

Methods and Techniques Specific to Human Resource Management

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Abstract

The first part of the study presents the contextual and conceptual novelty elements concerning human resources on which this human resource management approach relies. The conceptual novelty element is represented by the comprehensive approach of human resource management (MRU), focused on the relationships of the organisation with internal and external human stakeholders, not limiting to the traditional approach, managers subordinates.

The second part of the paper makes a selection of methods and techniques used in human resource management, grouped on the 14 activities specific to MRU. This ensures a coherent and effective methodological basis for human resource managers and specialists, in agreement with the challenges of the current period of transition to knowledge-based economy.

The last part of the study indicates the methods and the techniques recommended to be used in particular during the eight stages of human resource reengineering.

Keywords: *human resource management, specific human resource management methods, knowledge-based economy, human resources reengineering*

1 Preliminary Considerations

Human resource management is among the fields where managerial practices and theoretical-methodological research have been going through extensive development during the last decades. It is a natural situation, generated mainly by the following **variables**:

- the increase in the training level, the work and the creation potential of human resources, at very high levels, difficult to imagine not very long ago;

- awareness for the decisive impact that human resources have on the functionality of management and the performance of organisations, whatever their branch or size;
- the start of the knowledge revolution, whereby the new economy is made, which “pushes” knowledge and the human resource to the foreground of all economic-social activities, as main generator, holder and user of knowledge.

In the context of this evolution, our study presents **two major novelty elements**.

a) it approaches human resource management with a comprehensive view, of ours, based on the stakeholders’ principle, not limiting to the traditional managers subordonees relationship, which is still necessary and important, but not enough for the complexity shown in a developed economic environment. In figure 1 we present the activities which, in our opinion, make up the human resource field.

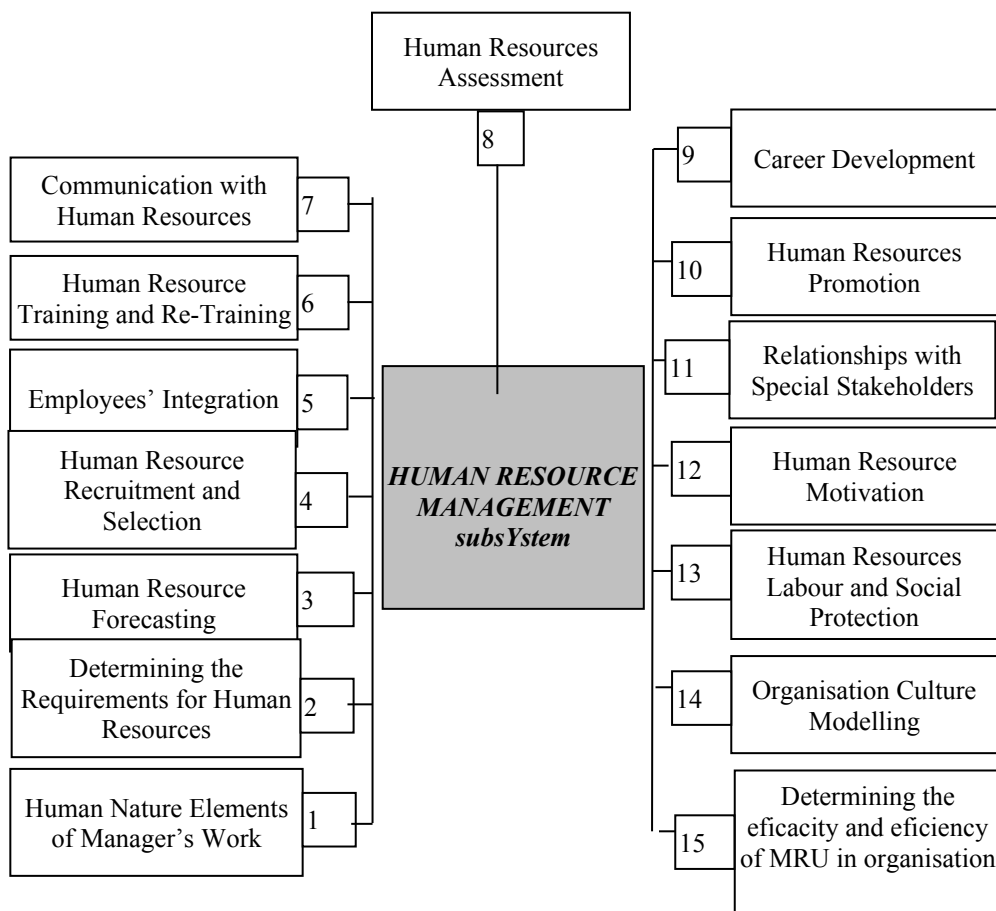


Figure 1 The activities making up the human resources field

b) it makes a selection of methods and techniques grouped on the main human resource activities and the main stages of the human resource management subsystem reengineering. These elements are particularly useful in professionalisation and making efficient human resource management within organisations.

2 The Main Specific Methods and Techniques

The literature and the practice of human resource management use a large number of methods and techniques, particularly varied, coming from psychology, sociology, management, mathematics, statistics, and informatics or from their interface areas. In the following table we present a **selection of methods and techniques** which focused on the most frequently used and/or effective in the professional management of modern enterprises, grouped on the human resource field activities, as previously established.

Methods and techniques grouped on human resource activities

Table 1

| Current No. | Activity | Methods, Techniques and Procedures |
|-------------|--|---|
| 1 | Determining the requirements for human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ jobs analysis ▪ workday tasks analysis ▪ instantaneous observation ▪ time recording ▪ workday shooting ▪ standard administrative times ▪ work standards determination ▪ the scenario ▪ extrapolation ▪ the correlation coefficient ▪ physical and/or value work productivity ▪ the “critical incidents” method |
| 2 | Forecasting the requirements for human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the dynamics of the size and structure of market demand for the company’s products ▪ the dynamics of the size and structure of market offer for the company’s products ▪ the forecasts on company’s branch of activity ▪ the forecasts on the evolution of national economy ▪ the dynamics of the company’s turnover ▪ the dynamics of the production ▪ productivity dynamics ▪ trends analysis ▪ the regression method ▪ the Delphi method ▪ the business plan |

| Current No. | Activity | Methods, Techniques and Procedures |
|-------------|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the Gantt chart ▪ staff fluctuation index ▪ the extrapolation of the current human resource number and structure ▪ the retirement index ▪ investment value per workplace ▪ investment value for the next period |
| 3 | Recruiting and selecting human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ human resource selection model ▪ general knowledge tests ▪ specific knowledge tests by field, positions etc. ▪ skills tests (distributed attention, communication, negotiation etc.) ▪ qualities tests (intelligence, memory, reaction time, a.s.o.) ▪ personality tests ▪ practical exam ▪ projects elaboration ▪ case study ▪ writing papers ▪ interview ▪ questionnaire ▪ personnel file ▪ C.V. ▪ studies diploma ▪ recommendations from former managers |
| 4 | Integrating employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ individual labour contract ▪ labour protection seminar ▪ orientation discussion between the department manager and the new employee ▪ company's organigram ▪ description of the job assigned ▪ the organisation and operation handbook of the organisation ▪ the internal regulation of the company ▪ the manager presenting the new employee to the compartment colleagues ▪ specific work instructions to the job ▪ methodologies in the new employee's field of activity ▪ celebrating the new employee's special days (birthday, name day etc.) |
| 5 | Training human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ individual study ▪ bachelor's degree ▪ master's degree ▪ doctor's degree ▪ vocational schools ▪ workplace apprenticeship ▪ panel ▪ case study |

| Current No. | Activity | Methods, Techniques and Procedures |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ studying specialty papers ▪ presentation ▪ demonstration ▪ elaboration of specific projects ▪ specialized training ▪ job rotation ▪ research project ▪ managerial simulation ▪ managerial game ▪ the incidence method ▪ information seminar ▪ referring to specialty sites ▪ quality, skill and knowledge tests ▪ continue learning ▪ update training programme ▪ requalification programme ▪ information and documentation visits in other companies ▪ participating to specialty conferences, congresses etc. ▪ delegation ▪ coaching ▪ mentoring ▪ sensitivity training ▪ in “basket” method |
| 6 | Communicating with human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ information, coordination, decision, complex meeting etc. ▪ e-mail ▪ “four eyes” discussion between manager-subordinate ▪ written notice ▪ written communication ▪ balanced scorecard ▪ set of instructions on certain activities ▪ the organisation’s “newspaper” ▪ panel with the performers within the organisation ▪ annual letter of the CEO (or of the organisation’s manager) to the employees |
| 7 | Human resource assessment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 360 assessment ▪ assessment interview ▪ work productivity ▪ management by objectives ▪ the diagnostic analysis ▪ notation ▪ overall assessment ▪ functional evaluation ▪ the (assessment) case method ▪ self-assessment test ▪ assessment test ▪ graphic scale for classifying human qualities |

| Current No. | Activity | Methods, Techniques and Procedures |
|-------------|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ mixed standard scale of human qualities ▪ the essay method ▪ the critical incidents method ▪ the behaviours checklist method ▪ human resource assessment centre |
| 8 | Career development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ job analysis ▪ career plan ▪ organigram ▪ mentoring ▪ tutoring ▪ coaching* |
| 9 | Human resource promotion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ granting gradations and stages within the same job ▪ incumbency within a participative managerial body ▪ inclusion in a scientific, consulting body etc. dealing with major objectives and/or issues in the company ▪ job description ▪ list of positions |
| 10 | Relationships with special stakeholders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ inviting stakeholders to visit the organisation ▪ stakeholders inclusion in the company's participative managerial body ▪ stakeholders' participation to the celebration of major events in the organisation ▪ continuously informing stakeholders on the special events within the organisation ▪ sending cards, gifts etc. to stakeholders on the occasion of the main holidays, of certain special personal events for them etc. ▪ offering financial incentives to stakeholders (bonuses, commissions, premiums, discounts etc.) for major contributions in obtaining the economic performances of the organisation ▪ stakeholders' sponsorship by the company ▪ important stakeholders' participation to the company's capital increases |
| 11 | Motivating human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ listen and answer technique ▪ positive verbal feedback ▪ negative verbal feedback ▪ job extension ▪ job enrichment ▪ salary ▪ hourly rate ▪ bonus ▪ gratification ▪ profit sharing |

* The methods and the techniques specified for human resource training and re-training activities are quasi-totally added hereto.

| Current No. | Activity | Methods, Techniques and Procedures |
|-------------|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ shares received free of charge or at a preferential price ▪ salary penalty ▪ financial imputation ▪ fine ▪ verbal or written thank you ▪ praise ▪ critics ▪ warning ▪ reprimand and/or invective ▪ honorific titles ▪ medal ▪ ceremony for certain people or events ▪ panel of performances ▪ displacement dwelling ▪ work mobile ▪ treatment ticket ▪ trip organised by the company |
| 12 | Human resource labour and social protection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ labour protection training ▪ labour protection and safety standards ▪ minimum salary ▪ salary indexation ▪ individual labour contract ▪ unemployment compensation ▪ collective labour contract ▪ dialog social meetings ▪ trade union ▪ enterprise committee ▪ negotiation ▪ conciliation ▪ mediation ▪ arbitration ▪ (warning, repeated, revolving, surprise, workplace occupation etc.) strike |
| 13 | Modelling the organisational culture* | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ organisational culture audit ▪ organisational transformation ▪ new stories ▪ new myths ▪ new rituals ▪ new ceremonies ▪ case study ▪ employee role change ▪ employee status remodelling ▪ formal organisational norm ▪ organisational norm |

* This includes also the quasi-totality of the methods, techniques and procedures for training, promoting and motivating human resources.

| Current No. | Activity | Methods, Techniques and Procedures |
|-------------|---|--|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ informal sociogram ▪ the Lundberg model ▪ the Schein model ▪ remythologisation ▪ leadership |
| 14 | The efficiency of using human resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ (physical, value, conventional unit) work productivity per employee ▪ salary costs for 1000 lei turnover ▪ staff costs for 1000 lei turnover ▪ average profit per employee ▪ dividend per share ▪ company's share value |

3 The Use of Methods and Techniques During the Redesign of the Human Resource Management Subsystem

It is particularly important to **establish the use of these methods during the eight stages of the human resource management subsystem redesign process**. To satisfy this need we elaborated table 2 where we integrated the methods most frequently used in redesigning the human resource management subsystem.

The use of specific human resource management methods and techniques in the human resource management subsystem redesign stages

Table 2

| Current no. | Method or technique | Stages | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| | | Outlining the design team | Clearly establishing objectives to reach and the scope of the project | Elaborating the subsystem redesign programme | Analysing the human resource management subsystem | Designing the human resource management subsystem | Elaborating the specific programme for implementing the human resource management project | Implementing the human resource management subsystem | Assessing the functionality and the performances of the new subsystem |
| 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 1 | Job analysis | x | x | | x | | x | x | x |
| 2 | Job description | | | | x | x | | x | |
| 3 | Workday tasks analysis | | | | x | | | | x |
| 4 | Instantaneous observation | | | | x | | | | x |
| 5 | Work standards | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 6 | The scenario technique | | x | | | x | | | |
| 7 | Work productivity | | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| 8 | Turnover dynamics | | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| 9 | Physical production dynamics | | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| 10 | Trends analysis | | x | | x | x | | | |
| 11 | Investment value per workplace | | | | x | x | | | x |
| 12 | Investment value for the following | | | | x | x | | | x |

| Current no. | Method or technique | Stages | | | | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| | | Outlining the design team | Clearly establishing objectives to reach and the scope of the project | Elaborating the subsystem redesign programme | Analysing the human resource management subsystem | Designing the human resource management subsystem | Elaborating the specific programme for implementing the human resource management project | Implementing the human resource management subsystem | Assessing the functionality and the performances of the new subsystem |
| 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | period | | | | | | | | |
| 13 | The Delphi method | | x | | | x | | | |
| 14 | Gantt Chart | | | x | | x | x | x | x |
| 15 | Business plan | | x | | | x | x | | |
| 16 | Knowledge tests | | | | x | x | x | | x |
| 17 | Skills tests | | | | x | x | x | | x |
| 18 | Qualities tests | | | | x | x | x | | x |
| 19 | Personality tests | | | | x | x | x | | x |
| 20 | Case study | | | | x | x | x | x | x |
| 21 | Interview | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 22 | Questionnaire | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 23 | C.V. | x | | | x | x | | | |
| 24 | Organisation and operation handbook | | | x | x | x | | x | x |
| 25 | Internal regulation | | | x | x | x | | x | x |
| 26 | Organigram | | | x | x | x | | x | x |
| 27 | Training programme | | | | | | x | x | |
| 28 | Re-qualification programme | | | | | | x | x | |
| 29 | Specialisation | | | | | | x | x | |

| Current no. | Method or technique | Stages | | | | | | | |
|-------------|--|---------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| | | Outlining the design team | Clearly establishing objectives to reach and the scope of the project | Elaborating the subsystem redesign programme | Analysing the human resource management subsystem | Designing the human resource management subsystem | Elaborating the specific programme for implementing the human resource management project | Implementing the human resource management subsystem | Assessing the functionality and the performances of the new subsystem |
| 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | training | | | | | | | | |
| 30 | Job rotation | | | | | | x | x | |
| 31 | Quality circle | | | | | | x | x | |
| 32 | Managerial simulation | | | | | x | | x | |
| 33 | Managerial game | | | | | | | x | |
| 34 | Information seminar | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 35 | Sites specialised on human resource management | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 36 | Professional conferences, congresses etc. | | | | x | x | | | |
| 37 | Tutoring | | | | | x | | x | |
| 38 | Coaching | | | | | x | | x | |
| 39 | Mentoring | | | | | x | | x | |
| 40 | Meeting | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 41 | E-mail | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 42 | Written communication | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 43 | Balanced scorecard | | | | x | x | x | x | x |

| Current no. | Method or technique | Stages | | | | | | | |
|-------------|--|---------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| | | Outlining the design team | Clearly establishing objectives to reach and the scope of the project | Elaborating the subsystem redesign programme | Analysing the human resource management subsystem | Designing the human resource management subsystem | Elaborating the specific programme for implementing the human resource management project | Implementing the human resource management subsystem | Assessing the functionality and the performances of the new subsystem |
| 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| 44 | 360° assessment | | | | x | x | | x | |
| 45 | Management by objectives | | | | x | x | | x | |
| 46 | Checklist | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 47 | Career plan | | | | x | x | | x | |
| 48 | List of jobs | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 49 | Job description | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 50 | Informing stakeholders on special events in the organisation | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 51 | Listen and answer technique | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 52 | Verbal feedback | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 53 | Job extension | | | | | x | | x | x |
| 54 | Job enhancement | | | | | x | | x | x |
| 55 | Salary | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 56 | Bonus | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 57 | Profit sharing | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 58 | Verbal and/or written thanks | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 59 | Praise | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 60 | Critics | x | x | x | x | x | x | x | x |
| 61 | Performers' | | | | | x | | x | x |

| Current no. | Method or technique | Stages | | | | | | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---------------------------|---|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| | | Outlining the design team | Clearly establishing objectives to reach and the scope of the project | Elaborating the subsystem redesign programme | Analysing the human resource management subsystem | Designing the human resource management subsystem | Elaborating the specific programme for implementing the human resource management project | Implementing the human resource management subsystem | Assessing the functionality and the performances of the new subsystem |
| 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | panel | | | | | | | | |
| 62 | Labour protection regulations | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 63 | Organisational culture audit | | | | x | | | | x |
| 64 | Organisational transformation | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 65 | Remythologisation | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 66 | Formal organisational norms | | | | x | x | | x | x |
| 67 | The Schein model | | | | | x | | x | x |
| 68 | The Lundberg model | | | | | x | | x | x |
| 69 | Salary costs for 1000 lei turnover | | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| 70 | Labor costs for 1000 lei turnover | | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| 71 | Average profit per employee | | x | | x | x | | x | x |
| 72 | Company's share value | | x | | x | x | | x | x |

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