

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES IN HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT – SELECTED ASPECTS

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«Enterprises that follow the path of sustainable development are called sustainable enterprises. Their activities are determined by sustainable management, an essential part of which is human resources management. Human resources have a vital role in the process of transforming enterprises into sustainable organizations. The most valuable part of that is sustainable personnel, that is highly qualified employees who understand and implement the rules of sustainable growth in the development of their work» [1].

Efficient human resources management in an enterprise is the core of proper functioning of every contemporary organization. However, it is not always possible to fully utilize human potential, which can affect the results of an enterprise in a significant manner. For an appropriate allocation of resources within an organization, it is essential to focus on people who are assigned to performing specific tasks and carrying out strategic goals. That is why working on a given position requires specific skills and qualifications [2].

For an organization to be able to grow efficiently, only theoretical preparation of an employee is not sufficient. It is necessary to develop one's competencies, provide them opportunities for practical experience. In the context of sustainable development, in case of human resources the meaning of the following challenges should be considered: motivation and employee engagement, diversity, competencies of employees, and leadership in the process of management.

The concept of sustainable development in the area of human resources management can be analyzed in many ways, depending on the adopted approach. One of such solutions is the integrated growth concept [3]. Integrated development has two main aspects: external, focused on cooperation with the macro-environment, and internal, concentrated on cooperation of sub-systems within an organization. In case of development, both in the external and internal aspects, human resources are one of the key success factors of a company.

Therefore, human resources require particular attention of the organization. An important challenge for an organization in the context of human resources management is effective motivation of subordinates and the ability to build employee engagement. «Engagement means active participation in certain activities, doing something with eagerness and interest (...). It is important to put an emphasis on the participation of employees in managing the company and on the synergy effect of teamwork» [4].

Motivation and engagement require the fulfillment of employees' needs. Analyzing Maslow's hierarchy of needs [5], one should take into account at which point the needs of employees are fulfilled, and when a conflict of needs or lack of their fulfillment occurs – and that it can result in a decrease of employee motivation and engagement levels. In such situations, it is most appropriate to program the company's growth in such a way that every department and position has motivational and development plans. However, this requires management skills of the organization in the area of another HRM challenge, which is a widely understood diversity.

«Diversity among the members of an organization is a valuable chance and it should be utilized with greater awareness (...). Diversity stimulates productivity and

creativity» [6]. Many authors believe that efficient diversity management requires constant training of employees, proactive approach of managers, openness, flexibility in management and transformational leadership.

An optimal use of human potential nowadays has great influence on the competitive advantage of a company, and quality in the areas of internal and external integrated development. Another challenge is then leadership in the process of management. An efficient leader should understand the needs of an organization and its employees, be able to utilize their competencies and talents in an optimal way, and take care of engaging everyone in fulfilling the vision of future. Leadership requires energy in action, developed interpersonal skills, intercultural competencies and cooperation with people, passion, as well as extraordinary motivation.

It is worth noting that «organizational culture and leadership (...) are factors that stimulate other assets and abilities of a company. Proper organizational culture and leadership facilitate the process of gaining the best employees and make them more eager to fulfil common goals of the organization through their complete engagement» [7].

Following the path of sustainable development becomes a necessity today. Among numerous challenges that modern organizations have to face is also the need to create a habit of continuous improvement on all levels of organizational hierarchy. Human resources management requires multiple skills from managers of the future, such as: ability to changes, openness towards new challenges, innovative and strategic thinking [8].

To summarize, «sustainable personnel is best suited for transforming companies into sustainable enterprises, and such personnel consists of employees (...) efficient in achieving defined goals» [9].

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