUCHARSKA*

HUMAN RESOURCE PLANNING AND COMPETENCIES OF THE FUTURE

8.1. CHANGE IN COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS ON THE LABOUR MARKET

Theoreticians, practitioners as well as pioneers and contemporary researchers of organizations agree that employee competencies, based on the availability of which members of the organization make decisions, undertake actions and achieve their goals, are the key factor in the development of enterprises, as well as improving the efficiency of teams. Based on the available competencies, members of the organization play a leading role in it, conditioning the emergence of values, defining goals and selecting the range of other resources (material, financial, energy, information or human) (Jabłoński, 2015, pp. 267-268).

All job positions are linked to the flow of information. The scope of knowledge and information necessary to perform the responsibilities of a given job expands continuously. The number of data sources and amounts of information that has to be analyzed and taken into account in decision-making processes grows. The pace of information processing changes is also increasing. The change in information sharing technology, work organization and scope of duties on the job means that while in a traditional organization work with information was primarily an attribute of administrative, office-support and managerial work, now this feature is also commonplace on the lowest job positions in organizational structures. It is particularly true in modern sectors such as energy, finance, construction or processing in which the involvement of intangible production factors, i.e. knowledge and information resources, is important.

Historically, employees who performed specific functions in the production process were characterized by a relatively low level of competencies. It was mainly muscle strength and hard work that counted to generate a satisfactory wage level. Nowadays, information and communication technologies, organizational and modern technical solutions have had a significant impact on the automation of production processes and reduction of the number of employees with the lowest compe-

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tencies and qualifications. The employees who do not meet the competency requirements demanded by employers are relatively worse remunerated.

Technical progress has, in fact, contributed to process automation in companies. Process automation is no longer associated only with production processes, being also part of accounting, logistics, advertising and finance. Decision-making support systems, which are often based on artificial intelligence, make it possible to simulate phenomena and more and more often provide significant support for the management. Digital innovations such as machine learning, big data analysis and artificial intelligence (AI) change the nature of many professions and the way how tasks are performed. Therefore, changes in technology necessitate the adjustment of employees' competencies to the changing conditions of organizational functioning in the context of changes in the environment, not only in relation to production processes, which are most often associated with automation, but also in relation to administrative, office and managerial works. Artificial intelligence is unable to replace a holistic approach in the context of the human thought logics. New technologies are changing the labour market. Those of most importance to process automation include artificial intelligence (AI), neural networks, machine learning, robotics, IVR (interactive voice response) and NLP (natural language processing) systems (Hatalska, 2016).

Human competencies will always be supportive and required at various job positions also in the context of planning, organizing, implementing and controlling automated processes. Even well-developed support algorithms must be periodically monitored and improved by humans. The automated process of delivering semi-finished products to warehouses is a good example. Due to the global "lockdown", the pandemic necessitated changes in human behaviour and, consequently, in the data on which algorithms are based. Ultimately, this increases the number of warehoused goods since the results are not as well-matched as at the time of relatively stable consumer shopping patterns on the market. Such disruptions should be identified by employees who monitor the correctness of implemented processes because machines still do not have the ability to confirm the reliability of analyzed data or do it to a limited extent. Human competencies, knowledge and skills are becoming the key guardian in limiting the exorbitant losses which could be suffered by enterprises due to undesirable costs, e.g. automatic orders implemented with the help of artificial intelligence and machine learning algorithms.

In the context of production, it is easy to refer the development and impact of modern technologies to the concept of the fourth industrial revolution (*Industry 4.0)* which has been built since 2011 and identified by Henning Kagermann as the digital transformation of all processes in the product value creation chain. In this context, significant importance in the achievement of commercial success can be attached to Cyber-Physical Systems (CPS) (Lee, et al., 2015) and solutions in the area of Internet of Things which within Industry 4.0 is an element supporting marketing and sales, integrated within the information and communication system (Kozlov, et al., 2019). The development of technology has a significant impact on

the functioning of production companies in a competitive market (Brettel, et al., 2014). In a given organization, it should be balanced through the use of the appropriate strategy and company policy, implementation of new support strategies and the education and training system (Costache, et al., 2017, p. 744), to minimize competency gaps in the organization. To create new value and use the available company resources, it is important to build the potential of the company's intangible resources which include corporate competencies (Graczyk-Kucharska, et al., 2017).

The changing environment in which the organization will operate means that the role of the employee will evolve towards the management of activities performed by robots which cooperate with them. That combination of contextual human decision-making with the precision and regularity of robots will be a source of a significant increase in productivity (Brettel, et al., 2014). In the context of technological changes, employees are increasingly expected to be more active on their own initiative, have excellent communication skills, use modern information technologies and be able to organize their own work (Smit, et al., 2016).

8.2. PLANNING THE DEMAND FOR COMPETENCIES IN THE FUTURE

It has been emphasized many times in preceding chapters that the perception of human resources as a source for building competitive advantage is an important feature of the company. Activities in the area of human resource management should, therefore, be largely directed at strategic management. This also applies to planning the future demand for employee competencies required in the context of the company's developmental strategy, changes in processes, products, technologies and work organization. Therefore, it is important to choose the people properly so that future employees were not only obliged to perform their assigned tasks but were also characterized by innovativeness in building the organization's competitive advantage.

In relation to the internal factors of enterprise functioning, the context of human resource management refers to (Pocztowski, 2008, p. 45):
– the company's strategy.
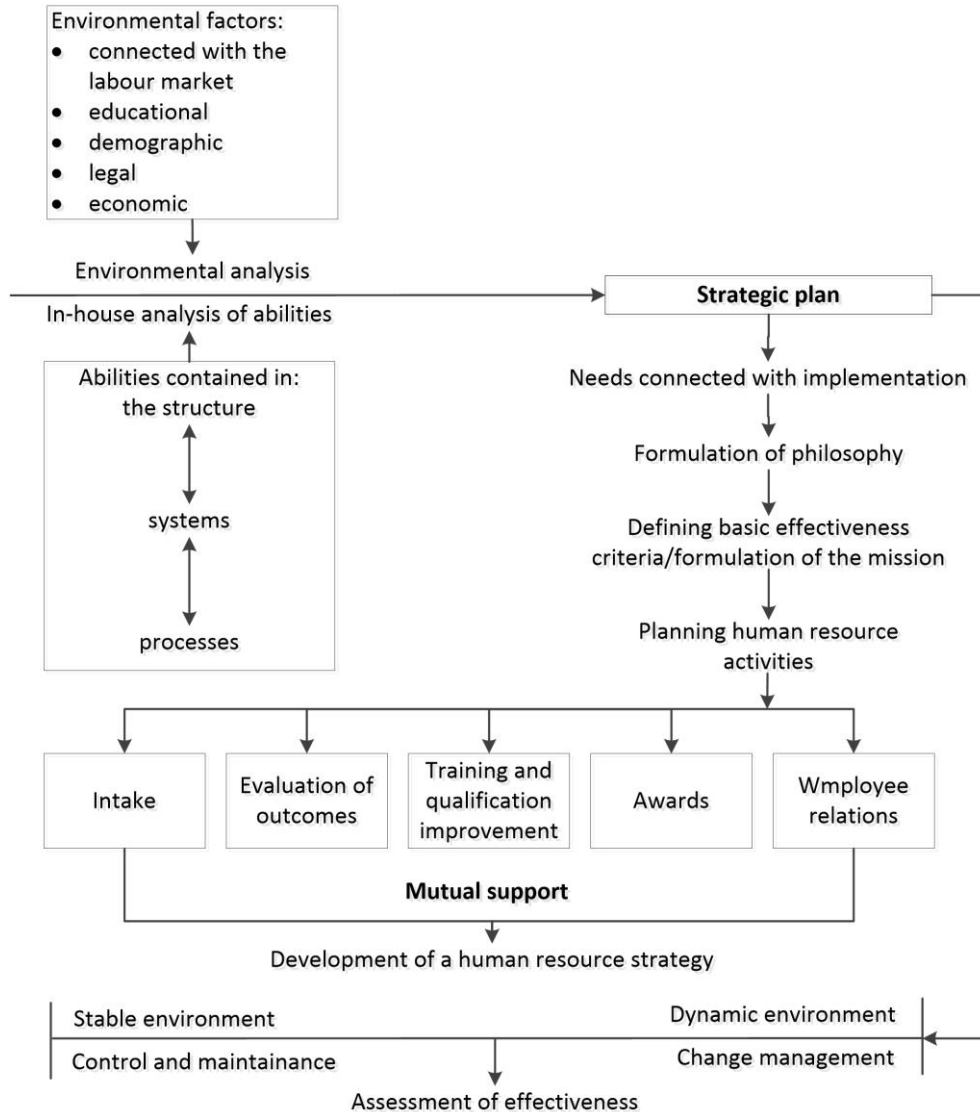– organizational structure,
– organizational culture.

Fig. 8.1. A model of strategic human resource management.
Source: Lundy O., Cowling A. (2000). Strategiczne zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi.
Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Kraków, p. 15

A model of strategic human resource management is presented in Figure 8.1. It includes the development of a human resource strategy incorporating an environmental and in-house analysis of the organization's capacities and the possibility to implement a specific strategic plan, as well activities concerning human re-

sources, changes in the environment and assessment of the effectiveness of the adopted plan.

The selection and planning of human resources, as well as employee recruitment processes, should take into account the possibility of cooperation and suitability of the employee to the real conditions in the organization. Noteworthy is also the organizational culture, i.e. the organizational structure which conditions work in specific teams and necessitates a specific type of information flow, as well as team selection based on the strategy adopted in the company. Most often, the strategy refers to (Pocztowski, 2008, p. 52):
– business goals,
– company policy and its specified principles and guidelines,
– an action plan which integrates goals, principles and activities,
– managerial decisions setting the company's direction,
– programs for detailing tasks within the adopted plan.

The example of a human resource management strategy system is defined by (Lunely, Cowling, 2000, p. 35):
– the company's human resource mission,
– analysis of the environment,
– analysis of human resources and the HRM system,
– strategic goals in the area of human resources,
– onset status of the plan and programs of action,
– monitoring principles.

Strategic human resource management is defined as the process of combining the HR function with the implementation of the strategic goals of the organization which results in improved performance (Bratton, 2017, p. 37). In the context of strategic planning, answers must be sought for more questions such as:
– What competencies are critical for the achievement of the company's strategic goals?
– Are critical competencies required by the organization in the future available on the labour market?
– What internal activities (in the institution) and external activities (in the environment) should the organization undertake to ensure the availability of critical competencies required in the future?

Human resource planning was already emphasized in the 1970s by Schein (1976) as an important activity in the context of the organization's adaptation to the changing environment, technology and variability of the influence of economic, political and socio-cultural factors. A strategy is a plan which was set by the management and adopted for implementation. It includes both planned activities as well as those that emerge during its implementation (Szejniuk, 2017, p. 312), for example, as a result of changes in the environment such as an economic crisis or a pandemic that lead to restrictions in movement (lockdown). Based on the company's strategy, a **personnel strategy** should be developed and saved in the form of a document (Wiśniewska, 2019), determining the scope of the demand for compe-

tencies in the future and taking into account the team's adjustment to the organizational culture and the company's strategy.

Personnel planning interprets the plans relative to the organization's requirements in the area of personnel. It can also affect the area of strategic planning, focusing on the more effective use of human resources (Zając, 2019, p. 110). The human resource planning process and its elements are presented in Figure 8.2.
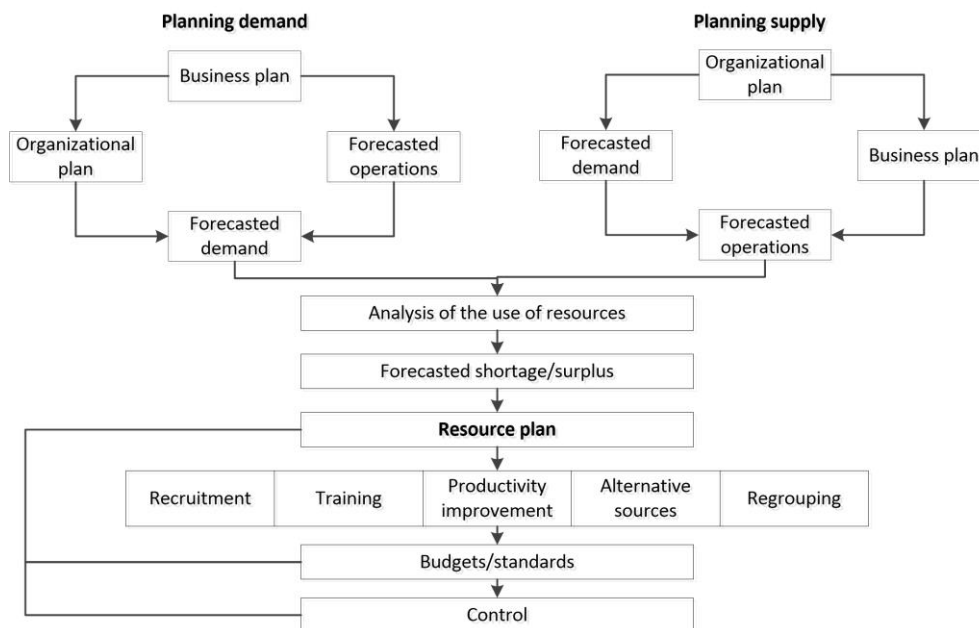

Fig. 8.2. The human resource planning process.
Source: Armstrong M. (2005). Zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi. Oficyna Ekonomiczna,
Kraków, p. 283

Personnel planning is a decision-making process which covers areas such as identifying and acquiring a given number of people with the right skills, motivating employees to achieve goals and creating interactive links between the company's goals and personnel planning activities (Armstrong, 2005, p. 277). Long-term planning of human resources and their allocation is aimed at shaping **quantitative and qualitative measures** which also take into account the knowledge of employees. The quantitative aspect refers to ensuring the right number of people at the right time. The qualitative aspect concerns the creation and shaping of an appropriate organizational culture which is advantageous for the transparent integration of the company's goals with the values, beliefs and behaviours of employees. The qualitative aspect is also closely connected to determining the employees' compe-

tency profile so that they could effectively carry out the tasks assigned to them (Zając, 2019, pp. 111-112).

In the context of human resource planning, one can distinguish further groups of activities which include (Kopeć, 2004, p. 15).

– diagnosis of the current state which encompasses the analysis of company goals, the analysis of employment status and structure, the analysis of changes in the labour market, characteristics of changes in the functioning of job positions and work organization or the definition of the need for such changes, analysis and assessment of all variables which affect planned employment (e.g. work efficiency, working time, standards),

– forecasting activities which encompass the collection of data necessary for analysis, selection of planning methods, formulation of personnel objectives, determination of the scope of planning based on defined objectives, development of employment plans,

– agreeing and synchronizing employment plans with other plans developed for the needs of various areas of the company's activity, making managerial decisions regarding the implementation of selected variants of plans in the organization, selection of ways to monitor implemented plans and persons in charge of these works, taking preventive measures to minimize disruptions and enable the implementation of the adopted plan, plan correction,

– assessment of the implementation of the adopted employment plan based on the adopted plans relative to actual values, determining the scope of deviations and analyzing and inferring differences between planned and actual values (broken down into positive and negative values), analyzing possible use of opportunities, chances and other positive phenomena in future planning and the cost to benefit ratios.

A good employment plan should improve the rationality of personnel activities. By balancing the need for human resources with internal and external supply, the management gets information about excesses and shortages of employees. It makes it possible to undertake activities connected with human resource surpluses or deficits. A flexible action involves looking for alternatives to dismissing part of the staff. Therefore, it is necessary to think in terms of constant change (Zając, 2019, p. 117) and look for other options of solving challenges connected with surplus employees such as e.g. limiting or suspending recruitment, reducing overtime, not extending specific-time contracts or early retirement (Ludwiczyński, 2014, p. 183). Employment plans should also refer to the changing environment, including technologies which force employees to change their competencies in modern processes in companies which implement new technologies.

8.3. CHALLENGES TO PLANNING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS IN THE FUTURE

The analysis of secondary sources allows one to conclude that a global competency gap, understood as a mismatch of skills held by employees and needs of employers, is growing in the world (Hays, 2018a, 2018b). Slower wage growth and structural changes in the labour market continue to feed the competency gap. Challenges which organizations will face in the near future will be largely connected with the shortage of skilled workers and the high expectations of candidates (Hays, 2019).

Research shows that the popularization of artificial intelligence will have a significant impact on companies' demand for new skills. 59 per cent of surveyed managers believe that it will be the case. Automation is introduced not only to tedious and repetitive professions but also to creative ones. Robots compose music, write poems and movie scripts and take over the competences of doctors and lawyers. Among the skills currently sought by companies, the first three places are occupied by hard competencies connected with the abilities of multidimensional data analysis (acquiring knowledge on their basis) and software development. Almost 90 per cent of respondents claim that in the coming years, **in-house programs for retraining employees and developing new competencies** will be crucial for companies. 68 per cent of managers already recognize retraining of employees as very important, however, less than half (46 per cent) consider that issue as a high priority (Salesforce Research, 2019).

The way how companies perceive their challenges in the face of changes in the environment and the impact of these changes on the competencies required in the future was studied during five meetings with 22 key enterprises held as part of *Focus Group Interviews* (FGI) in 2019. During each FGI, the participants analyzed future challenges to companies in the context of HR activities as well as opinions on competencies required in the future. The respondents represented companies which employ the total of ca. 39,000 staff in Poland and, in principle, are global production or logistics companies. The further part of this subchapter is devoted to the results of those studies.

Planning resources in the future is closely related to strategic planning, as discussed in the previous section. In the context of strategic planning, the respondents defined further challenges for their organizations:
– improving awareness of diversity,
– diversity management, especially in the context of representatives of the young generation, including generation Z, entering the market,
– strengthening the role of women in managerial positions,
– development of interdisciplinarity especially within project teams and building the company structure to suit that model of activity,
– strengthening leadership,

– expert detection and development programs,
– ensuring employee multifunctionality,
– development of autonomous production teams,
– change management,
– continuous improvement,
– use of good practices.

Human resources departments should effectively organize their work so that they could respond to strategic challenges, build and develop the enterprise based on improving the functioning of the organization, ensuring the efficiency of implemented tasks. To a large extent, that work should focus on creating a culture of responsibility among employees, as well as caring for networking, building lasting relations and gaining trust among employees. Shaping the company's image to improve the level of employee identification with the company is an important factor. When defining the demand for employee competencies, HR staff should pay close attention to team building, also in the context of work integration, competency-supplementing by different members of the same team, and motivating and stimulating work. Among other things, organizing work includes developing and strengthening leadership, communication and cooperation competencies also in dispersed teams which work on a remote-basis from various locations around the world. Expert detection and development programs and improving awareness of diversity might be useful in this area. All activities planned and implemented in a given organization should be tailored to the future requirements from the candidate. The qualities of the candidates required in the future include e.g. the ability to direct the development of the organization, innovation, unconventional thinking or multitasking. Employee features whose development is necessary for the future are presented in Figure 8.3.

Twelve of them were listed as key competencies required and indicated most often by employers in the context of the future. It is worth paying attention to the disproportions between the number of technical and social competencies. Two of them are technical competencies, with the remainder being soft and language competencies. The list of key competencies required in the future along with how often they were mentioned[1] is presented in Table 8.1.

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[1] It is worth noting that the competencies indicated in this point were not shown to participants in the form of a list, therefore the actual demand for these competencies, according to the table below, could be significantly different in quantitative studies. The list of employee competencies was developed based on pre-prepared statements/presentations of participants in the meeting who represented 22 companies from Wielkopolska and shows actual, not suggested, demand for employee competencies.

Fig. 8.3. Employee features whose development is necessary in the future.
Source: own compilation based on M. Graczyk-Kucharska, M. Szafrański, M. Goliński, M. Spychała (2019) Workshops entitled "Prospects of competence development in companies"

Table 8.1. Key competencies required in the future

Competencies	% of mentions of competencies as key to the surveyed companies
Command of foreign languages	64
Teamwork	59
Communication and media competencies	55
Analytical thinking	50
Ability to use specialist software	45
Self-organization	45
Ability to use own knowledge and information	36
Ability to create in a team	36
Self-improvement	36
Ability to work on projects	36
Flexible response to changes/adaptational competencies	32
Interdisciplinarity	32

Source: own compilation based on M. Graczyk-Kucharska, M. Szafrański, M. Goliński, M. Spychała (2019) Workshops entitled "Prospects of competence development in companies".

Table 8.2. Other technical and social competencies required in the future

Technical competencies	Social competencies
Basic technical knowledge	Critical thinking
Engineering multidisciplinarity in designing solutions with an understanding of the user and their needs	Multitasking
Ability to read technical drawings	Systemic thinking
Command of Exel	Comprehensive solving of complex problems
Ability to control processes	Independence in decision-making
Analysis of causes and effects of defects in production processes	Thinking out of the box, ingenuity/creativity
Analysis of process capability	Openness to new technologies
Data stream analysis	Timely performance of tasks
Communication between machines	Resistance to stress
Robot techniques	Manual skills
Image analysis	Ability to plan own career path
3D print technologies	Building on diversity
Manufacturing techniques including forming processes techniques	Leadership
Skills in pneumatics and hydraulics	Computer literacy; ability to delegate tasks and execute them
Work with virtual reality technologies	Emotional intelligence
Security in the web	Project management
Knowledge of problem-solving methodologies	Ability of intergenerational management
Technologies connected with electric cars	Active listening
Group of skills concerning electronics and electric vehicles	Accuracy, reliability and meticulousness in the performance of tasks
Ability to run components in a vehicle	Ability to commit to implemented activities
Industrial automation and programming of drivers	Initiative-taking
Basics of finance	Result-orientation
	Ability to use knowledge in the organization

Source: own compilation based on M. Graczyk-Kucharska, M. Szafrański, M. Goliński, M. Spychała (2019) Workshops entitled "Prospects of competence development in companies".

The respondents also listed other technical and social competencies. Although they were mentioned more seldom, in some industries they can be considered key competencies. They are presented in Table 8.2.

Technical and social competencies are important in the context of the employee's own development to match their competency profile better to the employer's needs. Digital competencies are also among the groups of transversal competencies required at various jobs at the moment and in the future. In the context of information and technological progress, the concept of key digital skills was defined in 2013 (OCED, 2013). They include the following:

– skills of text interpretation, content comprehension and text editing abilities,
– skills of inference based on data, numbers and communication of mathematical content, logical reasoning affecting cause and effect inference,
– the ability to use digital technologies, devices and communication networks to communicate, as well as acquire and verify information,
– ability to use the computer and information to research, create value and communicate to participate fully in professional, social and private life.

Digital technologies also affect education, training and learning (2018/C 189/1). Access to distance learning technologies is reduced by restrictions caused by the unavailability of materials, teachers or low employee mobility. Digital technologies can ensure repeatability of courses for many employees, ensuring that the same materials are shared in the same way, with identical tools, guaranteeing the same level of education for all course participants. Developing or expanding e-learning platforms in enterprises can also be a good alternative in times of "lockdown" and remote work.

The success of employees on the labour market depends on the changes which will be introduced by public institutions and social partners, i.e. employers. In the strategic context, there are three areas to which modifications should be introduced (International Labour Organization, 2019):

– investing in employee potential through the requirement of lifelong learning,
– investing in labour market institutions and social dialogue with/and among employees,
– transforming and modifying economies to ensure fair and equal working conditions.

The above activities should be planned and undertaken individually by each organization and supported as part of a broader concept for improving education and minimizing competency gaps, e.g. within a network of cooperating entities. The objectives of such cooperation include shortening the time of access to competency resources and minimizing the costs of training candidates for specific jobs, also in the future.

Chapter 9

Marek GOLIŃSKI*, Maciej SZAFRAŃSKI*

NETWORKING IN CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF COMPETENCIES

9.1. THE GENERAL IDEA OF NETWORKING

Given the challenges currently faced by human resource management, the ability to build relations, both in the immediate and further environment, is the key factor to success in that area. Building relations also translates into information exchange which in turn improves the competitive position. For this reason, important HR tasks include the development of cooperation whose examples are establishing and participation in networks.

A network of enterprises is developed as a capital-independent agreement of several entities in order to derive market benefits. The development of every network is motivated by the possibility to generate more benefits where there is cooperation than if each entity operated independently. Entities which make up the network keep their decision-making autonomy and their activity connected with functioning within the network usually focuses on a narrow range of operations. The limited scope of activities implemented within the network stems from the economic factors which condition the company's functioning. When joining the network, individual entities face the need to balance the benefits generated individually and the values acquired through cooperation in the group.

Motivators to join the network include the ability to gain access to resources, including human resources, which are harder or more expensive to obtain individually, better market expansion opportunities and gaining a more favourable position in relations with the economic environment. Most often, the benefits are connected with intangible resources, especially information exchange, for example in relation to effective recruitment tools, contacts and relationships, as well as human capital connected with employees who have appropriate competencies (Lachiewicz, Zakrzewska-Bielawska, 2012).

The concept of a network and the use of it has a long history. Examples of the application of the network approach include e.g. using it to solve mathematical problems as early as 1736 when Leonhard Euler used graphs to explain a mystery

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surrounding the crossing of bridges in Königsberg (Ujwary-Gil, 2017). The scientific analysis of network functioning uses the graph theory to visually present the structure of objects with connections between them (Fig. 9.1). The **tops** of the graphs are objects that are connected by **edges** which symbolize the **relations** (bonds) between them. Flows of resources can be an example of relations between objects. Depending on the adopted approach, it is possible to separately depict graphs of the flow of information, finance or employee competencies. To simplify graphics and reduce the number of drawings, it is possible to accumulate all flows into one arc connecting the tops and validate it on an appropriate numerical scale (Fig. 9.1).
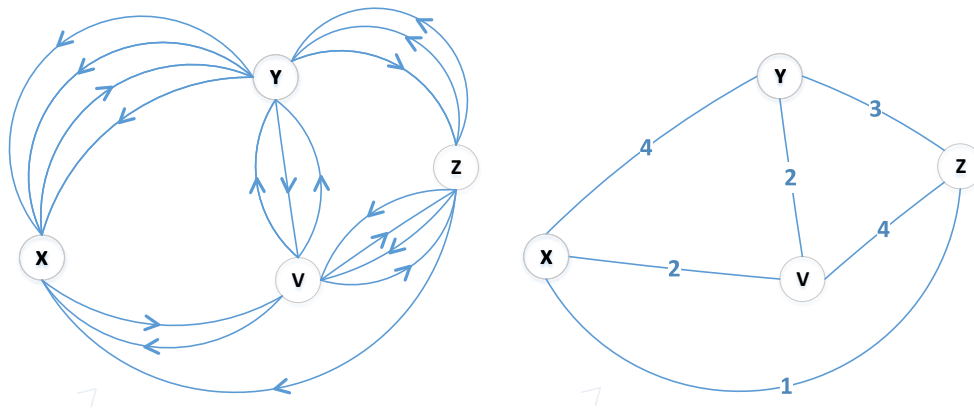

Fig. 9.1. A graph diagram and a network-connections diagram.
Source: own compilation based on Wilson R.J. (1996)

The popularization of the network approach concept is attributed to social sciences, especially social psychology. The Milgram experiment, which examines communication ties in a community, can be an example of analysis and research stemming from the consequences of network connections (Travers, Milgram 1969). Developing and strengthening ties is the subject of network development. The biggest strength and potential are generated from a network when the share of all participants is even and the benefits they derive depend on their involvement.

Participation in the network results from the need to cooperate in achieving goals that are very often economic but can also be connected with personal or family aspirations. Very often, this has consequences in getting involved in the network, especially locally. The regional approach to the concept of networking is very practical and justified in many areas of life, including in spatial analysis, environmental management, or social and educational activities. Local network conditions confirm Tobler's principle which, as the First Law of Geography, states that "*everything is related to everything else, but near things are more related than*

distant things" (Tobler, 1979). Due to the nature of emerging bonds and the scope of goals pursued by entities involved in the network, one can speak of **social networks** which are more natural, often resulting from the need to build a community and **economic networks** where an economic outcome is the objective.

The popularity and importance of network functioning are associated with deriving more benefits from a decentralized way of managing resources and more efficiency of actions initiated on a grassroots basis. If an entity functions on a regional market, e.g. sales or problems with finding employees are activated regionally, resulting in increased efficiency of operations. It is connected with developing networks in the area where they are used and solving problems where they arise, e.g. supporting the development of training in given competencies in an area where there is a shortage of specialists in a given field or sharing experiences in an environment where similar problems occur. Such activities constitute the idea behind building network connections, starting with the exchange of resources and ending with sharing information and building shared knowledge (Bodin, Crona 2009). Economic networks have many potential participants, e.g. thanks to the need for social integration. Building a network can be an interface between network participants resulting from the existence of relationships and strength of cohesion among people which are caused by e.g. joint efforts such as improving the standard of living of the local community, creating new jobs, or improving the quality of education (Shiau, et al., 2017).

Planning long-term presence on the market and having a sense of social responsibility which goes beyond the principles of sustainable development, an enterprise should assume cooperation with other institutions to a large extent and then partnership in the network becomes a necessity to accomplish the expected objectives.

9.2. CONDITIONS OF NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

An important factor in building a network is the possibility to derive expected benefits connected with the objectives pursues by individual network participants. Entities join a network only if, in order to achieve their own goals, they have to or should use values which other entities have and at the same time have some values that can be exchanged.

Every partnership comes together taking into account the principle of reciprocity of benefits: to receive something you have to give something. Different entities join forces within a network. If their scopes of operation are identical or similar, they are less open to cooperating and the scope of joint activities is limited to selected areas. Examples of these include businesses from the same industry which come together to develop legal regulations which are advantageous to the sector. If the scope of the institutions' activities does not overlap, there is no danger of conflicting interests. Then, such entities can be more open and at the same time, their activities might be mutually supplementary.

Important features of networks include the fact that entities join them voluntarily and leave them on the principles agreed in the network. Formulation and participation in a network are very dynamic and stem from the market situation as well as the internal needs of the organization. By joining the network, entities want to improve their competitive position, i.e. become better than other entities on their way to survival and development. Networked operations of enterprises can alleviate strong market friction, in particular cases, aggressive competition subsides and a less conflicting approach emerges. **Coopetition** is an instance of a softer transition from competition to cooperation, e.g. within a network. It involves simultaneous competition and cooperation on the part of organizations (Bouncken, Kraus, 2013). It happens when e.g. a group of enterprises together influences and scope and quality of competencies of their future employees by investing their commitment and cooperating for the local community. While the founding and development of networks are spontaneous, for their operations to be effective, they need a coordinator. The coordinator's task should be to integrate the network and to be authorized to do that they should hold a position which is based on having key competencies and managerial skills (Perechuda, 2005).

A feature of all network organizations is cooperation for the achievement of their own goals, however, networks can be differentiated according to many criteria that will determine their founding and then affect their structure (Fig. 9.2). Citing literature, one can quote three factors which are important in initiating networks (Rudy, 2009):

– potential – resources held by the network participant,
– control – the powers it will have when operating within the network,
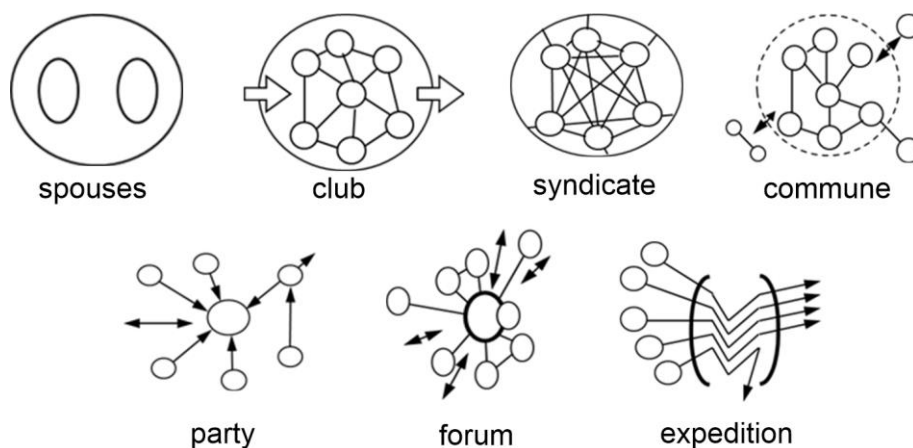– context – conditions that made it join the network.

Fig. 9.2. Examples of network types.
Source: own compilation based on Roehl, Rollwagen, 2004

As mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, networks are often used to exchange intangible assets, among which knowledge occupies an important position. The research presented by Lachiewicz and Zakrzewska-Bielawska analyzed the most important benefits from functioning in a network structure for individual participants (Lachiewicz, Zakrzewska-Bielawska, 2012):
– possibility to implement joint projects (98 per cent of responses),
– possibility to exchange ideas within the network (96%),
– better position when dealing with banks, suppliers and other organizations (94%),
– better market expansion opportunities (92%),
– transferring innovation and improving the company's attractiveness on the market through to the use of a product logo and brand (88%).

As can be concluded from the cited studies, the exchange of information has a significant share in the expected benefits from functioning within a network.

In a dynamically changing economic reality, when devising their operational strategy, enterprises will have to take into account flexible solutions that can be implemented in the short term. Such situations usually call for a profound change in strategy and, as a result, a radical change in the structures, processes and human resources within the organization. Operating in a network (or simultaneously in several networks) makes it possible for enterprises to access useful information, benefit from high flexibility of operations, market expansiveness and exchange of resources while efficiently responding to emerging market opportunities.

The scope of benefits for companies which join a network does not depend on the size, legal form or type of business, however, due to the information potential of the network, joining it should be recommended primarily to younger enterprises with less experience.

Thanks to the fact that it enables the diffusion of information and transfer of knowledge among its participants, an economic network can offer benefits not only to its participants. It can also lead to the emergence of systemic solutions which go far beyond the operation of the network. A description of such solutions is presented in the next subchapter

9.3. THE WIELKOPOLSKA EDUCATIONAL-AND-ECONOMIC NETWORK – AN EXAMPLE OF COMPETENCE MANAGEMENT IN A REGION

9.3.1. The genesis of the Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network (WEEN)

The Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network (WEEN) is an organizational innovation which has functioned and been improved since 2010 by the

Poznań University of Technology, the Wielkopolska Province Government, businesses, secondary technical schools from the region and other, mainly educational, institutions. As its name suggests, it functions in Wielkopolska, a region of Poland which is inhabited by about 3.5 million people.

The unsatisfactory level of knowledge about vocational competencies required in the region was the main reason behind its development. Vocational competencies are understood as all those which are required on job positions in companies. They include both key technical competencies as well as transversal ones which are needed in every business category and every economic sector. The problems noticed included insufficient knowledge of the stakeholders (schools, local governments, future employees, parents, scientists, decision-makers in companies) concerning competence requirements in enterprises. Other problems identified back in 2006 included:

– no knowledge databases on competencies required in enterprises,
– too slow diffusion of knowledge in the region's population concerning competence requirements on job positions,
– frequent inability to define and communicate requirements on job positions, in particular in SMEs (in Wielkopolska they account for 99.8 per cent of all the businesses),
– passivity of many students who were learning various professions with respect to interest in the profession or the sector in which they were being educated,
– shortage of vocational teachers and career councillors,
– an underfunded formal vocational education system which was ill-adjusted to the requirements of the labour market.

In such conditions, the following goals were formulated in 2010:
– long-term improvement of the management of knowledge about competencies in the region,
– based on the collected knowledge, faster elimination of competence gaps both in students of secondary technical schools (future employees) as well as vocational teachers.

The WEEN is being developed as part of three consecutive EU-funded projects in operational programmes, with the previous one having been granted the Minister of Infrastructure and Development's 2014 Award "*the Best Investment into the Human*" under the "*Good ESF Practices* contest. The WEEN vision was developed under the Poznan University of Technology's initiative Akcelerator Wiedzy Technicznej® AWT® (Technical Knowledge Accelerator) (Szafrański, et al., 2008, Szafrański, 2018). AWT® initiates activities for faster development of technology and protection against exclusion. The position of the WEEN in the structure of project activities is presented in Figure 9.3.

The development of the Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network received a strong boost after the Wielkopolska Province Government got involved in the initiative.
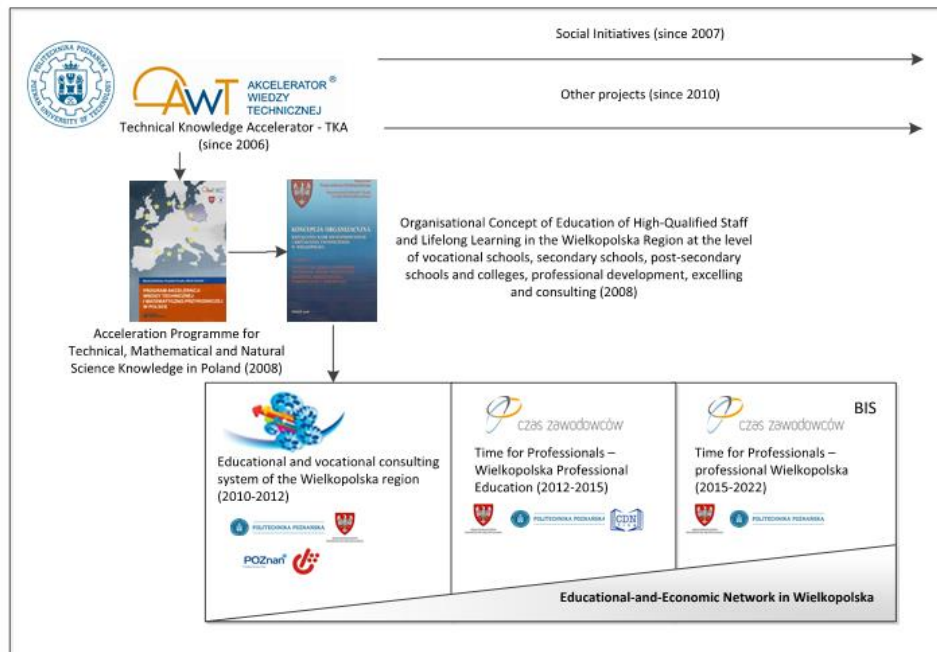
Fig. 9.3. The Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network in the structure of activities undertaken in partnership by the Poznań University of Technology and the Wielkopolska Province Government between 2006 and 2020.
Source: own compilation

Within the WEEN, it is important to continuously improve the partners' knowledge about existing relations between them and the value stemming from strengthening those relations. A higher level of knowledge about interdependencies among the stakeholders has a positive influence on building and consolidating intellectual capital.

9.3.2. The purpose, thematic scope and structure of the WEEN

The purpose of the WEEN is to develop and improve the management of knowledge about competencies in the region.

A significant strength of the WEEN is the fact that organizations of consolidated and permanent structures (local governments, a university, enterprises, schools) are involved in it. Figure 9.4 presents the current shape of the network (as at 2020), emphasizing categories of stakeholders who remain of strategic importance to its development. Entities involved in the network include the Wielkopolska Province Government, the Poznan University of Technology, 80 technical schools, 90 big

companies of strategic importance to the region and nearly 2,000 SMEs. Between 2010 and 2022, over PLN 70 million was securities for activities within the projects.

In particular, funds were allocated to the following:

– online platform system.zawodowcy.org which supports forming knowledge about competencies,
– an e-learning platform,
– development, implementation and maintenance of methods for measuring the compatibility between the level of competencies with the requirements of companies,
– laboratory equipment,
– equipment for schools and other educational entities,
– development, implementation and completion of competence improving laboratory learning programs,
– personnel for shaping student competences and cooperation with the companies, including specialists for relations within the WEEN, an IT team, a team for e-learning, including methodologists, staff for educational and career counselling, laboratory personnel.
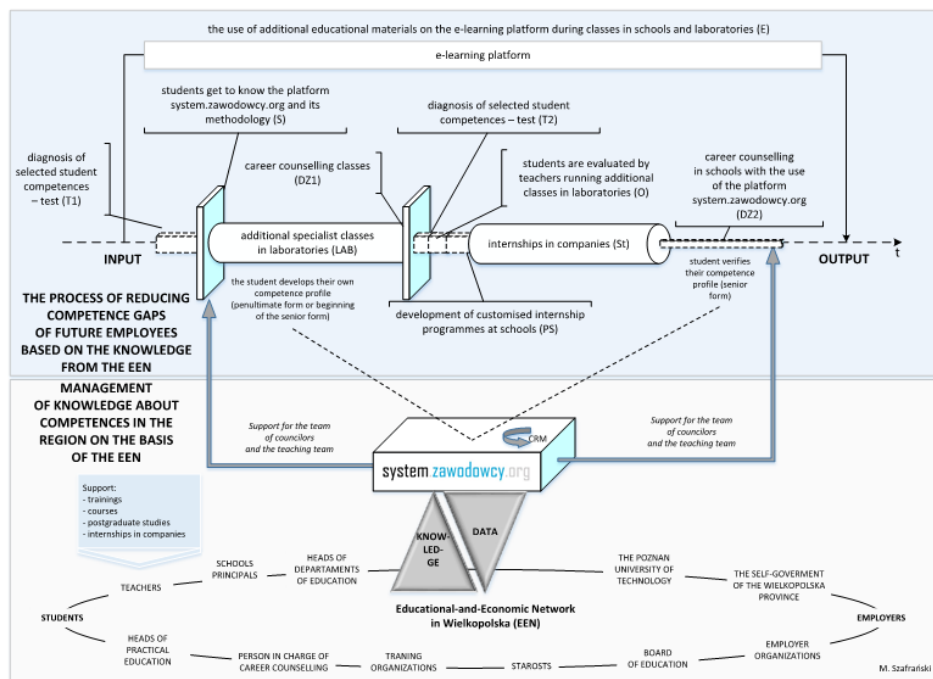

Fig. 9.4. The Structure of the Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network and its impact on competence knowledge management in the region and reduction of competence shortages in the additional education process (AEP).
Source: own compilation

A process of competence knowledge management (CKM) was implemented based on inter-organizational management mechanisms. The knowledge obtained is immediately used for improvement and realization of a model additional education process (AEP) which is oriented towards supporting the formal education process (FEP) with respect to reducing competence gaps in future employees. A model of the existing AEP is presented in Figure 9.4.

The two most important groups engaged in the functioning and development of the WEEN are companies and students of technical schools (primarily from senior years).

The two basic groups of enterprises are 90 biggest companies from the region which get involved in most of the activities, including personal contact, participation in meetings and interviews, sharing knowledge about competences and nearly 2,000 companies, which mainly hire interns, and thus share knowledge about competence needs while developing internship programs.

Based on data provided by the employers, it is possible to improve additional education programs (AEP) for students. They are very keen on taking part in laboratory classes and the internships. For example, by the end of 2022 alone, "Time of Professional BIS – professional Wielkopolska" project will have enabled the following: 11,200 students will take part in additional laboratory classes, 8,000 students will undergo paid internships, at least 30,000 users, including at least 1,200 companies, will be registered on the system.zawodowcy.org communication platform, and 28,000 users will use the e-learning platform. Whenever the words "*at least*" were used, it means that the quoted numbers were already reached in early 2020.

The methods of measurement and evaluation of competencies used in the network provide big research samples based on which it is possible to prepare reports improving the companies' knowledge about the level of competences in senior students of technical schools and the condition of that level's compatibility with employer requirements.

9.3.3. Managing knowledge about competencies in a network

The cycle of competence knowledge management within the WEEN looks as follows.

Individual meetings, panels, workshops, consultations, Steering Group meetings, open doors in laboratories for employers are being organized with the participation of WEEN members. For instance, the following activities are being undertaken during meetings with representatives of the companies:
– the possible scope of cooperation within the WEEN is specified,
– terms and conditions for signing long-term cooperation contracts are agreed on,
– competence profiles on job positions in specific companies are developed,

– based on those profiles reference models of job positions are developed and then posted on system.zawodowcy.org as material for work with students,
– language of communication with respect to competence requirements is improved,
– employers are registered on system.zawodowcy.org,
– functionalities of system.zawodowcy.org are being learnt; the idea is to show that supporting employers in entering data about competences makes it easier to educate students with respect to competency requirements of the employers,
– the scope of laboratory equipment is consulted so that it was continuously suited to the requirements of the labour market, particularly those of the employers who cooperate in the network,
– individualized internships for students are developed,
– conditions are created on panels for the exchange of knowledge among representatives of the businesses, particularly those from HR departments, with respect to competence management; good HR practices and issues connected with employing young workers, especially those from generations Y and Z, are discussed,
– periodical reports on competencies (including skills) required on job positions in the region and the competence level of future employees are developed for the WEEN members based on acquired knowledge.

Programs for the support of students and teachers are developed based on knowledge collected from networking with the businesses, based on diagnoses of needs of the schools and contact with other entities within the WEEN. The knowledge accumulated in system.zawodowcy.org is used in the student education process. Students evaluate classes in laboratories, so the process can be improved, taking stakeholders' comments into account. After the internships, the students are evaluated by their supervisors in the companies. Evaluation methods developed after consultation with employers are used. During additional career counselling classes, students learn what competencies, including skills, are, analyze reference models and learn to prepare their personal competence profiles based on those models and evaluate their competence level and competence gaps. It must be emphasized that the classes are attended by big numbers of students. Since 2012, support from *Time of professionals* projects has covered about 20 per cent of all students of technical schools who were studying in Wielkopolskie province at the time! By the end of 2022, the number will have reached about 21,000 students.

The data obtained in the additional education process (AED) and accumulated in zawodowcy.org are processed. The feedback presented to WEEN members in the form of simple and legible reports improves their knowledge about the students' competence levels. The additional knowledge makes it easier to undertake joint actions for the improvement of the AED.

Representatives of the companies, especially employees of technical and HR departments, are so committed that many of them are interested in the creation and diffusion of knowledge about competences on the vocational secondary school

level and, moreover, they asked for the activities to be expanded to cover the competencies of students, graduates and employees.

Fig. 9.5. Examples of measurement and evaluation of acquired knowledge about competencies among the two main groups in the WEEN, i.e. students and employees of the companies. Source: own compilation

Other entities involved in the activities include:

– The Wielkopolska Province Government which, apart from substantive activities in the network, provides funding for the WEEN development as part of subsequent "Time of professionals" projects,
– The Poznan University of Technology whose team created and activates the network and manages the knowledge about competences within it, with the use of research and analysis and ongoing improvement of measurement methods,
– governing bodies of other local governments which supervise schools – they consent to support for the schools and thus students,
– school authorities - they ensure the participation of schools in the processes of identifying the need for support and the participation of students in projects, including in WEEN,
– teachers get involved in e.g. looking after the children during trips to the laboratories and use modern educational techniques, including the e-learning platform and take part in training to then actively support activities improving vocational education in the region.

The cooperation and effective competence knowledge management within the WEEN, with emphasis on sharing knowledge, are of key importance to the success of cooperation in the network.

Figure 9.5 presents examples of measurement and evaluation of acquired knowledge about competences among the two main groups in the WEEN, i.e. students and employees of the companies.

The outcomes of cooperation with enterprises within the Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network are shown in the next chapter which presents good practices in human resource management courtesy of the companies.

Chapter 10

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GOOD HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN ENTERPRISES – CASE STUDY

10.1. INTRODUCTION

Good practices in human resource management are always inspiring to create new solutions and implement them for better planning, organizing, steering and monitoring human resources. This chapter describes 11 cases which were discussed based on materials made available by Ardagh Glass S.A., Arvato Supply Chain Solutions in Poland, Bolsius Polska Sp. z o.o., DFDS Polska, Fresh Logistics Polska, Mahle Behr Ostrów Wielkopolski, Mondi Simet Sp. z o.o., Phoenix Contact Wielkopolska, Pratt & Whitney Kalisz, Volkswagen Poznań and P.P.H. WObit E.K.J.Ober s.c., i.e. companies which cooperate within the Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network. Each of the descriptions begins with brief characteristics of the company, defining the human resource management problem identified in the organization and solutions implemented to address the challenge.

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10.2. ARDAGH GLASS S.A.

Ardagh Group is a global leader in the production of metal and glass packaging for leading global brands. The history of the group dates back to 1932 when it began operating under the name Irish Glass Bottle. Since that time, the concern has developed substantially. It currently has branches all over the world, employs over 16,000 people and reports revenues of approximately USD 7 billion every year. In Poland, three glassworks located in Gostyń (Wielkopolskie province), Ujście (Wielkopolskie province) and Wyszków (Mazowieckie province) are operating under the name Ardagh Glass S.A The Polish plants manufacture glass products, i.e. white, green and brown jars and bottles. The facilities employ over 700 people, with many of them having been employed in the glassworks for a dozen or several dozen years. According to the management's approach, joint success is built based on the success of each employee. Part of the Group's strategy involves sustainable development and innovation which are visible in both production and design methods as well as in recycling and energy-saving techniques. The company's goal is to minimize the negative impact on the environment while maintaining economic balance and social responsibility. The company's management believes that the company's success depends on the success of its employees.

Ardagh Glass S.A fosters very significant awareness of human resources and a belief that **employees and their competencies are key to the company's success.** *"The greatest resource of our organization are the people who carry out their work with passion, determination and commitment every day. It is thanks to our employees that we are a strong organization which continuously invests in new technologies and modernizes processes, we care for the natural environment and local communities, and every day we put a lot of work into improving our products"*.

The management of the company successfully makes the right decisions by discussing them with representatives of various employee groups, e.g. with respect to the development of key principles and regulations.

The first employee satisfaction poll was carried out at Ardagh Glass S.A. a few years ago. Its results provided the management board with the basis and inspiration to undertake many actions that have been successfully working in the company to date. Among those activities was the development and implementation of an employee referral program for the recruitment of new employees. Joint dialogue at

various levels of the organizational structure enabled the development of a program that on the one hand gives the opportunity to quickly recruit new people and on the other hand, motivates and engages employees to build the Ardagh team while giving them a sense of influence on decisions, as well as the opportunity to benefit additionally from an effectively recommended employee.

A pioneering approach to initiating and implementing innovative solutions turned out to be a great success for Ardagh Glass. The organization's managers tried to avoid the lack of outcomes from the implemented improvements or innovations, especially those time-consuming and cost-intensive. Therefore, the company focused on activities not only for the people but primarily with the people and by the people. The ***Best in Glass*** incentive program is an action developed jointly with the Ardagh team that makes it possible to build a culture of continuous pursuit of excellence. Thanks to the management's consent to questioning the status quo and their trust and faith in the wisdom of employees as the best specialists in their areas, as well as by changing the way of thinking, stimulating creativity and openness to change among the employees, the *Best in Glass* program has been successful internally. What definitely distinguishes it from other Kaizen-like programs is the fact that it is not limited to just making suggestions, instead, it assumes consent for the independent and self-reliant implementation of the idea or improvement. Employees are trusted and receive the necessary support not only from the supervisor as well as a financial budget and time or personnel resources for the implementation of the project. The results of the introduced improvements are the subject of a competition whose rules were created by the employees and under which authors of the projects are financially awarded for their efforts. The creativity of employees and great attention to their needs was the inspiration behind the release of a professional **board game** entitled "*Mission safe glassworker"* which originated from one of the employees who won an internal competition in occupational health and safety. Today, every glassworker has that game at home. It is also an original gift for the company's partners.

Ageing staff is one of the significant challenges to many manufacturing companies. Specialist knowledge leaves the organization when employees retire. Thanks to teamwork, an **internal training platform myLearning** was created and is used to manage knowledge in the organization and, first of all, give the employees the opportunity to share knowledge and create e-learning content which, when prepared in an interesting and interactive form, will be successfully used by next generations of glassworkers employed in Ardagh.

Every one of us will remember the beginning of 2020 as a time when the world stopped and united in the fights against the pandemic. Due to the specifics of Ardagh Glass S.A.'s production, it was not possible to stop its production lines and shift entirely to home-based work. In these difficult moments, the company focused on its employees' intuition, asking them for their opinion and **consulting the implementation of new procedures**, guidelines and protective measures. Today, the management feels that everything possible has been done to minimize the risk of coronavirus infection among the team. The best proof confirming that the activities were right is

the attitude of the employees who at that difficult time each day performed their duties with determination and enormous commitment and provided feedback confirming that the solutions were correct.

The company's experience confirms that the **biggest challenge of modern management is to build a culture of dialogue, cooperation and involvement within the company.** Through openness to internal cooperation, as well as listening to each other and talking about each other's needs, it is possible to develop solutions and systems which will bring benefits to the organization and, above all, serve the people employed in it.

10.3. ARVATO SUPPLY CHAIN SOLUTIONS IN POLAND

Arvato Supply Chain Solutions in Poland, one of the leading service providers in the scope of one-stop e-commerce, contract logistics and omnichannel, is responsible for handling complex processes for well-renowned brands from sectors such as fashion, beauty, high-tech and healthcare. Those processes include advanced IT solutions, customer service, B2B and B2C logistics management and e-commerce consulting. Thanks to its over 25-year experience, Arvato SCS helps its clients optimize key processes, thus increasing their competitive advantage on the market. Arvato SCS belongs to the international concern Bertelsmann and in Poland, it employs nearly 2,500 staff in 11 distribution centres.

Arvato Supply Chain Solutions' training program "**Practice for the Logistician**" is an example of how talent is acquired for the organization.

Logistics is an area in which new technologies and continuous improvement of operational processes determine work in change. Focus on development poses further challenges in the search for young talent, i.e. people whose knowledge and a new point of view will contribute to the achievement of the company's business goals. Therefore, the attitude of the candidate who is flexible and able to work within that change becomes important from the very start. For 4 years, the "Practice for the Logistician" summer internship program which is run in the spirit of creativity and entrepreneurship has been dedicated to MA students of logistics who after 3 months of cooperation have a chance to present their own project as a product ready for operational implementation. The most talented interns stay with the organization and continue to work in specialist positions.

Important elements of the program's success (Fig. 10.1):
1. Adaptation – the permanent evolution of the baseline of the program which stems from the challenges in the labour market, changing expectations of informed candidates and the company's ambitious goals.

	— PAST —	— PRESENT —
Motivation of the interns	Finish the program for its own sake, just for the entry in the CV	Acquire as much as possible
Recruitment	Focus on hard competencies, e.g. computer literacy in MS	Focus on the candidate's attitude which should be in line with the company's values
Intern supervisor	Task – accompany the intern throughout the project, specifying the subject of the project	Task – support, inspire and show the available options to the candidate who chooses their own path of development
Intern	The person who carried out the subject of the project	A person with significant operational initiative. They define the scope of the project and work on it by themselves
End of the training program	The intern presents the project	The intern presents and implements their project

Fig. 10.1. Important elements of the success of the "*Practice for the Logistician*" program. Source: Documentation provided by Arvato Supply Chain Solutions in Poland

2. Involvement - support of key people at various levels of the organization (Management Board, HR, operations, quality).
3. Effective planning - a several-stage process with clearly defined goals for each of them, enabling the monitoring of progress in the project.

As experts, the company has noticed how candidates' expectations change. Young people who enter the labour market would like to change the world, and we as an organization show them how to professionally introduce changes to the immediate business environment.

By implementing their own optimization ideas, the company gives the interns a sense of agency and shows that initiative, commitment and skilful cooperation can generate real benefits both for themselves as well as the organization.

10.4. BOLSIUS POLSKA SP. Z O.O.

"Providing employees with opportunities for personal development gives them a sense of accomplishment and improves their perception of the value of their work; moreover, it fosters the conviction that work can be a source of pleasure and satisfaction as well as self-improvement. This approach shifts the attitude towards one's own work to a higher level - the level of personal fulfilment."

William B. Martin

Bolsius Polska Sp. z o.o. is a sister company to the international holding Bolsius International, a family company based in the Netherlands. Bolsius is a producer of a wide range of candles, candle refills and vigil candles, operating mainly across Europe and in many non-European countries. The history of the company dates back to nearly 150 years ago and during that period the holding achieved a leading position on the European market. It owes its position to the principle of uniting employees in a shared passion for creating organizational success. Tradition, continuous development and innovation are important elements of the company's developmental vision.

Bolsius Polska was founded in 1997 in Zalesie Małe near Kobylin, Wielkopolska province, and is currently the biggest producer in its industry in Poland and one of the largest ones in Europe. Its Polish plant currently employs about 1.000 people.

Bolsius is a business created by people and they are its strength and growth driver. The focal point of the company includes innovation, creativity, competence, passion, talent management, market orientation, above-average leadership skills of the management and a vision of brand development, the phenomenon of market recognition and desire. The company is focused on innovation and latest technologies directed at product development and production capacity, as well as a continuous increase in productivity and effectiveness, building optimal internal and international organization, supported by world-class integrated management systems conditioning building competitive advantage and stable development of the company.

The market situation encourages enterprises to seek an advantage over other organizations, and it is also the case of Bolsius Polska. **The competencies of its employees are the most significant competitive advantage of the company.** It is the

case because it is the people who create unique solutions and constitute the added value of the organization. Therefore, employers are paying more and more attention to implementing competence-based personnel management tools.

Creating a **competence model**, i.e. defining competencies that are particularly important for the entire organization, its individual areas, departments and positions, brings real benefits:

– already at the job interview stage, candidates and later employees get a clear message as to which competencies and behaviours are consistent with the company's values, vision, mission and culture,
– clearly defined competence requirements for individual job positions are a condition for the effective performance of assignments on a given position, employees receive standards governing the manner and quality of their work, the supervisor gets information about the level of the employees' compliance with the standards of activity in everyday work. It is crucial for an informed trial period and the rules governing the onboarding of the new employee,
– the department manager identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the employees and thus can delegate tasks more accurately
– areas in the company's operations which require improvement of effectiveness are identified,
– competencies whose development will contribute to the improvement of work outcomes throughout the organization are identified,
– training and development needs of employees in relation to the current and future challenges in the organization are identified,
– employees are motivated to constantly improve the level of required competencies and thus work effectiveness.

Linking the competence model with a periodical assessment system is the most efficient method of implementing and communicating the range of desired competencies in the company. In connection with that, the company attaches great importance to the periodical assessment system. The assessment of employees' competencies should be based on a juxtaposition of their behaviour in everyday work with the set work standards, i.e. sets of behaviours describing each competency.

An employee who is subject to regular competence assessment:

– gains awareness which skills and behaviours are assessed as valuable for the company, desired on specific positions and which should be particularly developed,
– has the opportunity to undertake self-improvement activities – thanks to the description of competencies through sets of behaviours that should be employed in everyday work, linking the competence model in the company with the employee assessment system enables accurate identification of training needs and that in turn enables the optimal design of training and development programs.

Innovation, creativity and creativeness are forecasted to be competencies which will be most desired and sought after by employers in the coming years. Bolsius Polska considers those competencies very much expected already today. Along with them, as equally important, the company mentions comprehensive problem solving,

critical thinking, cooperation with others, emotional intelligence, inference and decision making, ability to learn independently, technical competencies.

To Bolsius Polska Sp. z o.o., investing in the development and improvement of employees means investing in the development and improvement of the company. It examines training needs to plan training programs which are needed and will bring tangible benefits to employees and the company. A motivated employee, gaining new knowledge and skills, who will bring profits to the company is the main objective. Bolsius invests in employee development not only by enabling them to participate in training programs which they undertake on the initiative of the employer. It also listens to and analyses proposals from the employees. It supports employee development by co-financing the improvement of professional qualifications at universities and participation in language courses.

Due to shortages of candidates with appropriate qualifications to work in certain positions, at the beginning of 2018 the company started cooperation with schools and universities which educate young people in various fields. It concluded first agreements on didactic cooperation with respect to supporting the education process.

At the moment, in the area of activities concerning young people, Bolsius implements the following actions:
– in most departments, it offers practice programs for high school and university students of various levels and fields of study,
– it chose candidates for practical vocational training instructors from the employees and had them attend a course,
– it cooperates with career councillors and career bureaus,
– it participates in educational and job fairs and career days to present the company and its offer addressed to high school and university students and graduates.
– it enables practical training in the areas of the company for which it is difficult to find the right candidates. By doing that, it intends to ensure a supply of qualified employees every year.

Candidates can gain practical education in the company on the positions of a warehouseman, logistician, mechanic, machine and device fitter, electrician, electromechanic and electronic technician. The range of professions the company can educate in can be extended depending on the requested needs. After completing their education, candidates can find employment and further professional development in Bolsius' structures.

10.5. DFDS POLSKA

DFDS Polska is part of the DFDS Group – an international ferry operator which carries passengers and goods on the North, Baltic and the Mediterranean Sea. DFDS Group has its branches in 18 European countries and its headquarters are located in Copenhagen. DFDS Group employs over 7.000 staff, with 232 people working for DFDS Polska. DFDS Polska's task is to provide accounting services and contact with clients of the DFDS Group, operating as a Finance Service Center (FSC).

The DFDS Group has developed its own quality management system which is also the company's organizational philosophy and culture. The system is called DFDS Way and provides the basis of the entire company management policy. DFDS Way is based on five pillars:

– **Customer driven –** with its activities, the DFDS group first and foremost strives to meet the needs of its customers. The services provided to them are controlled at many levels to ensure the highest quality of service.
– **Continuous improvement** – the company strives for excellence through continuous development and search for better methods of operation, which is why it set up a team for Continuous Improvement which is in charge of finding solutions.
– **Best practice** - sharing experience and searching for the best solutions in all areas of the company, from customer service to the organization of the workplace,
– **Leveraging scale –** taking advantage of the size of the DFDS Group to take actions which a smaller enterprise could not afford - the economy of scale.
– **Performance culture –** an organizational culture focused on high performance.

Continuous improvement of the recruitment process

Based on the five pillars, DFDS continuously improves its recruitment process (Fig. 10.2) The most important method it employs is based on the experience of a group of its own employees and industry consultations such as talks with other recruiters and sharing good practices, i.e. learning from specialists.

During recruitment, DFDS uses the following tools:
– self-developed practices,
– databases,
– own website with career/practice programs tabs,
– recruitment strategies,

– social media content strategies - support from the marketing department
– more financial outlays on recruitment.
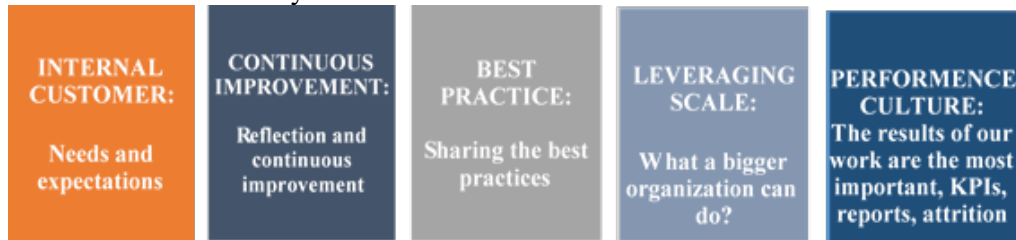
Fig. 10.2. DFDS Way.
Source: Documentation provided by DFDS Polska

Good practices in the preparation of the job offer and selection, i.e.:
1. Cooperation with the Hiring Manager when editing the job offer.
2. The HR department's response time to a candidacy.
3. The style employed - individual approach, respect.
4. Gratitude for interest in the company and taking the time to apply.
5. Contact details provided in the job offer for the candidate's use.

Good practices during the recruitment process:
1. Sincere interest in experience but also a desire to develop, whether it is our profile or we can offer those opportunities later.
2. An honest presentation of our offer – what you are going to do on an everyday basis. How you understand that role, the development of what skills you hope for.
3. Showing respect through questions about the profile and atmosphere during recruitment.
4. Answering the candidate's questions, no pulling the wool.
5. Rejecting people who do not suit the company's culture and role.

Good practices after recruitment:
1. Fast response (depending on the hiring manager and developing a good relationship with the candidate).
2. Detailed feedback – if the candidate wants it, also from the hiring manager. Devoting time and personalization.

After the recruitment process, one has to can think about what one can do better next time – continuous improvement and questioning the status quo. One should learn from one's mistakes by analyzing the behaviour of oneself or peers from the recruitment group. Candidates should be asked for feedback regarding the recruitment process. Apart from that, talks have to be held with Hiring Managers – their feedback and expectations after a completed recruitment process as well as a few weeks into employment. After each recruitment, results should be measured and recruitment rates, e.g. KPIs, reports on how many people leave and when should be developed. Then the recruitment process should be improved: a changed approach, changed recruitment questions, new tests.

DFDS Polska does not focus on who the candidate is but on what they do – this is also the company's olicy regarding job names – they are "lower" in comparison to other companies.

10.6. FRESH LOGISTICS POLSKA

Fresh Logistics
Raben Group

"Committed employees are US!"
Building an engaging work environment at Fresh Logistics Polska

Fresh Logistics Polska specializes in comprehensive logistics services for fresh products which require controlled temperature ranging from +2°C to +6°C and 0°C to +2°C (UltraFresh) throughout the supply chain. The company provides domestic and international transport and contract logistics services.

Fresh Logistics Polska is part of the Raben Group. It was founded in 2002 and currently has a chain of 8 branches in Poland. Its distribution centres are located in Gądki, Gliwice, Grodzisk Mazowiecki, Wojanów, Szczecin, Wrocław (Nowa Wieś Wrocławska), Lublin and Łomża. It employs over 650 employees, has approximately 50,000 square meters of controlled-temperature warehouse space and a fleet of over 550 vehicles with a capacity of 4 to 33 pallets.

Fresh Logistics Polska underwent an enormous metamorphosis in terms of work organization with a view to streamline business processes as well as strengthen the level of employee commitment. When the first survey was carried out in 2011, the results were shockingly low. Commitment at 32 per cent with 40 per cent satisfaction did not give rise to much enthusiasm.

ENGAGEMENT						
FLP **2011**	FLP **2012**	FLP **2013**	FLP **2015**	FLP **2017**	FLP **2018**	FLP **2020**
32%	**40%**	**57%**	**48%**	**60%**	**58%**	**67%**

SATISFACTION						
FLP **2011**	FLP **2012**	FLP **2013**	FLP **2015**	FLP **2017**	FLP **2018**	FLP **2020**
40%	**46%**	**75%**	**72%**	**76%**	**-**	**80%**

Fig. 10.3. Change in the annual employee commitment level at Fresh Logistics Polska.
Source: documentation provided by Fresh Logistics Poland

As the weakest links, the employees pointed to areas such as leadership, work organization and tasks, development opportunities and self-fulfilment, as well as low identification with the employer's brand. The company's board, top management and HR department took up the challenge of rebuilding the image of the company. One of the strategic goals was to be awarded **the title of the Best Employer** in a study organized by Aon Hewitt (currently known as Kincentric) and to strengthen employee motivation. The transformation does not just happen on its own. It is a difficult process which requires hard work of the entire organization, from the general manager down to the warehouse worker.

Building commitment coincided with the company's interest in the Lean philosophy whose idea is to create conditions for the functioning of the organization in which employees co-create its goals. The method is ordered and planned and its outcomes are parameterized and measurable. The improvement program began with strategic reflection and the question: "why?" – why we do what we do, and then how we want to implement the change and what we finally want to achieve.

In line with the Lean philosophy, the company built a business context based on the following assumptions
MISSION = WHAT WE BELIEVE IN
VISION = WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
VALUES = WHAT WE ARE GOING TO FOLLOW
STRATEGIC GOALS = HOW WE ARE GOING TO MEASURE IT
(PARAMETRIZE THE VISION)

All employees were involved in every stage of implementation of the change. They participated in workshops and training programs, jointly developing an optimal model for the functioning of the organization. Everyone had their own personal contribution to the process.

The continuous improvement culture encouraged the employees to develop an **effective leadership model**. Managers are close to their people, every day at a certain time they meet at brief boards at which current problems are discussed and the level of satisfaction of each employee is measured. The improvement also involves measuring processes and looking for optimization. Each employee can report a deviation from the standard or waste and propose improvements. The employees know what the business goals of the company are, they feel responsible for the organization's results and they exert a real influence on their growth through their attitude and doing their tasks in accordance with the operational standard.

Neither does Fresh Logistics Polska forget about **team integration**, celebrating joint successes and local initiatives and improvements. It looks after communication with employees, contacting them via cyclical newsletters. In addition, once a quarter, team meetings are held in each branch in Poland (Fresh Hours) to communicate the company's business achievements, scientific successes of its employees, the participation of experts in industry events, development programs, volunteer campaigns and CSR activities. The company enables the development of passions and interests,

turning its employees into influencers who promote a healthy lifestyle and share their sports and culinary activities on social media.

As part of building an engaging work environment, the company defined **6 areas of activity** which have become its main objectives:
1) "we focus on the people"
2) "we enable development"
3) "we provide the sense of meaning"
4) "we appreciate employee activities"
5) "we inspire and support"
6) "we keep committed people in the organization"

The employees can see and appreciate the changes. By consistently implementing all the developed solutions in the Lean culture, each year the company achieves **an increasingly better result in the survey of commitment**. In 2020, it achieved the result of 67 per cent and was included in the **Best Employers' Zone**.

Every year shows that all employees are moving in the same direction - they want to work in an organization which has a good reputation in the market, well-organized processes, its own operational standards, work for which is interesting and inspiring and all employees are proud and satisfied to be part of it.

Better Every Day is the company's motto. Every day, the company's employees consciously implement its business context (mission, vision, values, strategic goals) while identifying and eliminating waste. The pursuit of development is part of the organization's DNA. All employees build an engaging work environment together.

10.7. MAHLE BEHR OSTRÓW WIELKOPOLSKI

MAHLE is a leading international development partner, a supplier to the automotive industry and a pioneer of future mobility. The goals of the concern include more efficient, more comfortable and environmentally friendly transport which is why its activities focus on optimizing internal combustion engines, facilitating the use of alternative fuels and creating a basis for global electrical mobility. The concern works with propulsion and air conditioning technologies, both for cars with internal combustion and electric engines and its products are today fitted in every second vehicle in the world. At the moment, over 77.000 employees work in its 160 production plants and 16 major research and development centres, one of which is located in Ostrów Wielkopolski. The Ostrów Wielkopolski-based MAHLE has been part of the Group since 2015 and specializes in the production of cooling components for internal combustion, hybrid and electric cars. In Wielkopolska's biggest Research and Development Centre over 450 specialists design and test solutions which are implemented at MAHLE factories all around the world.

The company's everyday reality brings a series of challenges which are the result of significant variability in the sector and specific customer requirements. The full **cycle of completing a single project takes about four years.** The company's management and employees are aware that with the current market dynamics, demographic changes and generations Y and Z entering the labour market, it is a relatively long period to additionally pay and reward employees only after a completed project has been successful. Therefore, the company strives to provide employees with opportunities to capitalize on the potential and strengths in the implementation of their assignments. It happens by developing important components in human resource management such as providing friendly working conditions tailored to a stable organizational culture, employee satisfaction analysis, efficient flow of information and feedback, providing flexibility as to the forms of work, comprehensive and coherent programs, including those for individual and team development.

In 2017, considering the planned dynamic and significant development of R&D structures in Ostrów Wielkopolski, the company decided to build a **development path directly linked to a matrix of competencies and the pay grade.** The project originated from business leaders who took the changeable nature of the labour market into account which makes it quite special.

Significant volatility is a challenge not only at the level of new competencies, knowledge management in the organization or the ability to carry out tasks independently but also to maintaining high involvement of teams. For the company's employees, in particular graduates of technical fields of study, waiting for the implementation of a full project, and thus the possibility of promotion or payment regulation after four years seems to be a completely unrealistic prospect. Reduced motivation and the desire to confirm one's independence faster are just some of the challenges identified as a result of annual dialogues with employees or mapping impressions after they join the organization (in the case of new recruits). To meet them, the company devised a development path planning process and implemented it in the structures of the R&D department. The program includes evaluation of performance in the first months, knowledge of methodologies and tools and soft competencies which are a benchmark for assessing the attitude and decisions regarding further cooperation.

The levelling process, which is part of the development paths, aims to clearly and comprehensively outline the possibility of changing the job position or the nature of their role for the employees of the research and development department. It specifies individual levels (from technician roles, through junior engineers, to leading positions) and presents the promotion criteria assigned to them, indicating the time frame in which such changes may occur, for the levels for which they were defined. Individual levels were also assigned a pay grade, thanks to which after meeting the criteria and being promoted, the employee can see direct translation of the results of their work and the competences they acquired and developed into a percentage-wise increase in their remuneration. When joining the organization or taking on a new role, an employee of the human resources department known as the Human Resource Business Partner (HRBP) together with the leader specifies checkpoints which will make it possible to give the employee standardized feedback and verify their progress in the new role. During such meetings, the leader outlines the expectations and summarizes previous performance, discussing or updating the competence matrix at the same time. The matrix is a tool which makes it possible to track employee requirements and progress both in the area of knowledge, hard skills and attitude assessed on a behavioural scale.

In line with the specified levels, once a year the leader can apply for a change in remuneration for their employee within their pay grade or for a change in their position connected with upgrading the remuneration to the new level. All applications are sent to the assessment team. The team is composed of leaders of key areas and the HRBP. The composition of the team is extended to make sure that broad feedback is collected and the same process standards are applied to all employees when the applications are examined, discussed with authors and then decided on. Payment regulations are completed synthetically by assigning analogous percentage-wise changes in the salary. Career planning paths are designed in such a way as to allow for the development of competencies both in an independent job position in the area

where specialization is being built as well as in a leadership role where a higher level of leadership competencies is necessary.

The comprehensive annual team development planning solution which currently exists in the company is based on the **analysis of market data as well as the improvement of the process of collecting, analyzing and inference** based on the collected data. The company implements this process as part of "**onboarding**" which provides significant support in the completion of assignments and the development of communication processes while strengthening the value of feedback. It intensifies activities in the area of improving organizational culture towards inter-team cooperation and enables building motivation and team member involvement both in the area of specific specialization and in the situation of a role change within MAHLE's structures.

10.8. MONDI SIMET SP. Z O.O.

The focus of **Mondi Simet Sp. z o.o.** is the production of corrugated cardboard packaging. At the moment, the company's headquarters in Grabonóg (Piaski commune, population of 8.600, Gostyński district, Wielkopolskie province) employ 200 people. The origins of the company date back to 1969. In 1985, the entity transformed into a cooperative and in 1997 it became a joint-stock company. In 2016, the company jointed the structures of Mondi Group, the world leader in the packaging and paper industry. Being an international group from the packaging and paper industry and employing over 25.000 staff in more than 30 countries, Mondi decided to consolidate its position in Central and Eastern Europe. The acquisition of Simet made it possible for Mondi to supplement its network of production plants located throughout Poland and gain a competitive advantage.

As a Group, Mondi is completely integrated within the packaging and paper value chain, starting from the management of forest areas, through the production of wood pulp, paper and multi-component plastics, to the design and production of packaging for the needs of individual consumers and industry. Since the beginning of its existence, the plant has employed people with disabilities. At the moment, employees with a certain degree of disability represent more than 30 per cent of its staff.

The company's management adopted an attitude based on openness which means that **every employee can always arrange for a meeting with the company's director** and discuss any issues that might bother them. The management is based on participatory principles where all employees are encouraged to directly join the activities for the development of the company. Once a quarter, meetings of the entire staff are held during which the company's performance, developmental strategy, goals, etc. are analyzed. Ongoing tasks are discussed during daily morning meetings between the managing director and the managers of separate organizational units.

To ensure good communication, an additional information channel, i.e. intranet called "*Planet Mondi*", was implemented in 2019. The current corporate events and news are presented through it.

The **transparency of the principles** followed in the company is an expression of open communication and care for employee relations. Procedures and regulations are written, open and available to everyone. They can be read in e.g. the company

canteen and the HR department. Among other things, that documentation includes anti-mobbing, evacuation and anti-child labour procedures as well as procedures for complaint and request handling and recruitment. The documents which are open and available to employees include numerous work, organizational and wage regulations, the regulations of the Company Social Benefits Fund and the Company Fund for the Rehabilitation of the Disabled and as well as the job positions book.

The company publishes an **internal guidebook** entitled "*Everything an employee should know*". It is a collection of information about employee rights and principles followed in the company.

The facility also has a direct telephone line available for every employee who wishes to **report violations** such as discrimination or mobbing. A system called Speakout registers the reports anonymously and a procedure enabling investigation of the reported issue is initiated at the company's headquarters.

Mondi Simet promotes professional development in line with the needs of individual people and the company. The Group has its **own training portfolio** called the "*Mondi Academy*" which is available to all employees and tailored to the specificity of the company and the needs of a given employee group. The program includes substantive and soft skills training programs such as finance for non-financiers, team communication, conflict resolution and assertiveness. The company covers the costs of the employees' travel for training in other plants in the group (also abroad) as well as the costs of learning English or improving competencies in secondary schools and universities.

The *work-life balance* philosophy is important to the Mondi group. The company implemented the **Employee Assistance Program** (EAP) which is available to all staff members free of charge. EAP encompasses telephone counselling under which employees are offered support in solving professional or personal problems. The external telephone line, available on a 24/7 basis, is answered by professional consultants from a third-party company. The program is available to Mondi employees and their families who live together in the same household. EAP consulting is 100% confidential.

Mondi Simet also promotes the idea of **work-life balance** through employee picnics to which families are also invited. Moreover, the company supports the passions of its employees, in particular in the field of sport and recreation, actively encourages physical activity, e.g. by organizing or participating in runs, marathons or football competitions.

Employee health and safety are Mondi Simet's priorities. The company undertakes its best efforts to ensure that the employee enters and exits the workplace fit and sound. A **colour marking system** is strictly observed. Orange T-shirts or vests are worn by employees of the company while interns, apprentices and newcomers wear yellow ones. Yellow means that special attention should be drawn to the safety of the people wearing it. The dress code in the production hall is strictly observed. The requirements include appropriate shoes, no jewellery and tied hair. It applies to everyone who enters the hall, including the management.

Mondi Simet's activities with respect to the human resource policy and its development of a healthy and friendly workplace were appreciated by the industry portal markapracodawcy.pl which awarded the plant with the prestigious award "Friendly Workplace" 2019.

10.9. PHOENIX CONTACT WIELKOPOLSKA

Phoenix Contact Wielkopolska is a production company from the electrotechnical sector. It is part of the international concern Phoenix Contact which has around 60 branches worldwide and employs over 18,000 personnel. It is one of the largest employers in Wielkopolska's Nowy Tomyśl district. Its main plant in Poland is located in Nowy Tomyśl where almost 2.400 people are employed. 2018 saw the establishment of its second production plant in Tarnobrzeg and in 2019 the second Machine Construction branch was opened in Poznań, following the Nowy Tomyśl location.

The company specializes in the production of components used in electrical connection techniques and industrial automation, including rail connectors, industrial connectors, surge protection and automation devices. The components it manufactures ensure efficient transmission of energy and data. Such solutions are used in almost every branch of industry. The company focuses on modern technologies. Its mission is to create progress through innovative solutions. It strives to be a corporation which achieves a significant and technologically leading position in the world and every area of its activity.

In June 2016, the company gradually implemented the so-called qualification system, i.e. a development program for the employees of direct and indirect production departments. It was a response to emerging problems and low efficiency of the previously employed competency management model. The qualification system was a significant change in the approach to the development of employee competencies. The key idea of the new program is the employees' own responsibility for their individual development. The employer, in turn, is expected to ensure all the resources which are necessary for them to acquire new competencies. A comparison of the approaches before and after the introduction of the qualification system is presented in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1. The approach to competence management before and after the implementation of the qualification system at Phoenix Contact Wielkopolska

The approach to competence management before the implementation of the qualification system	The approach to competence management after the implementation of the qualification system
Unstandardized names of jobs and lack of developmental paths	A unified organizational structure, creation of developmental paths
Lack of or a very general standard of competencies for a given job	Analysis of job positions and preparation of a development card
Unstandardized matrixes of employee competencies	A single standard of competency matrixes linked with the development cards
The manager decided who should know what	The development is the responsibility of the employee, the employer ensures resources
Random training programs, no employee teaching standard	Development of methods for learning every skill in the development card (TWI, tutorial, external courses)
Seniority decides about the employee's place in the organizational structure	Competencies decide about the employee's place in the organizational structure
Pay diversity	A transparent pay system with transparent rates
No knowledge about the pace and direction of the employee's development	Planning employee development

Source: documentation provided by Phoenix Contact Wielkopolska.

The implementation of the qualification system in the company was a complex process. The development of its concept and the principles of its functioning was the starting point. The department manager was responsible for the implementation of the process, with the support of employees from the HR department and leaders/foremen. The process required good work organization. To effectively implement the qualification system, each department went through the following processes:

1. Analysis of jobs in the department which are to be covered by the qualification system.
2. Valuation of jobs.
3. Communication to employees.
4. Development of exams for a given job.
5. Conducting the exams.
6. Feedback after the exam and further action (e.g. promotion).

The qualification system brings many benefits both to the employee as well as the employer. From the point of view of the employee, the system enables

– planning the career path,
– defining competency expectations for a given job position,
– elimination of pay unfairness.

The employer, in turn, could more easily match employee competencies to its needs by appropriately orienting their development also in the strategic context of the enterprise. The implementation of the system enables an objective assessment of employee knowledge and skills and makes it possible to quickly identify competence gaps which can then be bridged by appropriate training.

At the moment, the qualification system has functioned across the company for over 3.5 years. During that time, about 1,500 employees were promoted to higher positions within the given development path. Employees have more impact on their development, thanks to which the motivation to improve their competences has increased noticeably. The time needed to eliminate failures or to convert production lines has been shortened.

To check the functioning of the qualification system, **internal audits** are carried out cyclically in the organization. Optimizing activities are undertaken based on the results. In 2020, an IT system developed especially for the current competency management model will also be put to use at Phoenix Contact Wielkopolska, helping managers and leaders manage employee development.

10.10. PRATT & WHITNEY KALISZ

"Dual studies at Pratt & Whitney Kalisz as an opportunity for a good start"

Pratt & Whitney Kalisz is part of Raytheon Technologies corporation. It has been operating in Kalisz for over 25 years, manufacturing components and parts for aircraft engines for Pratt & Whitney, the world's leading producer of engines for business aircraft, local and intercontinental transport as well as helicopters. Its plant in Kalisz is also a centre of excellence in the production of

- complex gears,
- steering apparatus,
- main shafts for engines.

Pratt & Whitney Kalisz is also the producer of parts for the FDGS (Fan Drive Gear System), a new-type transmission system for the latest aircraft engine in the Pratt & Whitney family, i.e. the **PW 1000 Pure Power**. Characterized by exceptional technical parameters, those engines are used in e.g. Airbus A320 NEO aircraft.

In 2018/2019, together with the State University of Applied Sciences in Kalisz, Pratt & Whitney Kalisz developed a **concept of dual studies**. The goal of the project was to develop a program for educating young people in close cooperation with business. It was also a response to the needs of the local labour market and an extension of the educational offer available from the local university. An additional impulse to develop the solution was provided by an insufficient level of technical competence among the candidates who applied for work and deficiencies in practical skills acquired throughout the cycle of education. By developing the program, Pratt & Whitney also took the opportunity to influence the quality of education and provide students with knowledge and skills tailored to the needs of the business. Thanks to cooperation with the university, the company's employees were also given a chance to develop in the area of knowledge sharing. Moreover, the project is considered in the broadly understood aspect of social responsibility.

The Pratt & Whitney Kalisz dual studies are completed within 3 years of study. Students spend the specified amount of time at the company carrying out practical tasks, while the remaining hours are spent attending lectures and laboratories at the University. The concept of the project was developed by a group of specialists from

various fields who also serve as mentors for the participants in the program. While preparing the program, its developers analyzed the issues tackled during separate stages of the study. It made it possible to combine the practical issues learnt in the enterprise with theoretical knowledge taught in class. As part of the program, each student completes **three stages described below.**

1.   At the first stage, students become acquainted with the production process, starting with the acceptance of the order in the customer service department, subsequently moving to the department of technology, construction of tools, the start of the production process, special processes and the maintenance of traffic, logistics and quality. The participants in the program accompany PWK specialists on an ongoing basis, with them also actively participating in their tasks.

2.   At the second stage, students implement projects which they were assigned by their mentors. The projects involve the implementation of an issue selected based on the experience gained during the first stage.

3.   At the third stage, the students write their diploma theses based on the theoretical and practical knowledge they were able to acquire.

In addition to gaining practical knowledge during their stay at Pratt & Whitney in Kalisz, the students have the opportunity to develop the so-called **soft competencies** by participating in special training programs and daily activities which are carried out in the company. At each stage of the program, we jointly review the tasks completed by the students which also contributes to the development of teamwork skills.

This is the first pilot edition of dual studies at Pratt & Whitney Kalisz. Based on the acquired experience, the company plans to launch further cycles. The development and implementation of dual studies were inspired by the belief that such an initiative affects the **level of technical competence and skills of the graduates and prepares the candidates better for entering the labour market.**

10.11. VOLKSWAGEN POZNAŃ

Volkswagen Poznań is today the largest car manufacturer in Poland and the biggest employer in Wielkopolska, with its staff including over 10,000 people in 4 factories. Every day, 1,170 new vans, VW Caddy, VW Transporter, VW Crafter and MAN TGE models, including electric cars, leave the production lines of its plants located in Poznań, Swarzędz and Września. In 2019, the factories manufactured a total of 266.127 vehicles. In addition to car production, Volkswagen Poznań also has a Foundry which ended the past year with 4.2 million produced aluminium components such as cylinder heads, steering gear housings, suspension components and clutch housings. In September 2019, the Foundry began serial production of transmission housing for the modular MEB platform for electric cars. It is the first component from the portfolio of the Poznań Foundry to be built into the electric VW ID.3 model.

The company has been involved in cooperation with the education segment for years. It conducts vocational training programs, hires technical secondary school students for apprenticeships and cooperates with universities by conducting various internships, programs for students or dual studies with the Poznan University of Technology.

One of its more developed initiatives is the process of vocational education at the first-degree industry school level. Starting that cooperation was one of the elements in the preparation of the company to the challenges of the future. In HR terms, it is a long-term strategy meant to ensure a constant supply of successors. In addition, the company not only teaches the profession but also prepares future candidates for work, develops competencies (both technical and soft) which are not included in curricula and develop the students interculturally by organizing exchanges of youth with other countries. Over 15 years, the vocational education process run by the company developed significantly. In the initial phase, only one class was taught while currently there is a separate department for educating students and the classes are mostly taught by practical vocational training instructors delegated exclusively for that assignment.

With respect to vocational education, the company cooperates with two educational institutions. Since 2005, with School Complex no. 1 in Swarzędz and since 2016 with the Polytechnical School Complex in Września. In Swarzędz there are patronage classes in the following professions: mechatronics specialist (since 2005),

electromechanical specialist for motor vehicles (since 2011), operator of foundry machines and devices (since 2012) and automation specialist (since 2012). A precise mechanical engineering class was, in turn, launched in Września (from 2016). At the moment, over 150 students are enrolled in all Volkswagen Poznań's patronage classes. Importantly, all the students are young employees of the company. Since 2008, the company has hired more than 450 graduates of the patronage classes for further work.

Theoretical classes are taught in the schools while the location of practical classes depends on the profession and year of education. First-class students of School Complex No. 1 in Swarzędz are taught their practical classes at school while in the case of first-class students from the Polytechnic School Complex in Września, practical classes are organized at the District Vocational Education Centre in Września. From the second year, the students start practical training programs at the company, in various professional areas connected with the given profession. It is worth pointing out that the company has also made numerous investments in **retrofitting workshops** within the company which are intended solely for the education of students. In the workshops, the students are learning their skills under the supervision of practical vocational instructors. The equipment of the workshops is cyclically modernized and supplemented. It stems from the need to adapt education and acquired competencies to current technological progress and changing competency needs resulting from these changes. Not only do the students acquire a profession and thoroughly familiarize themselves with the responsibilities at a specific job position but also learn about work in the organizational culture defined by Volkswagen Poznań. Courtesy of the partner schools, the students also have the opportunity to acquire language skills, including German at the extended level, which is key to e.g. communication with representatives of Volkswagen Group factories from Germany.

In addition, the best students have the opportunity to take part in **internships and international exchanges** which are organized 1-2 times a year by the schools or 4-5 times a year by Volkswagen Poznań. The foreign internships make it possible to strengthen the development of language and vocational competencies. Depending on the profession and the nature of the exchange, students go to Germany, e.g. Wolfsburg, Hanover, Kassel, Korbach, Berlin or the Czech Republic, e.g. Mladá Boleslav. One of the more interesting and unique exchanges involves work at the Auschwitz Memorial and Museum. It is an exchange program whose purpose is not to acquire professional skills but to deepen historical knowledge, reflect on the past and provide real help to the museum in Oświęcim. During that internship, a Polish-German group of students from various Volkswagen factories, including a group of 10 Polish students, works for almost two weeks at the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum together with full-time employees of the institution.

The education ends with **Polish exams** as well as **German examinations** conducted by the Polish-German Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AHK Polska). Every graduate who passes the exam receives a **certificate** entitling them to practice

in many European countries. After the end of the education process, the graduates can be hired by the company. The best graduate of the year also has the opportunity to participate in the "**Best-Apprentice-Award"** which is an annual international congress of the best graduates from the entire concern as well as the development program "Wanderjahre" (Wanderer) which involves one year's work in a Volkswagen factory abroad.

10.12. WOBIT E.K.J. OBER S.C.

www.wobit.com.pl

WObit is a Polish family company with nearly 30 years of experience in the mechatronic industry which develops and manufactures industrial robots, successfully implementing them in industry. In 2006, thanks to the establishment of a research and development department, the enterprise started intensive work on creating proprietary technologies. As a result of teamwork, WObit designed and produced a series of its own mobile robots called **MOBOT® AGV** which are one of the pillars of the fourth industrial revolution thanks to their ability to remotely communicate with other devices, integrate with a superior system and cooperate with humans. However, WObit's operations encompass much more than just commercial undertakings.

Ever since the company was established, education of youth has been a very important aspect of all its activities and it is something that it pursues consistently and on an ongoing basis. The company supports Polish education by **equipping research laboratories, conducting lectures at universities and organizing training cycles,** giving future engineers the opportunity to gain knowledge and experience during **apprenticeships and internships**. It also sponsors **teams of young designers** who create **innovative solutions such as Mars rovers** as well as **internal combustion and electric race cars** which are successful all over the world. WObit supports and independently organizes events and workshops devoted to robotics. The company also participated in projects connected with the space industry, popularizing and developing that field on the Polish market, e.g. during scientific conference Meet the Space.

Supporting children and youth, inspiring them and helping them acquire knowledge as well as experience and develop their passions is the best investment in creating a knowledge-based economy. An example of such activities is extending patronage over education in the profession of a mechatronics technician at the E. Sczaniecka School Complex in Pniewy.

WObit is based in rural areas in the Pniewy Commune. Members of the local community have the opportunity to learn advanced technologies thanks to the information in local media regarding innovative products of companies and their applications. They also participate in various events (e.g. the event *Polish robots on Earth and in space* which was attended by nearly 1,500 children and youth from the Pniewy Commune in one day), thanks to which they develop an interest in technology and start to perceive technical education as increasingly attractive and an opportunity to get an interesting job. Many years of familiarization with technology and developing an interest in it create the need for educational institutions that will provide the necessary qualifications to young people.

Therefore, from 2006 meetings were held with representatives of local authorities, educational units and enterprises to identify professions which were lacking in the commune. As a result, the first recruitment started in 2017 and at the beginning of 2018 WObit **created and extended patronage over a class in the profession of the mechatronics technician in Pniewy.** However, before that happened, the room was renovated, fitted with appropriate connections and assembly tables which could also serve as ordinary desks. WObit funded part of the equipment for a modern mechatronic workshop, including MLA linear modules and components enabling the construction of stations for learning how to program Cartesian robots and selected teaching equipment necessary for learning the profession. Moreover, the company equipped the room with educational boards enabling young mechatronic experts to consolidate their knowledge. Industrial robots were also lent and the school and the project are promoted on the domestic and international market. Every year, the company actively participates in the promotion of the school during open days and educational fairs. The outcomes are noticeable because, sensing the passion and commitment of specialists from the company, visitors to the WObit stands believe that it is the right place to acquire knowledge in a modern field.

Obtaining qualified teaching staff who could teach the classes turned out to be the biggest difficulty. In the first and second year of educating young mechatronics, the professional staff was exclusively composed of WObit employees who taught the school classes during their working hours. It wasn't until the third year that several teachers were found who teach vocational subjects to the young mechatronics technicians. However, in connection with the fact that there are more and more recruits for that field of study every year, WObit continues to provide support in terms of professional staff (currently 3 teachers).

The students are interested in cooperating with the company. In 2019 all first recruits to that class participated in apprenticeships and also in 2020, the whole class will practice inside Wobit structures. Some of them will also stay with the company for internships.

For example, in 2019 alone, the teaching process at the E. Sczaniecka School Complex in Pniewy involved the following:
– 6 specialists from WObit taught vocational subjects with dedication and passion,

- WObit employees devoted 712 lesson hours to the education of mechatronic technicians at the school,
- 60 students from 3 levels master the knowledge in mechatronics under the supervision of Wobit,
- 12 apprentices gained their first experience inside the company during vocational training programs.

In addition, guest lectures are conducted during which WObit specialists share their knowledge and experience in measurements, drives as well as other areas such as personal development, social competencies, and regulations and laws connected with the GDPR.

It is important for mutual success to maintain relationships and commitment of all the parties (the company, the leading body, the school, students and parents) and to build awareness of the opportunities which young people can gain through cooperation with WObit, which technologies they are dealing with and which national and foreign partners they have access to thanks to that.

The project is very promising and enables further retrofitting of the mechatronic laboratory, attracting new national and international partners, as well as organizing the professional development of vocational teachers or training programs supporting vocational education of technical secondary school students. Last year, WObit initiated contact between the Pniewy Commune and Siemens. The laboratory was enriched with modern educational sets based on PLC controllers and HMI panels. As part of its educational activities, Siemens launched an international program confirming skills in the field of industrial mechatronic systems (Siemens Mechatronic Systems Certification Program) which is conducted based on cooperation with universities around the world, as well as Vocational training at Siemens. Those activities could significantly expand the educational offer of the School Complex in Pniewy in the future.

Given the dedication and enormous commitment (including the devotion of time) from the WObit team, it is worth mentioning another dimension of the project. By participating in the entire education process, they can get to know the students and their parents, students can observe their teachers also at work, and there is nothing more beautiful than seeing them flourish after apprenticeships and catching the proverbial "bug"... .

The initiative enables the development of staff and activation of young people in rural areas which are also close to production plants. The students are guaranteed to acquire practical skills at WObit by working with enthusiasts and then the opportunity to work in professions that suit their qualifications. It will also have a beneficial effect on **lowering unemployment and raising the living standards of members of the local community** who will be able to easily find satisfying jobs.

SUMMARY

The subject matter of the monograph was inspired by numerous group meetings and individual talks with employees in charge of human resource management. The topicality and validity of the issue are also confirmed by numerous articles and research carried out in that field around the world.

The issues discussed in the monograph confirmed the thesis about the extent and complexity of competence management and the need to develop methods and tools to support HR employees. The arrangement of the presented topics reflects the structure of issues arising from the conditions in which enterprises currently operate. The authors wanted to interweave content taken from literature with materials collected during scientific research and work on projects connected with the labour market and vocational education.

Digital transformation applies to all the areas of economic and social life. It also applies to enterprises in which all departments, not just production, have to meet technological challenges. HR professionals face a difficult task: not only do they have to master modern technologies themselves (IT systems, internet applications, e-learning platforms, Big Data, gamification, etc.) but most importantly they need to help other employees enter the cybernetic world.

The future of the labour market presents HR management specialists with new challenges. At the moment, the division into physical and intellectual work gains new importance. Polarization will occur more in the area of existing skills and acquisition of new competencies which are required by the market.

The authors intended to collect issues which are part of everyday work in HR departments with particular emphasis on developmental trends. Therefore, starting the monograph, they began with the **classic functions** in human resource management which will always be the responsibility of the HR department, i.e. employment planning, recruitment and retention and development of staff. Based on the traditional approach, it was shown how HR departments will transform in the future to ensure that the strategic tasks of the company are accomplished.

The second chapter emphasizes **competencies** which are a very extensive and popular notion. Competencies were referred to as a method for **characterizing the features of an employee.** At the same time, **competencies were treated as a resource** and a carrier of the employee's value in marketing terms.

The next chapter developed the notion of **employee competencies** by characterizing selected methods and tools which can be used to **manage competencies in an enterprise**. Examples included **reference models** which are a modern tool enabling a rational use of human resources in an organization.

Chapter four presented the premises justifying the use of **modern technologies** in the recruitment process. The chapter showed the important role of the use of the Internet in recruiters' work, characterized selected recruitment methods and indicated the directions of their development in the future.

The following chapter connected two important aspects of HR work, i.e. **communication and generational diversity** of candidates and employees. It offered a selection of communication tools for selected generations of employees, emphasizing that the efficiency of transmitting and receiving information has to be ensured.

Chapter six described the importance of **organizational culture and Employer Branding** in the recruitment and employee retention processes. Matters such as working conditions, the atmosphere within the team and interpersonal relationships can determine the motivation of employees and job changing decisions.

Given advancing specialization and changing work conditions, individual employees with outstanding competencies can sometimes have an impact on the implementation of strategic objectives. In such situations, one can talk about **employee talent,** hence chapter seven is devoted to how to acquire and then develop employees with above-average abilities.

Will the experience and subjective approach of the recruiter be replaced by cool analytics from the "binary cloud"? Will complex analysis of information resources be an equally important asset of employees as communication competencies? These questions are difficult to answer today but chapter eight attempts to describe the conditions connected with the development of competencies which will be in greatest **demand in the future**.

In chapter ten, the HR management subject matter goes beyond the organization as it describes building relations with the environment. Cooperation with the company's environment, and in particular the transfer of knowledge within **economic and social networks**, provides important support for enterprise management in prioritizing tasks in the company's business model. Building and developing relations with the environment was presented on the example of the **Wielkopolska Educational-and-Economic Network** which was founded on the initiative of the Poznan University of Technology and the Wielkopolska Province Government. Maintaining relationships with the environment should naturally fall within the scope of HR professionals' responsibilities.

The chapter which summarizes all the addressed issues focuses on the presentation of nine case studies from Wielkopolska companies which are particularly involved in the development of competencies of their employees, cooperate for the improvement of the quality of vocational education and at the same time want to share their achievements as part of the transfer of knowledge on innovative HR solutions.

Thanks to the fact that it is characterized by thematic diversity while maintaining consistency of objectives, the content of the ten chapters of the monograph can provide practical support for HR management professionals in enterprises. The good practices presented in the book can also be an inspiration for young people who are beginning to enter the world of organizations of the future.

Marek Goliński, Małgorzata Spychała

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