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## Motivating, Caring for Employee Development and Employer Branding in Diverse Companies during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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**Abstract:**

**Purpose:** The subject of the considerations of this article is the implementation of selected functions in the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic. The article aims to identify changes caused by the pandemic in selected HR functions, i.e., motivating, training and caring for employee development as well as employer branding activities, based on research (in-depth interviews) conducted among HR specialists, employee specialists, and company owners, in enterprises diversified in terms of industry and size, in Poland.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:** The study consists of two parts: theoretical one, in which the author presents the literature on the subject, and empirical, discussing the research technique and the results obtained as a result of its application. Twenty-three people from twenty-three companies of different sizes and sectors took part in the research, using the in-depth interview technique.

**Findings:** As a result of the research, it turned out that the specialists and company owners participating in the study indicated various forms of motivation used in their enterprises, i.e. strengthening the sense of security, employment and health through a system of communicating with employees, flexible working hours, increasing the decision-making autonomy of employees, offering gadgets which, due to various conditions (e.g., the size and financial condition of the company), did not always appear or appeared to a lesser extent. The situation was similar regarding the training offered, where apart from training related to IT competences, training offered to the management in appreciating employees deserves attention.

**Practical implications:** The care of most companies for the image of a friendly employer branding, which can be treated as a manifestation of increasing awareness of the importance of caring for the brand, and creating a positive image is positively surprising.

**Originality/value:** The issues addressed in the paper are important from utilitarian point of view as pandemic made the methods and approaches used before no longer effective and efficient in many cases.

**Keywords:** Motivating process, employee development, employer branding, COVID-19.

**JEL codes:** M2, J54.

**Paper type:** Research article.

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## **1. Introduction**

The subject of the considerations of this article is the implementation of selected functions in the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic. The article aims to identify changes in selected HR functions, i.e., motivating, training and caring for employee development as well as activities undertaken as part of employer branding, on the basis of research (in-depth interviews) conducted among HR specialists, employee specialists and company owners, in various areas in terms of the industry and size of enterprises in Poland. The pandemic period in general is not only major public health problems, but cause devastating socioeconomic and political situations in affected countries. Covid-19, aside from being the biggest threat to global public health in the century, is seen as a symbol of inequity and lack of socioeconomic progress. Loss of life due to any pandemic causes substantial irretrievable damage to the society at large. Yet, aside from that, Covid-19 has seriously demobilized the world economy and in a narrower sense, the functioning of organizations and individual employees. (Diaz-Carrion *et al.*, 2021).

To prevent further spread of the disease in the population, all the infected countries have agreed to undergo full closure. In almost all the countries affected by Covid-19, all educational, economic, sports and spiritual facilities are closed. Industries are struggling a lot as all of them, except those connected to basic services, have been closed for a long time in many countries. Workers in the travel and shipping industries are also faced with the biggest difficulties. The amount of output has gone poor. The economy of many so-called strong countries is now at risk of high inflation (Robbins, 2016) and<sup>3</sup> rising unemployment because of lack of investment and unsustainable spending on the care and recovery of victims of Covid-19 and their families<sup>4</sup>.

## **2. Changes in HRM Functions during the Pandemic Time**

One of the important functions of HR in pandemic time is pandemic to ensure the increase in level of satisfaction of employees This increases the retention of those employees and brings about the eagerness to work further without fear of the pandemic. This result would be successful for businesses in the present time frame as well as in the rest of the world, as the influence of Covid-19 is currently expanding through every single economy in the world (Przytuła *et al.*, 2020). It is advised that HR managers play their position with patience and commitment, so that workers can be retained for a long period of time. The respondents of research carried out have noted that significant and timely steps should have been taken by the Government to resolve these issues (Wassem *et al.*, 2019). Another researched had expressed that staff supportive measures may have been utilized by the Government and the Workplaces to reduce the negative effects of the Pandemic of Covid-19 and to make staff happier and more profitable. Many of the big companies that have had a huge influence because of pandemic are airline, automobiles, oil and gas

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<sup>3</sup>What Studies Reveal About Social Distancing and Remote Working During Coronavirus, <https://www.Forbes.com/sites/bryanrobinson/2020/04/04/what-7-studies-show-about-social-distancing-and-remote-working-during-Covid-19/#1bfe20ca757e>, Accessed on 24.04.2020.

<sup>4</sup>OECD Interim Economic Assessment, Coronavirus: the world economy at risk. <https://oecd.org/economicoutlook>, Accessed on 02.03.2020.

sectors (Quaedackers *et al.*, 2020). The Covid-19 pandemic has given rise to advances in training, recruiting and on-boarding, from verifications to pairing furloughed employees with vacant vacancies in related firms. A panel of HR experts shared their lessons learned from working in this emerging reality, as well as other talent retention techniques.

There were numerous changes in HRM functions because of the pandemic. Major changes in the planning, recruitment and selection techniques are discussed. E-recruitment is a modern recruitment method, both internally and externally, for any company that is looking to attract productive workers through enhanced social media activity. Social media offers an online approach for the end-to-end recruiting process, from the necessity to recruit to the appointment of a qualified candidate. E-recruitment, also known as online (Butterick and Charlwood, 2021; Harris, 2013).

### 3. Changes in Motivation Systems

As all the organizations are taking up work remotely, it has been a great challenge for the HR managers to induce motivation at the stressful situation. Even with the stressful conditions, HR managers have taken up the initiative to keep the employees motivated. They send out newsletters about managing to work at home and enhancing work life balance. According to Saad *et al.* (2021) the employees stay motivated through constant communication. Weekly meeting about improving the skills and making the work at home facility more adaptable are done by the managers<sup>5</sup>. Recognizing good work and appreciating them in video conferences motivates employees in tough times. Making sure that the team follows necessary safety conditions during pandemic by communicating about the precautions, paying attention to the vital role of employee praise<sup>6</sup>.

All these practices are identified as factors that motivate people during the tough period of pandemic. Flexibility in working hours and mutual understanding of shifts in work if the employee feels sick are also factors that motivate people in the organization at times of Covid-19. Sharing employee success, stories and trusting the employee by giving them the power of deciding, and appreciating employees also motivate the employees further (Zhong *et al.*, 2021). Organizations need to concentrate on workers' feelings linked to the corona virus pandemic to restore morale and expand on employee engagement. HR should encourage managers in various departments to help them collaborate more with their team during the tough time.

They should foster employees by paying attention to their needs of support and try to build the team by promoting dialogue for better mutual understanding. HR managers should emphasize on recognizing the employees' efforts during the pandemic time.

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<sup>5</sup>How to Keep Your Team Motivated, remotely <https://hbr.org/2020/04/how-to-keep-your-team-motivated-remotely>, Accessed on 09. 09. 2020.

<sup>6</sup>COVID-19 impact: Effective performance management in the new normal<https://yourstory.com/2020/07/Covid-19-employees-performance-management-hr-organisation-role>, Accessed on 02.09.2020.

Thus, by doing all these the reinforcement of organization values tends to reduce any type of misconduct especially during the tough times<sup>7</sup>.

#### **4. Changes in Training and Development**

As of the beginning of the pandemic, nearly four billion people around the world have been advised to remain in their homes in a continuing attempt to slow down the spread of COVID-19. It goes without saying that the actions we are (rightly) taking to contain this virus have meant major damage to industries in every industry. For weeks, workers of all but the “essential” firms have been operating from home, prompting corporations to transition to 100 percent remote work, if they wish to continue to run. Regardless of that remote work was already on the rise before the pandemic hit, many companies that considered the practice to be impractical or inconvenient must adapt<sup>8</sup>. Many companies have adapted the following changes and pretty much sums up the practices accepted at various organizations. Some of them have decided to have a Covid-19 response team.

This team corresponds to build a cross-functional response and was made up of stakeholders from all different stakeholder groups to create a holistic image of learning offerings, and how to adapt them to this changing because of the Covid-19 pandemic. These include HR business owners, Learning-Delivery employees, IT and platform technologists, and vendors. Adaptations are included by creating a daily operational cadence and integrate activity with the larger Covid19 response initiative of the organization. Companies establish simple decision points and be open on the conditions for canceling or deferring a service, or who will make a call. Companies gather the whole team on how to convey these decisions – for example, globally or geographically.

In person programs for employees have certain changes in the companies. In person training (Saad *et al.*, 2021) for employees are scheduled timely with precautions such as wearing a mask, social distancing, alternatives to hands shaking and improved cleaning and sanitization procedures are followed in companies. People involved in remote training are provided emails for making themselves aware about the video conferencing tools and cloud-based sharing of documents.

Companies are making sure that the virtual training and learning is not only stopped at preaching, but a continuous effort to follow up, resolve technical issues and guidance on adapting to systemic changes are communicated by the HR team for a successful online session of training<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> *Coronavirus: How to Help Managers Maintain Employee Performance and Engagement* <https://www.chrone.lu/actualites/coronavirus-how-help-managers-maintain-employeeperformance-and-engagement>.

<sup>8</sup> *Learning & Development from a Distance, During COVID-19 and beyond.* <https://www.quantifiedcommunications.com/blog/remote-learning-and-development-Covid-19>.

<sup>9</sup> *Adapting workplace learning in the time of coronavirus,* <https://www.mckinsey.com/~media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/McKinsey%20Accelerate/Our%20Insights/Adapting%20workplace%20learning%20in%20the%20time%20of%20coronavirus/Adapting-workplace-learning-in-the-time-ofcoronavirus-vF.Ashx>.

## 5. Changes in Employer Branding

Martin *et al.* (2011, pp. 3618-3619) define employer brand as “*a generalized recognition for being known among key stakeholders for providing a high-quality employment experience, and a distinctive organizational identity which employees value, engage with and feel confident and happy to promote to others*”. Employer branding has always been an important function of HR department. In activities undertaken by companies, communication with internal and external clients is particularly important. With the outbreak of corona virus there are major changes in employer branding. It is necessary for companies to showcase how they create a Covid-19 friendly environment in their organization. This is done by creating a Covid-19 friendly employer brand which seems to be the important motto of companies in 2020-2021.

There are four important changes in employer branding which are:

1. If an organization publishes job offers on-line, this information should be complete, and therefore have complete information about the employer's expectations, the competences of the future employee and his duties.
2. On the other hand, the publication by the company of information about the freezing of admission to work does not inspire confidence in the employer<sup>10</sup>, therefore it would be more beneficial to provide information about the expected time of resuming recruitment on-line.<sup>11</sup>
3. Another factor that helps in maintaining and building a brand is diversity management against any discrimination and exclusion. During a pandemic, this is of particular importance to maintain employee confidence. The currently conducted research has shown that about 70% of employees looking for a job indicate that pursuing an equality policy is particularly important for the future employer<sup>12</sup>. It is about paying attention to fair and equal treatment of all employees, regardless of gender, race, health, and sexual orientation.
4. In addition, it is important to point out to employees the benefits of remote work as an element contributing to maintaining social distance<sup>13</sup>, introducing flexibility in the organization, allowing for one employee to be replaced by another, and the implementation of flexible working time (Gartner, 2020).

The last important element of the employer branding strategy is supporting candidates to work in the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic, which takes the form of not only concern

<sup>10</sup> *Now is the time to earn employees trust* <https://www.docebo.com/blog/employee-motivation-covid-19/>, Accessed on 10.09.2020.

<sup>11</sup> *Employer Branding Strategies for the COVID Era* <https://hrdailyadvisor.blr.com/2020/07/02/employer-branding-strategies-for-the-covid-era/>, Accessed on 15.09.2020.

<sup>12</sup> *Supporting people and companies to deal with the COVID-19 virus: Options for an immediate employment and social-policy response* <https://www.OECD.org/coronavirus/policy-responses/supporting-people-and-companies-to-deal-with-the-Covid-19-virus-options-for-an-immediate-employment-and-social-policy-response-d33dffe6/> Accessed on 12.09.2020.

<sup>13</sup> *What Studies Reveal About Social Distancing And Remote Working During Coronavirus.* <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bryanrobinson/2020/04/04/what-7-studies-show-about-social-distancing-and-remote-working-during-Covid-19/#1bfe20ca757e>, Accessed on 24.04.2020

for health, e.g., by offering health insurance for them, but e.g., the possibility of offering immediate employment to people dismissed due to the pandemic if it is possible (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2020).

## **5. Research Methodology**

The research was carried out in two stages. The aim of the first stage was to select the HRM functions that the specialists and company owners participating in the research considered important in the situation of the Covid-19 pandemic. The condition for classifying certain functions was the consent of at least 12 people (> 50% of participants). The functions considered requiring special adaptation to the changed conditions were the incentive system along with possible actions taken to protect employee health, employee training and improvement, actions taken as part of employer branding. As suggested by Patton (1980), the instructions for the interview (questionnaire) included the following questions:

- (Experience / behavior questions),
- Opinion / value questions,
- Background / Demographic questions.

This article analyzes the answers to selected questions concerning standards and procedures functioning in the organization, the modifications of which were considered the most important by the respondents in the time of the pandemic. These procedures included the assessment of the usefulness and validity of the trainings organized, the system of motivating care for ensuring the health of employees as well as activities aimed at maintaining a positive brand of the employee also as an employer (employer branding):

1. What are the motivation systems induced during COVID-19 to retain employees? What types did your organization implement? Please, rate this strength on 1-5?
2. Do you have any trainings in your organization during COVID-19 time? What about with trainings strategy in your organization and employees' career in the difficult time? Please, rate this type of activity on 1-5?
3. How would you rate the role of employer branding in a pandemic world? How has your company implemented the changes in branding with respect to COVID-19? Please, rate this type of activity on 1-5?

The selection of people for the research was deliberate. The condition for participation in the research was the consent of individual specialists. A total of 23 people participated in the research: 9 HR specialists, 7 employee specialists and 7 business owners. There were 13 women and 10 men among the respondents. The mean age of the in-depth interview participants was 42.8 years. The respondents came from 4 large companies, 12 medium-sized companies and 5 small companies, from the service, trade and service and production industries (with advanced technology)<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Due to the lack of consent regarding the use of information about the company's industry in research, this information will not be included in further analysis.

## 6. Findings

The statements included in Table 1 indicate a diversified approach of specialists to the issue of changes in the incentive system in their own company in a pandemic situation. Due to the assigned points, the statements were classified into specific categories: positive (5 points), partially positive (3-4 points) and not very positive (less than 3 points) or, respectively, very positive, positive, and neutral.

**Table 1.** Assessment of changes in the motivating system

O.N.	Assessment of changes	Characteristics of changes	Characteristic of research participants	Cited statements
1	Assessment of changes	<p>Positive assessment of the changes The employer tries to make employers feel safe both in terms of employment and health.</p> <p>The employer offers flexible working hours</p> <p>The employer increases the autonomy and decision-making possibilities of selected employees</p>	<p>HR specialist, male, 35 years old in a medium-sized company</p> <p>HR specialist, 47 years old, woman, large company</p> <p>HR specialist, woman 40 years old, medium-sized company</p> <p>HR specialist, woman 28 years old, large company</p>	<p>"It is impossible to complain, in our company we informed employees that despite the pandemic, no one would be dismissed, although the financial condition ..." We try to limit direct contacts between our employees and customers ... even though it reduces the turnover in our company ..."</p> <p>"Our employees working remotely received from us health pillows stimulating circulation during remote work ....."</p> <p>"Covid was" useful "to my employees, because finally ... we have, I think that this is how flexible working hours will remain ... It could have been introduced earlier, but our superiors were very afraid of it ... "</p> <p>What has changed for good next to the gadgets they send us, I think the procedures in the area of communication have changed. It is not that an employee has to address his manager with each decision ... of course, this applies to selected employees, most often specialists, but this was not the case before the pandemic</p>
2	Neutral assessment of changes	<p>The employer does not take any action other than before the pandemic.</p>	<p>Employee specialist, woman 52 years old, medium-sized company</p> <p>Small business owner, male, 58 years old</p>	<p>"There is nothing wrong with us, we do not scare our employees with dismissal, although if the situation does not change, we do not exclude such a possibility ..."</p> <p>"Our financial situation is good so far, but I don't see any need to change anything during Covid ..."</p>

				We are a workplace, not a social welfare ... here people come to work ... “
3	Not very positive assessment of the changes	The employer introduces an atmosphere of competition and threat, pointing to the need to make layoffs	HR specialist, male, 43 years old, medium-sized company  Employee specialist, woman 39 years old, a big company	“We cannot hide our heads in the sand ... Employees should know that they will lose their jobs if they fail to fulfill their obligations. Only the better ones can stay in a situation that is ...”  "We have no place for unproductive people, and in the time of a pandemic, employees should know that they can be dismissed at any time, even though we give severance pay ....."

*Source: Own research.*

In the statements classified as positive by experts, some people emphasized that their companies pay attention to maintaining the sense of employment security and health security among employees. Others pointed to "specific good practices" expressed in offering employees specific gadgets useful in remote work.

Among the analyzed statements, both included, and not included in the table above, concerning changes in the motivating system, it is difficult to arbitrarily comment on the relationship between the size of the company and the introduction of changes in the motivation system caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, but it is not excluded that in a quantitative procedure, conducted on a larger research sample, such a relationship could be ascertained. In the statements of other respondents, among the gadgets offered to employees there were: camera covers, mice with coasters, coffee cups keeping warm. The most interesting, however, seem to be the changes relating to the applicable communication procedures, forms of work (flexible working hours) and, indirectly, the company's organizational culture. Thus, in some cases, the modifications introduced seem to break stereotypical procedures, replacing them with new ones that meet employee expectations, regardless of the Covid -19 pandemic.

As indicated by the statements of specialists and business owners, not all employers modified the incentive system during the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of them, regardless of their age, seem to be conservative, assuming perhaps, because of the pandemic situation, that employees should be glad that they have a job at all. As was the case with the assessment of changes in the motivation system, the employees participating in the interview expressed various opinions about the involvement of their companies in optimizing the competences of their employees by organizing additional training during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Obviously, specialists emphasized the important role of training both in terms of health safety and career development (Table 2). Others pointed to the company's concern for the development of media competences of its employees due to remote work. However, it is worrying that some specialists admitted that their company, in the time of the pandemic, does not organize and do not offer any training to its employees.



**Table 2.** Assessment of changes in the scope of training offered (in terms of health safety and career development)

O.N.	Evaluation of training	Characteristics of the training offered	Characteristic of research participants	Cited statements
1.	Very positive	Companies provided employees with links to trainings to improve the mental well-being of employees, offered communication trainings and bought language courses	Employee specialist, woman, 43 years old big company  HR specialist, male, 35 years old in a medium-sized company.  Employee specialist, woman 45 years old, medium-sized company	"In our company, we constantly send our employees links to anti-stress training, which has turned out to improve the well-being of many of them."  "From time to time, we have a longer or shorter on-line language course for which we pay"  "For a week now, our employees have had interesting communication skills training so that they do not waste valuable time and think about the threat "
2.	Positive	Companies provided links to webinars that facilitated remote work.	Employee specialist, male 35 years old, average company  Employee specialist, woman, 55 years old average company  Employee specialist, woman 32 years old, large company	"During the time we are experiencing, we try to provide our employees with all possible access to training that improves their media qualifications and the possibility of using new applications that are constantly being improved, although we do not prepare them ourselves".  "We have a computer scientist, he helps us, but he is so overloaded with his daily work that we do not expect him to prepare training ... We want him to find links to effective and free training ..."  "In our company, the management staff was directed to training in the field of communication of other social competences, in particular teaching the techniques of appreciating the employee ... If we cannot afford other forms of gratification, in my opinion, let them at least praise their employees ... which improves the well-being"
3.	Neutral	The companies did not offer any new training	Male small business owner, 59 years old  Employee specialist, male,	"We rarely train, unless there is a special need ... we are a small company, our budget is limited, we have to think how to survive ... now we did not organize any additional training ... I know that employees need such trainings because most of them work remotely ... some of them feel insecure ... but they have to cope by themselves ..."  In our company, we generally do not avoid training, but we do not see the need to organize them exactly as the competition does ... If we

			38, medium company	decide that it is necessary ... then we will organize such training ".
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Source: Own research.

**Table 3.** Assessment of activities undertaken as part of employer branding during the Covid-19 Pandemic

O.N.	Assessment of activities undertaken as part of employer branding	Characteristics of actions taken	Research participants characteristic	Cited statements
1.	Positive evaluation of activities	The companies tried to satisfy the employees 'and potential job applicants' sense of job security or the existence of such a possibility	Employee specialist, woman 32 years old, large company  Employee specialist, male 35 years old, average company  Employee specialist, woman, 43 years old big company	"We have a policy of retaining employees as much as possible, although it is not easy .. From time to time we realize that we have to say goodbye to some of them ..."  "We never communicate in the media that due to the covid, we have stopped recruiting online, even though this is the case. Rather, we encourage graduates to apply with us. "  "We emphasize that young women who are likely to have children with us receive the same salary and, above all, have the same chances of being promoted ... Now, as the Covid is, we try to offer the chosen ones favorable forms of health and life insurance."
2.	Neutral evaluation of activities	The company does not take any special measures to ensure employment security for its employees and to reduce their level of risk in the pandemic.	Small business owner, male 52 years old	"We do not have fireworks, we do not try to show that nothing changes during the coronavirus ... We do not know whether we will keep employment until next month ... about working time ... "  "We also expect commitment from employees, but we assume that the good and loyal will know what to do themselves, we do not buy gadgets for them, but we do not scare our employees..."
3.	Not very positive evaluation of activities	The company sees no need and is not "interested" in taking any action in the area of employer branding.	Owner, 49, male, small business	"Our company's situation is uncertain, we do not hide it. We are not trying to "beautify" our situation. Unfortunately, there are dismissal decisions that we do not communicate before... "

Source: Own study.

The obtained data, in contrast to the incentive system, indicate a greater frequency in the field of organized and shared training in the case of large and medium-sized enterprises than in the case of small enterprises.

When analyzing the statements of specialists relating to the actions taken by enterprises to take care of their image, as a friendly employer, we observe their diversified attitude to such activities and the assessment of their needs. Contrary to the evaluation of the motivation system, one can observe the coexistence of negative assessments of the care for the company's image and undertaken actions with the company's size.

Contrary to large and medium-sized enterprises, owners of small businesses, as in the case of organizing and sharing training courses, did not see the need for consciously undertaken communication and shaping employer branding. This situation may result from both the decline in the financial condition of small businesses, caused by the limited economy during the pandemic, and the awareness of owners' attitudes, treating such activities as "unnecessary luxury".

## 7. Summary, Discussion, and Conclusions

The data obtained in relation to individual HR functions indicate different conditions relating to the assessment of changes in the adjustment of the incentive system during the pandemic period. Thus, regardless of the small size of the studied sample, it was not possible to observe the relationship between the size of the enterprise and the introduction of (positive) changes to the employee motivation system.

The obtained data confirmed the previously identified significant role of training in a situation of uncertainty of the virus (Fletcher *et al.*, 2018), and the threat of the Covid-19, when most employees work remotely (Stuard *et al.*, 2021). However, both in the case of organized and shared trainings as well as activities undertaken as part of employer branding, the analysis showed that such activities more often became the participation of large and medium-sized companies.

It can be expected that the attitude of individual specialists and owners, representatives of the surveyed enterprises to changes in the functions of motivating, training, and caring for employee development, as well as employer branding is conditioned by the acceptance (aware of a specific) HRM model (Lapina *et al.*, 2013) and experience of individual specialists. According to the adopted model, care for an employee determines the involvement of specialists or other decision-makers in creating specific conditions in relation to the company's strategy.

Moreover, it should be realized, as indicated by numerous studies (Gest, 2011; Noe *et al.*, 2010), that the modification of the considered functions, even though it is caused by a pandemic period, may depend on several variables that may modify the involvement of enterprises and the vision of this involvement by specialists and business owners. These are both factors on the part of the enterprise, i.e., the size of the company, the type of company, the technological level, and the interviewee, professional and social competences, specialist experience, personality characteristics, a sense of threat.

The analysis of the obtained research results allows for the formulation of the following recommendations of an applicative nature:

- It would be good, regardless of the company's financial condition, to monitor employees' opinions on the incentive system. Sometimes, inexpensive items as an expression of concern for employees can improve employee satisfaction at work.
- Employees have a positive opinion not only of organizing training, which should each time be preceded by a needs analysis, but also sending links to training, in particular relating to competences regarded to remote work.
- The statements of the research participants on employer branding show the need to monitor and analyze the perception of specific enterprises by job candidates and employees as friendly employers, from where inspiration should be drawn to take further actions. Moreover, regardless of the nuisance caused by the time of spread of Covid-19, one would expect employers to use the pandemic period as an opportunity to promote their company by showing concern for the employee.

The conducted research is not free from limitations, the most important of which is the small size of the research sample, which determined the choice of a qualitative research procedure, and which at the same time prevents the generalization of the obtained data. It would be good to continue the presented research in the form of longitudinal and / or quantitative research, which would make it possible to find out to what extent the observed trends in enterprises of a given size and sector are permanent.

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