
Crisis of Practices in the Field of Recruiting Employees to Organizations

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Abstract:

Purpose: The aim of this article is identification of practices used by organizations to recruit employees and assessment of their adequacy in the face of challenges connected with so called BANI world. The research problem is the answer to the question: what practices are used by organization in the process of employees recruitment and if they are adequate to contemporary economy?

Design/Methodology/Approach: The following research methods were used to achieve the aim: subject literature analysis, interviews with owners and employees of chosen organizations, synthesis and logical reasoning.

Findings: Taking into consideration the challenges of so called BANI world, as well as job candidates' expectations, the already identified practices in the field of recruitment for job became inadequate and require reformulation.

Practical implications: Research results can be used by organizations' owner and HR department workers to rethink and reorganize currently used practices of workers recruitment.

Originality/ value: Except for identification of practices used to recruit employees, the article also presents proposals of new practices to adjust organizations to challenges connected with contemporary economy and job candidates expectations.

Keywords: Recruitment, selection, practices in the field of recruitment and section, crisis.

JEL codes: J24, O15.

Paper type: A research article.

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1. Introduction

Nowadays, organizations function in so called BANI world (which, according to Jamais Cascio, is characterized with brittleness, anxiety, non-linearity and incomprehensibility), which means that a lot of current assumptions connected with surrounding reality and management rules lost their meaning and usefulness.

BANI world makes organizations search for new methods, techniques and tools for work organization and adjust to many new conditions. Dilemmas connected with human resources management, especially within the area of workers recruitment, appear on the basis of these transformations. This gives rise to further questions related to effective functioning in surrounding reality, the best way of presiding over worker, conditions which should be created in an organization to trigger leading attitudes of employees, and moreover, to the way employees should be recruited.

These questions also refer to raising employees engagement and motivation. The research problem is the answer to the question: what practices are used by organization in the process of employees recruitment and if they are adequate to contemporary economy? The aim of this article is identification of practices used by organizations to recruit employees and assessment of their adequacy in the face of challenges connected with so called BANI world.

The following research methods were used to achieve the aim of the paper: subject literature analysis, synthesis and logical reasoning, interviews with owners and employees of chosen organizations: two hierarchical and two turquoise organizations.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 The Essence of Crisis in an Organization and Contexts of its Occurrence

Generally speaking, the issue of crisis is multidimensional which makes it difficult to define. Crisis can be referred not only to issues of economic or managerial nature. It is also connected with psychological, social, technical or legal aspects. Subject literature concerning management presents a lot of definitions of crisis.

The majority of them concentrate on negative dimensions and consequences of crisis. K. Ziemiwicz, for example, indicates that crisis is an unplanned process, in other words a sequence of events appearing in a particular period of time, constituting a threat for enterprise existence (Ziemiwicz, 1990). A similar point of view is presented by B. Wawrzyniak, who states that crisis in an enterprise is a situation of great threat for an organization as a whole, where, as a result of difficulties accumulation and escalation of conflict phenomena, the realization of rudimentary functions of an organization is threatened (Wawrzyniak, 1985).

On the other hand, E. Urbanowska-Sojkin's opinion is that crisis is pathology of development, which is often caused by disproportion between organization's aims and resources necessary to achieve them. According to Urbanowska-Sojkin, crisis as a pathological situation in an organization constitutes mainly an economical threat to an enterprise (Urbanowska-Sojkin, 1998).

The above quoted definitions present differentiated views related to crisis. Contexts in which crisis is most frequently analyzed are also worth mentioning (Grądzki and Zakrzewska-Bielawska, 2009):

- As some kind of turning point in the sequence of events, key moment, critical point, basic turn of events preceding a change, or as a decisive situation which leads to breakthrough in the process of development;
- As a serious situation which exists or is likely to exist as a consequence of different circumstances, disrupting normal course of events and which is characterized with ambivalence of developmental possibilities;
- As an unstable situation preceding a rapid, significant change and as situation causing that a system can no longer maintain its identity, since basic regulation forms do not work, and social norms and goals undergo transformations which consequently contributes to an increase of system's disorder and uncertainty;
- As a circumstance which may be an effect of unforeseen events of more or less shocking character, or a situation which is a consequence of previous choices and modes of action, increasing slowly and gradually. In this context crisis is described in cause and effect categories (process approach) and particular stages and phases of crisis differ with intensity of unfavorable tendencies, individual's ability to identify and differentiate them, as well as counteract them.

Taking into consideration research problem and the aim of this paper, further considerations will include the last of the above mentioned context of crisis.

2.2 Personal Function in an Organization – Phases and Elements

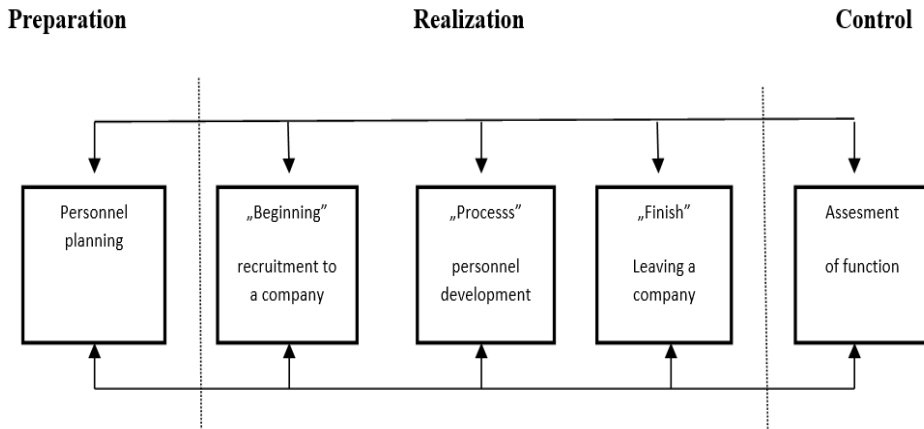
Human resources management is identified with "personal function" in an organization which is understood as a set of actions and issues connected with functioning of people in a certain organization. The following phases and elements are included in human resources management in organizations (Listwan, 2010):

- 1) Preparing: planning of personnel (personal philosophy, goals, strategy, kinds of plans);
- 2) Realization:
 - a) Beginning: recruiting workers to an enterprise: recruitment, selection, introducing to work,
 - b) Process: personnel development – assessment, training (improvement), changing job positions, integrating, motivating, remunerating
 - c) Finish: leaving company – "contractual", dismissals, retirement (natural);

3) Control: function evaluation.

Figure 1 presents above indicated phases and elements of personal function and shows relations between them.

Figure 1. Phases and elements of personal function in an organization according to T. Listwan.



Source: Listwan (1995).

The remaining part of this article will be devoted to one of the elements of realization phase, which is recruiting employers to an organization, as well as practices used by organizations within this area along with assessment of their adequacy in the light of challenges of contemporary economy.

3. Materials and Methods

The following research methods were used to realize the aim of this paper: analysis of subject literature, especially connected with personal function realization, as well as crisis and its manifestations in an organization, in-depth, semi-structured interviews with chosen organizations' owners and workers, method of synthesis and logical reasoning.

Two interviews with the owners of the organizations and four interviews with employees of personnel cells were conducted, according to a specific, partially structured scenario and included questions about the practices in the field of recruiting job candidates. Both hierarchical and turquoise organizations are small and medium-sized organizations, representing the education and IT (information technology) industries.

4. Results

In the phase of workers recruitment (workers selection) to an organization there is an actual process of staffing vacant or newly created positions. It is a very complex, difficult process, bringing a lot of challenges for an organization, since it includes, among others, issues related to psychology, sociology, management. Companies use a lot of practices at this stage. However, there is a question related to their adequacy to contemporary labor market challenges, as well as job candidates expectations.

In the examined traditional organizations, the processes of recruitment and selection, including job interviews with candidates are often conducted solely by HR departments². These are mainly HR workers who, without any or only minor participation of members of a team to which a candidate is to join, prepare the whole process of a new worker recruitment (specification of candidate search area, necessary qualifications, competencies; defining the best selection tools; preparing questions for candidates etc.) and then analyze application documents of a candidate, conduct job interviews and use other, adequate selection tools.

The next stage is proposing the manager who searches a new worker, so called short list of candidates which includes several the best candidates. Next the manager makes a final decision related to choosing a certain candidate to work in a team which he is in charge of and where a vacant position appeared. However, the team to which a candidate is recruited often do not participate in the selection process and consequently do not have a possibility to co-decide, together with the manager, if a certain candidate matches the team, its culture, work style, and what is most important if they want to work with this candidate.

Nevertheless, “almost every reasonable employee wants to meet the candidate in person before he offers him a job” (Schultz and Schultz, 2002). Such analogous need exists in a natural way among team members. It is related to having a conversation, getting to know one’s work style, and then possibly making a decision concerning collaborative work.

Lack of direct meeting with a candidate and possibility to co-decide may lead to situation in which carefully chosen person, meeting the requirements for the vacant position, motivated to work in a new place, who went through all stages of selection process, does not ‘match’ the team to which he was recruited and does not gain support. Such practice might indicate that the position and meaning of all members of a company is not recognized, and the approach to team of workers who occupy not managerial positions is not subjective.

²*In the selection procedure there is a preliminary interview – conducted mostly by HR worker and in-depth interview – planned and conducted in cooperation with an immediate super of a job candidate (Jamka, 2001).*

Selection processes performed by HR department workers in the examined hierarchical organizations are often very extensive, and supported with sophisticated techniques and tools. Assessment center and personality tests used by organizations to specify candidate's social competences or personality are also worth indicating.

On one hand, personality tests are referred to as advanced and reliable selection tools used by modern organizations³. On the other hand, Guion and Gottier in the mid 1960s, while summarizing 12 years of research related to personality tests, indicated that there are no grounds to use them when making a decision about employing a candidate (Guion and Gottier, 1965). Research results also show that average selection process has a minor influence on organization's functioning.

Research conducted in this field does not confirm that financial expenses on selection processes and their complexity and number of used tools and techniques have statistically important impact on increasing human resources in an organization (Huselid, 1995). So, using developed and sophisticated selection tools and techniques is not indispensable to employ a valuable candidate in an organization.

The team members are involved in this process in the turquoise organizations examined (equipped before in necessary knowledge and skills) to which a candidate is to be joined should participate the selection process. Team members, even though they are not specialists in the field of candidates selection, are very interested in choosing a competent, motivated candidate, matching the team specificity, since he is going to be the member of their closest community. Such a practice used in the surveyed turquoise organizations is also an expression of the subjective treatment of employees, trust and building partnership relations with the entire community of the organization.

The first places in the recruitment and selection processes in the examined hierarchical organizations are usually occupied by: job candidate's knowledge, skills, features (talents), education and experience. This is the way job advertisements are frequently constructed. The selection process is also conducted in similar way.

During this process the following aspects are being checked: experience, knowledge, skills, and education of a job candidate. In the examined hierarchical organizations attitude, "character" and values⁴ of the candidate and their similarity with organization's culture and values are often ignored, treated marginally, or on equal terms with candidate's knowledge and experience. "It is not that they [education,

³Research proved that personality tests results correlate with proper performance of a task. Predictive accuracy of personality tests can be as high as assessment centers.

⁴Values In an organization are collective preferences imposed on a group. They are a resultant of values to which organization's managers or owners adhere. They are consciously or subconsciously transferred to other workers (Dziewit, 2014).

knowledge, skills, experience] are not important, but they are work aspects which can be taught, whereas issues such as character, ethics of work, intelligence, engagement at work or shared rules are integral features of personality” (Collins, 2003). These features rarely become a foundation or a starting point of recruitment or selection processes or decisions related to the choice of a certain candidate in the examined hierarchical organizations.

Organizations are not equipped with tools which would help to diagnose such adjustment. Literature studies indicate that a lot of organizations, despite the fact that they define their values in significant documents (for example: strategy of an organization), do not use them in everyday functioning. As a consequence, only a few organizations verify candidate’s values and check if he matches their organizational culture, values, assumed goals, missions and strategies.

After all, values important for an organization cannot be imposed on a new worker in an authoritarian way, since he is a shaped grown-up and most probably will not change his principles and values. Choosing a candidate with completely different values may have long-term negative consequences for an organization (in extreme situation it can even lead to loss of an important client, increase of costs, loss of good reputation, leaving work by employees).

It is worth emphasizing that the role of values is especially important in so called BANI world. For example, in the time of remote work which became a necessity in the face of COVID-19 pandemics, such values as mutual trust, being reliable, engaged, responsible (for both entrusted tasks, as well as for the whole organization), thoroughness, proactive approach, honesty, cooperation and respect became foundations of many organizations’ functioning (De Smet *et al.*, 2020).

It is worth emphasizing that the surveyed hierarchical organizations employ only so called professional ‘part’ of a worker, that is his ‘hands’ and ‘mind’, so his knowledge, skills, competencies, professional experience, etc. Other features of a candidate, such as emotions, passions, interests etc. are often ignored and there is no place for them in an organization.

However, employment process always means employing the whole person (Drucker, 2005). The assumption that working is the only activity to be done at work, since it increases effectiveness, was undermined by numerous scientific research. Research results show that joining professional activity with fun contributes to the increase of satisfaction and happiness level of workers, their motivation and engagement, as well as effectiveness (HRM Institute, 2018).

Recruitment for vacant or newly created positions in an organization can be conducted with the use of internal and external sources. External recruitment is searching for workers outside an organization, and internal recruitment is analyzing

own workers' potentials and choosing the best one⁵. Both, internal and external recruitment have advantages, but also limitations. It is really hard to distinguish one of the mentioned sources (Pocztowski, 1996; McKenna and Beech, 1997).

However, internal recruitment is very important from the point of view of creating development possibilities and promoting workers within the structures of an organization, building their morale, motivation and engagement. It means that in case of similar level of competencies, priority should be given to candidates from the internal labor market (Listwan, 1995).

However, examined hierarchical organizations make use of external labor market in the first place, when an 'interesting' vacant position appears, for example for a manager, forgetting in a way about the potentials and ambitions of their workers (Devaro, 2017). It may be a manifestation of the fact that some organizations 'save on' their workers and do not invest in their development and do not prepare their employees to a promotion within the structures of an organization. Such actions can also result from the belief that there are better or even ideal workers outside the organization, the ones who do not make mistakes, do not have drawbacks, do not face different difficulties and challenges encountered by workers of a certain organization.

The next significant aspect is the issue of remuneration and negotiations of its value during the process of selection. Remunerations in examined hierarchical organizations are confidential, and people in charge of recruiting process often ask candidates about the amount of money he wishes to earn.

However, they do not inform candidates about the range of salaries for a certain position for which they apply. The possibility to gain such information from, for example, other workers is usually very limited (The issue of remuneration amount is still a taboo subject in Poland). Moreover, individual amount of remuneration is confidential according to provisions of Polish law.⁶ Therefore, there is a possibility that when a candidate proposes remuneration lower than the one paid on this position in an organization, he is going to be paid this lower salary (which might not be justified with, for example, economic conditions of an organization) (Bugdol,

⁵Some authors, however, indicate that division into external and internal sources of recruitment requires *précising* nowadays, since borders between organization and its surrounding become blurred, which means that the information available only for workers employed (on the basis of employment contract or civil law contracts) in a certain organization can nowadays be accessible to other groups of people, for example: former workers, consultants or advisors (Woźniak, 2013).

⁶Information concerning the Mount of remuneration is treated as worker's personal right (similarly to for example health, freedom, image, freedom of conscience) and it remains under special protection, article 23 and 24 of Civil Code (the Act of Law of 23 April 1964, Civil Code (OJ, no. 16, item 93 with amendments)) and article 111 Labor Code (the Act of Law of 26 June 1974, Labor Code (OJ, no. 24, item 141 with amendments)).

2014). Moreover, lack of financial transparency in examined hierarchical organizations and managerial staff's monopoly on information consolidates such situation. This obvious asymmetry of information is a great challenge especially for young workers and/or people with small professional experience. Informing about proposed remuneration in a job offer, for example, on annual basis with all supplements is a good and honest practice in the examined turquoise organizations. It can constitute a pre selection factor.

Attention should also be paid to reprehensible and often humiliating or contemptible treatment of job candidates by people conducting recruitment procedure (Bugdol, 2014) (such practice increases in periods of high unemployment and employer's labor market).

Different 'sophisticated' tasks can be brought up at this point, such as: making noises of a favorite wild animal, waiting for several hours for a person conducting job interview, etc. Using stressful interviews without thinking about their reasonableness and analyzing tasks and duties proposed to a candidate, can be other examples of such activities. Stressful interviews can check candidates' reactions under strong emotional stress, pressure caused by additional stressing factors other than the interview itself.

In order to achieve this goal the recruiting person tries to destabilize a candidate using for example, unconventional questions, accusations, confrontational attitude of an interviewer and manipulations (Kawka and Listwan, 2010). Using stressful interviews is justified in such professions as air traffic controller, sales representative, prison guard (Fry, 2010). However, practice shows that these kinds of interviews are overused and conducted without a shade of reflection.

Performed research indicated that they can be helpful in measuring and assessing candidates' emotions in very stressful conditions. On the other hand, collected results also prove that there is a negative relation between utilization of stressful interviews and attractiveness of an organization, perceived by candidates (Chen *et al.*, 2019). Employees of many organizations present such attitude towards job candidates in selection process due to the fact that they are often treated as objects, without respect.

5. Discussion

Contemporary world challenges had a very significant influence on organizations' functioning, which led to a situation in which currently used practices become inadequate and do not fit so called BANI world. It also refers to a personal function, especially to the area of recruiting candidates to work. The following practices within the area of recruitment and selection have been identified by the author of this article:

- Conducting selection process mainly by HR departments workers;
- One-person (team manager) decision making in relation to employment of a certain candidate;
- Strongly developed and formalized procedures used while selecting candidates, additionally supported with sophisticated techniques and tools;
- Recruiting workers mainly due to their knowledge, skills and professional experience;
- Putting a lot of emphasis/ attention to external recruitment;
- Lack of respect towards candidates within the selection process.

6. Conclusions

Due to the challenges of contemporary world and job candidates expectations, identified practices seem to be inadequate and require deep reflection and reformulation through:

- Active involvement of organizations' members in the process of new workers recruitment;
- Consistent with reality description of a position, honesty in relations with a job candidate, transparency of information within the recruitment process;
- Ensuring autonomy to teams in the process of recruiting new workers;
- Respectful treatment of job candidates;
- Choosing candidates whose values will be in line with organization's values.

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